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A comparative study of Islamic allusions in Lord Byron's poetry and prose

Zughoul, Mohammed Said, Ph.D.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1992

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ISLAMIC ALLUSIONS IN LORD BYRON'S POETRY AND PROSE

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Mohammed Said Zughoul
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 1992

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Title: A Comparative Study of Islamic Allusions in Lord Byron's Poetry and Prose

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Throughout his poetry and prose, Lord Byron voices mixed opinions on Islam and Muslims. This study examines, in depth, the poet's dual perceptions and analyzes the likely factors underlying them, in order for one to gain a deeper understanding of Byron and his works.

To achieve these goals, we use a fourfold structural plan, so each chapter discusses Muslim, English and Byron's traditions, and evaluates Byron's treatment of Islam and Muslims in light of those traditions, as well as Byron's philosophical, political and personal views.

This study contains 12 chapters. Chapter 1 furnishes a background of Byron's knowledge of Islam. Chapters 2 through 6 discuss belief-related practices: Allah, angels, the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad, and Paradise. Islamic religious practices: prayers and mosques, charity and hospitality, and fasting and pilgrimage are dealt with in Chapters 7, 8, and 9. Chapters 10 and 11 focus on Muslim laws of marriage and infidelity, while Chapter 12 discusses results and conclusions.

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Although Byron's Islamic writings show sympathy with the oneness of God, prayers, charity and hospitality, they are for the most part very unsympathetic with Islamic ideologies and practices: invocations of Allah, angels and jinn, the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad, paradise, organized prayers, fasting, polygamy, and infidelity. Deism, the English tradition, panhellenism, politics, and personal views are substantial factors behind Byron's disagreements and sympathy with Islam and Muslims, deism being the strongest. Still, a significant conclusion exists. There is a pattern in Byron's religious thought--a dual perception of Christianity and Judaism with deism rating high in all. That means Byron's views of revealed religions resemble largely those of modern secular humanists.

Among other benefits, this study can help English scholars learn the basic teachings of Islam from its primary sources, the Qur'an and the tradition of Muhammad. Additionally, knowledge of Islam via this comparative approach is crucial to discern the myth written about Islam from the truth of Islam, a vital step for correcting the stereotypical perceptions of Islam inherent in Western culture. Further, this study may encourage futher research on Byron's oriental materials, as well as his versatile philosophical thoughts.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I	INTRODUCTION	1
II	ALLAH	23
	Islamic Tradition	23
	English Tradition	25
	Byron's Tradition	27
	Evaluation and Understanding	38
III	ANGELS AND JINN	58
	Islamic Tradition	58
	English Tradition	63
	Byron's Tradition	70
	Evaluation and Understanding	87
IV	THE QUR'AN	90
	Islamic Tradition	90
	English Tradition	93
	Byron's Tradition	100
	Evaluation and Understanding	109
V	PROPHET MUHAMMAD	119
	Islamic Tradition	119
	English Tradition	123
	Byron's Tradition	135
	Evaluation and Understanding	149
VI	PARADISE	165
	Islamic Tradition	165
	English Tradition	167
	Byron's Tradition	175
	Evaluation and Understanding	190
VII	PRAYERS AND MOSQUES	201
	Islamic Tradition	201
	English Tradition	203
	Byron's Tradition	209
	Evaluation and Understanding	227

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Chapter		Page
VIII	CHARITY AND HOSPITALITY	240
	Islamic Tradition	240
	English Tradition	242
	Byron's Tradition	248
	Evaluation and Understanding	265
IX	FASTING AND PILGRIMAGE	272
	Islamic Tradition	272
	English Tradition	279
	Byron's Tradition	282
	Evaluation and Understanding	292
X	MARRIAGE	294
	Islamic Tradition	294
	English Tradition	296
	Byron's Tradition	307
	Evaluation and Understanding	321
XI	INFIDELITY	324
	Islamic Tradition	324
	English Tradition	328
	Byron's Tradition	334
	Evaluation and Understanding	344
XII	CONCLUSION	355
	Specific Findings	356
	General Conclusions	373
	Significance of Study	376
WORKS CITED		382

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A substantial element in Lord Byron's writings is an interest in the Muslim Orient. Among his works with such emphasis are Don Juan, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, "The Giaour," "The Bride of Abydos," "The Corsair," "Lara," "The Siege of Corinth," "Beppo," "Morgante Maggiore," "To Eliza," "A Very Mournful Ballad On The Siege And Conquest of Alhama," "On Jordan's Banks," "Heaven and Earth," as well as the 1809-1811 letters, journals, and notes. Byron employs numerous Eastern themes, including references to the region's geography, climate, history, politics, economy, peoples, languages, literatures, customs, rites, and religions. Many of the Oriental allusions in his writings address three major aspects of Islam: faith, devotions, and laws.

Byron's references to faith include those to Allah, angels, Muhammad, the Qur'an and paradise. References to Muslim devotions deal with mosques, mua'thin calls, prayers, charity and hospitality, fasting and pilgrimage. Remarkable allusions also appear on Islamic laws--marriage, slavery, wine, and infidelity.

The frequency of Islamic expressions in Byron's works certainly warrants investigation. Therefore, in this study, I intend to clarify Byron's Islamic allusions concerning faith, devotions and laws. More specifically, I will

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analyze carefully and completely his disagreement and agreement with the current orthodox teachings of Islam to determine the sources that influenced his treatment, to discover why he wrote about Islam in the manner he did, and to see what effect this treatment of Islam has on our understanding of Byron or his works as a whole.

This investigation will enrich one's knowledge of Byron's treatment of Islam and Muslims, since no scholar has ever written a comprehensive discussion of Byron's Islamic material. Mohammad Asfour's chapter, "The Orient Observed," deals with Byron's observations during his journey to the Muslim east and their impact on his poetry (155). Wiener's study, "Byron and the East: Literary Sources of the 'Turkish Tale,'" focuses on Byron's knowledge of the Eastern life and manners. It mentions Byron's sources--Vathek and notes about the Qur'an, the Bibliotheque Orientale, Richardson's "Dissertations," the Arabian Nights, and Sale's translation of the Qur'an and Preliminary Discourse (91-110). Brown's article "Byron and English Interest in the Near East" emphasizes the effect of the poet's observations of the East in his poetry, capitalizing on the English interests there. The English Romantic Poets indicates no research has been done on Byron's treatment of Islam. If modern critics do hint at it, they simply reiterate Byron's version.

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Islam in English Literature, by Byron Porter Smith, is an indispensable annotated survey of English writers' Islamic material from the Middle Ages through the 19th century. It mentions English travellers, historians and theologians on Islamic subjects; it presents miscellaneous prose works, fiction, poetry, and drama on Islam and Muslims. It also introduces English translations from Latin and European languages on Islam (vii). Smith's four page reference to Byron's Islamic material is on polygamy (180-181), the houris (178), hospitality (179), Sirat Bridge (180), and descendants of Prophet Muhammad (179). But the book is very informative on Islam in English literature.

Samuel Chew's The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance is a survey of English writers on Islam in this particular era, outlining their knowledge and attitudes toward Islam. His chapter, "The Prophet and His Book," surveys legends on Muhammad in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (100-150) and considers the Muslim military threat to Christian countries a basis for such legends on Islam. Chew's study is very helpful for our research background, and so is Philip Hitti's Islam and the West with its brief references to Islam in English literature.

Modern non-Muslim scholars may have not attempted comprehensive studies of Byron's treatment of Islam because it requires an adequate knowledge of Islam, which they

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likely do not possess. Objectivity in scholarship necessitates such knowledge of Islam. Our study, therefore, will be the first to deal, in-depth, with Byron's Islamic material. Understanding of Byron's literary achievement is incomplete if his Islamic material is ignored.

The bulk of Byron's treatment of Islam and Muslims is critical of doctrines, devotions and laws. He deals harshly with Allah-related practices, angels, jinn, the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad, paradise, martyrdom, and houris. He thinks prayers are wrong, utilizing the mosque, charity and fasting to express political sentiments. Further, he shuns polygamy and infidelity. However, at times, Byron cherishes some aspects of Islam: the unity of God, sincerity in prayer, and charity and hospitality.

With this very general survey in mind, let us explore sources of Byron's knowledge and treatment of Islam. Translated Arabic and Islamic literature, histories, biographies, translations of the Qur'an, Islam and Muslims in English literature, politics, panhellenism, and Byron's Christian and deistic beliefs, among others, have shaped the poet's criticism of Islam and Muslims.

Oriental scholarship influenced Western writers since the Middle Ages. Eighth century Spanish Muslim poetry affected a Platonic love theme among French and Italian writers for several centuries. Arabic tales, fables, apologies and wise sayings captured the fancy of Western

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readers and authors (Hitti, Islam 76). Martha Conant supports Hitti's claims. During the Middle Ages, many Eastern stories, including Kalila and Dimna and Sendebar drifted to Europe through merchants, missionaries, pilgrims and crusaders (xix).

According to Hitti, the Arabian Nights was translated from French into English between 1712 and 1778. The tales so quickly became popular that in the 18th century they were printed in thirty English and French editions. Since then, the tales have been published hundreds of times (Islam 76).

Harold Wiener argues the Oriental scholarship and travel literature vastly increased by the end of the eighteenth century (89). Consequently, in 1800, a young English scholar would have read many books treating the history, language, sociology, and topography of the Levant. Moreover, an Oriental scholar might have visited the Arab countries described if he had the opportunity. Wiener believes Byron's place in Oriental scholarship was "part of the dictates of fashion of the time" (89-90).

Byron holds a significant position in Oriental scholarship. He read the Arabian Nights at an early age. " . . . [T]he Arabian Nights . . . I had read . . . before I was ten years old" (Moore Life 95-101). The Arabian Nights Byron read were those of Antonie Galland and Jonathan Scot (H. Wiener 91). He was also familiar with the extensive

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notes on the Arabian Nights, relying on them to supplement his Islamic material (Byron, Works 2: 283; H. Wiener 91).

Byron also read and admired Beckford's Vathek with its notes. "Vathek was another of the tales I had a very early admiration of . . . what do you think of the Cave of Eblis, and the picture of Eblis himself?" Byron thought Vathek "far surpasses all European imitations" (Critical 264).

Byron also read the Bibliotheque Orientale, D'Herbelot's encyclopedia of Islamic literature. Byron admits Henry Jones, D'Herbelot, Beckford, and notes to the Arabian Nights serve as some of his Islamic literary source material (Works 2: 283).

He read the poetry of Sadi, Hafiz, and Firdawsi, as well. In an 1807 reading list, Byron wrote:

> Persia--Ferdousi, author of the Shah Nameh, the Persian Iliad--Sadi, and Hafiz, the immortal Hafiz, the oriental Anacreon. (Moore Life 95-101)

Byron mentions Hafiz's "Megnoun and Leila," a romantic love poem well-known in Arabic and another long poem about Zuleika, Potiphar's wife, and Joseph to his editor, Murray (Works 2: 283). He also admits he pursued some of the Asiatic works either in the original or translations (Moore Life 49). It is not likely that Byron read these works in Arabic, but he had some knowledge of the language.

Byron's works reveal some understanding of Arabic. His works are rich with many Arabic terms. When the poet made

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plans to tour Persia, India, and the East, he obtained information from the Arabic professor at Cambridge (Galt 55). Byron told his mother that he did contact John Palmer, Arabic Professor at Cambridge from 1808-1817 (Works 1: 195). The poet also bought an Arabic grammar book to prepare for his Eastern voyage (Marchand, Byron: A Biography 1: 199). After arriving in Malta, Byron began taking Arabic lessons from a monk--". . . I believe one of the librarians of the public library." But he did not devote all of his time to it (Galt 68). Marchand says Byron took Arabic lessons in the mornings while in Malta. Maurois (128) and Borst (52) agree with Galt and Marchand on the subject. But the real proof of his Arabic is found in Byron's works.

Now that Byron's Orientalism has been outlined, one must take a closer look at the influence of Oriental literature on the poet and his works.

Oriental readings produced admiration and gratitude in Byron for the East and its people. The Islamic material led him to develop an unusual interest in the Muslim East before reaching the age of ten, as he claims in his letters and journals. This fascination and love of the Orient remained dear to him throughout his life. As well, his Islamic knowledge added to other factors: his education and masters degree, peculiar reading abilities, fluency in Latin, Greek, Italian, and French, and little Arabic have naturally qualified Byron to be a notable Orientalist. They

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contributed to his Eastern tour and his remarkable place in the English travel literature. Most importantly, his Oriental knowledge fed his poetic genius. The following excerpts illustrate Byron's addiction to the Orient.

First, he advises his friends, namely Moore to "orientalize." "Stick to the East;--the oracle, Stael, told me it was the only poetical policy. The North, South, and West, have been exhausted" (Byron Works 2: 255). These remarks reveal a sympathetic attitude towards the East.

Byron then praises Oriental literature, in a second remark to Moore. "The Orientalism--which I hear is very splendid. . . . [Nourjahad] is as good as an Advertisement for your Eastern stories, by filling their heads with glitter" (Works 2: 288).

In a third example, Byron portrays his greatest appreciation for the East. He acknowledges that without the Orient he would not have achieved his poetical fame:

> With those countries, and events connected with them, all my really poetical feelings begin and end. Were I to try, I could make nothing of any other subject, and that I have apparently exhausted. (Byron Works 3: 274)

Byron's last piece of advice is to observe the Orient, rather than to fictionalize it. However, it requires knowledge and genius to write a good work of Oriental literature. "Some thing more than having been across a

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camel's hump is necessary to write a good Oriental tale" (Byron Works 4: 171). These comments reveal much of Byron's gratitude for the East.

According to Harold Wiener, Oriental literature produced such an impact on Byron that in 1824 he could still retain

> . . . the essential facts of Eastern geography, history, and custom, and could produce them at will; it is scarcely surprising that the readings should have left a marked imprint on the Turkish Tales written a decade earlier. (92)

Conant holds the same conviction. She believes the Arabian Nights and other Oriental fiction translated into English between 1704-1712 shaped the poetry of Byron, Southey, Moore, and others. She also contends that Vathek (1786) influenced Byron (xvii, 236) and was a direct source of his inspiration (251).

The 18th century translations of Oriental fiction had a more enduring and expressive effect. Travel literature and Oriental tales "made the world of Islam look more colorful, more wonderful and more exotic and mysterious" to Westerners (Hitti, Islam 61). With Hitti's view in mind, one recalls Byron's advice to Moore to stick to Eastern themes. This comes from his own experience with Oriental themes, which increased his poetic ability and colored it with fascination. The effect of the Arabian Nights is obvious in

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developing Byron's attitudes towards Islam, Islamic culture, and Muslims.

On the other hand, these tales provide a particular perspective, since they describe the Muslim masses living in ignorance, poverty and misery (Hitti, Islam 47-48). Such accounts may have affected Byron's views of Islam and Muslims. The Arabian tales depicting Muslim women as having no education or souls, Muslim men's sole jobs as having harems and concubines, sack and sea as punishment for infidelity, slavery as an everyday feature in Muslim life, and wine consumption as a common practice, for instance, provide stereotyped representations of Muslim life. These stereotypical descriptions find their way into Byron's treatment of Islamic topics--women, the harem, etc. The Arabian Nights, according to orthodox Muslims, is not a reliable source on Islamic civil and religious life. It is in every way a work of fiction.

Modern critics believe stereotypes exist in the Arabian Nights and other tales. Penzer criticizes Westerners for their dependence on the book for truths about Muslim life. Early versions of the Arabian Nights created

> . . . false ideas about the harem in the Western mind early in the 18th Century when Antoine Galland first published the Arabian Nights, and the public in Western Europe were too much intrigued by the novelty and fascination of the

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> tales themselves to entertain any desire to question the mise en scene or seek to dissipate the clouds of romance and hyperbole that hung so heavily over the newly discovered creation of the Orient. (13)

If one recalls, Wiener establishes Byron's reading of Galland's original French translation of the Arabian Nights.

Besides being an avid reader, Byron was a history addict. "The moment I could read," he said, "my grand passion was history" (Byron, Works 5: 406). The poet continues,

> The Turkish history was one of the first books that gave me pleasure when a child; and I believe it had much influence on my subsequent wishes to visit the Levant, and gave me, perhaps, the oriental colouring which is observed in my poetry. (Byron, Critical 149)

According to Leigh Hunt, Byron's favorite reading was history and travels (Byron, Critical 149). Byron's knowledge of history was great. Moore quotes a memorandum-book written by Byron in 1807, which shows his vast reading of all disciplines of knowledge ". . . at a period of life when few of his schoolfellows had yet travelled beyond their longs and shorts" (Moore, Life 46). Moore adds that Byron possessed a most retentive memory that "there could not be found a single one who, at the same age,

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has possessed any thing like the same stock of useful knowledge" (46).

Of particular interest are the materials related to Islam and Muslim. Of Turkish history Byron wrote the following in the 1807 list:

> Turkey.--I have read Knolles, Sir Paul Rycaut, and Prince Cantemir, besides a more modern history, anonymous. Of the Ottoman History I know every event, from Tangralopi, and afterwards Othman I, to the peace of Passarowitz, in 1718,--the battle of Cutzka, in 1739, and the treaty between Russia and Turkey in 1790. (Moore, Life 46-47)

Moore cites a more detailed list of Byron's Turkish reading, which sheds light on the poet's readings of travel books of all kinds. I will discuss it later in this chapter.

> Knolles, Cantemir, De Tott, Lady M. W. Montagu, Hawkins's translation from Mignot's History of the Turks, the Arabian Nights, all travels, or histories, or books upon the East I could meet with, I had read, as well as Rycaut, before I was ten years old. I think the Arabian Nights first. After this I preferred the history of naval actions, Don Quixote, and Smollett's novels . . . and I was passionate for the Roman history. (119)

A few months before he died, in a conversation with Mavrocordato at Missolonghi, Lord Byron said:

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> The Turkish history was one of the first books that gave me pleasure when a child; and I believe it had much influence on my subsequent wishes to visit the Levant, and gave perhaps the oriental colouring to my poetry. (Moore, Life 119)

Rycaut's history of the Turks captivated Byron's imagination (119).

Byron's interest in history is clear from his remarks to friends and acquaintances. Thus, there is little question that historians such as Rycaut, Knolles, Montagu, Ockley, Gibbon, Voltaire, Prideaux, Sale, Ross, among many others have shaped Byron's view of Islam and Muslims. We will show historians' influences on Byron's Islamic thought in many chapters of the study.

In addition to histories, biographies and translations of the Qur'an, Byron was strongly affected by works of English literary figures addressing Islam and Muslims. The poet read a vast amount of English literature, according to two reading lists in his letters and journals.

Byron was also an avid reader of English travel literature on the East. Leicester Stanhope states that voyages and travels delighted Byron most: ". . . their details he seemed actually to devour. He would sit up all night reading them. His whole soul was absorbed in these adventures, and he appeared to personify the traveller" (qtd. in Byron, Critical 192).

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Before his Eastern tour, Byron said he read all the travel books on the East (Critical 191-192). However, from his traveling experience, the poet discovered travel books "are full of lies" (Byron, Works 5: 307). Voyages and travels to Greece, Spain, Asia Minor, Albania, Italy ". . . can convey nothing further which I desired to know about them" (5: 373-374). Montagu also viewed the travel books on the East as inaccurate. Penzer states, travelers' descriptions were vague and conflicting: "Ambassadors' wives or secretaries were the sole source of information; all kinds of misunderstandings, exaggerations, distortions, and occasionally deliberate fabrications" (13-14). Conant calls the translators, historians, and travelers forerunners of Southey, Moore, Byron, Matthew Arnold, Fitzgerald, Kipling and others on Eastern topics (Collins 251).

Among travelers Byron read and knew are Richard Chandler, William Hamilton, Edward Clarke, Sir William Gell, William Leake, Galt, William Bankes, Burkhardt, Lord Valentia, Henry Holland, W.G. Browne, J.C. Hobhouse, and Lord Aberdeen (Brown 60-61).

Byron's vast reading of English literature and travel books may have affected his vision of Islam and Muslims. This assumption is not unreasonable since Byron read many of the English and European literary works, and was a Westerner. From the Middles Ages until Byron's time, and even today, Western perception of Islam has been primarily

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disagreeable. However, the Western view of Islam has varied in degrees from age to age, according to Western relations with the East (Said 61-63). English writers' influence on Byron's Islamic thought will be discussed in some detail in every chapter of the study.

As well, politics plays a major role in Byron's treatment of Islam in his poetry and prose. The poet sometimes has political objectives behind his unsympathetic treatment of Islam and Muslims. One reason is military.

Islamic conquests began in the 7th century, continuing up to the 17th and 18th centuries in parts of Asia and Europe. Muslim armies conquered Byzantine Syria, and occupied Spain for eight centuries (711-1492). They held Sicily (for 200 years), Cypress, and made raids in France and Italy. They occupied Greece for more than four centuries, and overtook Constantinople, seat of the Eastern Roman Empire, in 1453. The military demise of the Eastern empire and the Ottoman conquests in Europe made the West view Turkey as the "terror of the world" (Hitti, Islam 58). John Galt describes Turkish military practices as "merciless" (149).

European Crusaders battled on Muslim soil in the 12th and 13th centuries. Memories of the Crusades and hopes for future campaigns lingered for generations (Hitti, Islam 48-49). The political-military factor affected all kinds of English writing. Shelley, Southey, and Byron were not alone

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in urging uprisings against the "Saracens" or "Turks" (Smith 19).

Byron's perception of Turkey as a political-military power definitely influenced his literature. The poet criticizes any Muslim power that threatens Europe. He depicts sultans and pashas as despots. His "A Very Mournful Ballad On The Siege And Conquest Of Alhama" is a criticism of the "Moors" or Spanish Muslims. In Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron warns against the growing power of the Wahhabis, a fundamental Islamic movement from 1703 to 1818 that spread throughout Arabia, Syria, and Iraq. It was identified as "puritanical" (Brandon 646). He advocates destroying their power, which threatens the West. After the 1683 Siege of Vienna, Ottoman expansion ceased (Smith 19), and this situation improved English relations with both Turkey and Persia. Meanwhile, English interest in the East became a reality, and the East India Company in the Muslim world grew in power (Smith 20). In 1809 England had a peace treaty with Turkey, the Treaty of the Dardanelles. This resulted in friendly relations between Turkey and England. However, Turkey's war with Russia continued until 1812 (Borst 116).

Friendly relations existed between England, Turkey, and Albania during Byron's visit to Turkey (Davenport 325; Borst 116; Byron, Complete 884). Ali Pasha, the governor of Albania and Byron's host, was an ally of England. Ali, who

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was instrumental in bringing peace between England and Turkey, "expressed his happiness to Byron at having the British as neighbors (Davenport 325). Marchand states that Ali Pasha's hospitality to Byron was the result of a friendly policy with England.

But Greece always occupied a remarkable place in English writings, particularly Byron's. His affection for Greece molded his relations and attitudes towards Turkey. Despite the above mentioned favorable attitude toward Turkey, Byron felt the Greeks were persecuted under Turkey, and punished by three and a half centuries of captivity (Borst 140-141). Byron's "Greeks Arise" was inspired by his sympathy with the Greeks (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 217). After visiting Turkey, Byron told the House of Lords the Turkish government was "despotic and infidel," and he had visited "the most oppressive provinces in Greece" (Roden 80).

Byron thought there was hope for the Greeks to fight for independence (Borst 141; Raphael 52). He wrote, "The Greeks will, sooner or later, rise against them [the Turks]; but if they do not make haste, I hope Bonaparte will come, and drive the useless rascals away" (His Very 31). Byron's message of Greek revolution appears in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

> Thou friend of thy country! to strangers record
> Why bear ye the yoke of the Ottoman lord?

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> Why bear ye these fetters thus tamely display'd,
> The wrongs of the matron, the stripling, and maid?
> (qtd. in Borst 142)

Byron also encouraged Europe to liberate Constantinople from Turkish control (Childe Harold II 206).

His poetry contains numerous references to Turkish Muslims as "circumcised polluters" of Constantinople, Saracens, barbarians, and rascals; while portraying Muslims addressing a Greek as "slave" and "Christian." He also presents numerous allusions to the crescent and cross clash, and the banishment of church bells from Turkey. All reflect the poet's zeal to free Greece from Turkey.

To achieve his political goal, Byron deliberately plays on the religious sentiments of the Greeks. The poet was quite popular with the Greek clergy, who called him their savior (Trueblood 184). He was even illustrated with the Greek clergy carrying the cross (Raphael 52). The poet's involvement in the region was under the guise of spreading Christianity, for he distributed Bibles, discussed religious matters with Dr. James Kennedy, and met with Greek Christian leaders. Founding a Bible society in Greece, Byron supervised distribution of Dr. James Kennedy's Bibles (132), reconciling the clergy to their distribution (Howarth 60). However, the poet only utilized Christianity as a means to a political end.

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Byron was a friend of Greeks, and rebel against non-Christian conquerors. In his efforts to liberate Greece, he hired Albanian Christian mercenaries, the Suliotes (Trueblood 94-95). They were a mountain tribe of fierce and noble fighters (Mauoris 131; Nicolson 53). Assisting the Greeks in their struggle with Turkey, Byron died April 19, 1824 (Galt 320-321). He was planning military action against Sultan Mahmoud II when he died (Jump 30).

Shortly before Byron's death, the sultan proclaimed him an enemy of the Ottoman Empire because of his pro-Greek activities (Trueblood 104). The sultan said: "He [Byron] will be beheaded by the Turks if they succeeded in taking him a prisoner . . . His poems are fervently read by his Greek admirers" (Trueblood 184).

Hearing news of Byron's death in Missolonghi, Mavrocordatos called his death a national misfortune. He ordered a battery of 37 guns fired, Greek offices and shops closed for three days, and 21 days of mourning (Galt 320-321). Today a monument stands in Missolonghi in Byron's memory, and another in the National Gardens of Athens.

When Byron gave his effort, health, and life to Greece, the English had already begun supporting Greece by founding a Philhellenic Society for the country's liberation. Many members were Byron's friends (Trueblood 94), and the poet a key figure in the society.

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Byron's literary statements and activities were to assist Greece in reviving Hellenism. David Hotham explains Byron's ideals as Western.

> Of course we have so much which binds us to Greece, because we think of the age of Pericles and Socrates and Athenian democracy . . . as the dawn of the western civilization. These feelings were revived in the 19th century by the exploits of Byron. There is still a tremendous amount of romantic Hellenism still latent in Britain. (4)

Hotham stresses that not much historically binds the West to Turkey.

> As for the rise of the Turkish empire, most people still consider the fall of Constantinople in 1453 an unmitigated disaster. I have the feeling that many Philhellenes nourish in their hearts the hope that some day, somehow, the Greeks will recapture the city, and even win back parts of Anatolia, as they tried to do in 1919. (4)

This critic considers Byron a strong supporter of this idea (4). These hopes are identical to Byron's when he calls for returning the Imperial city to the Greek Christians.

The poet also emphasizes Hellenism in other ways. Byron uses Athens as a favorite theme (Galt 109). He stresses the "beauty and a heritage of the world's most noble values" in reference to Greece (McGann 49). Byron

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criticizes Sir Elgin and his agents for destroying the metopes of the Parthenon to transfer them to the British Museum. The poet regretted Greece's being "pillaged by collectors such as Lord Elgin" (Jump 78). He accused the English of robbing the Acropolis of its masterpieces (Mauoris 135).

There is no question that Byron sides with Greece against Turkey. Most modern critics support this view.

The poet's religious perceptions also influence his treatment of Islam in his works. We will discuss these views in detail in almost every chapter of the study.

This chapter has focused on factors contributing to Lord Byron's knowledge and treatment of Islam and Muslims. The influence of Arabic and Islamic literature, Islam and Muslims in English and Western literature, politics, pan-hellenism, and religious beliefs all mold Byron's treatment. One should keep these factors and the purpose of this investigation in mind when reading the following chapters.

Showing Byron's treatment of Islam and Muslims, tracing his sources of Islamic knowledge and their influence on his understanding of Islam and Muslims, disclosing his misinformation on Islam and Muslims by comparing it to the Islamic tradition, and determining what this all means in relationship to an overall interpretation of Byron and his works are the real intentions of this study.

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Such objectives will be achieved through discussions of Byron's allusions to Islam and Muslims in the next eleven chapters. Part One, made up of Chapters Two through Six focuses on Islamic belief practices: Allah, Angels and Jinn, the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad, and Paradise. Part Two, consisting of Chapters Seven through Nine, deals with Islamic devotional practices: prayers and mosques, charity and hospitality, and fasting and pilgrimage. Lastly, Part Three, composed of Chapters Ten and Eleven, concentrates on Islamic legal practices: marriage and infidelity. Conclusions and implications are offered in Chapter Twelve. Each chapter is organized according to a fourfold structure. First, I will briefly discuss the Islamic tradition of specific beliefs, devotions or laws alluded to by Byron. Secondly, I will discuss the same Islamic accounts in the English tradition and/or in Byron's sources whenever possible. Next, I will fully display the Islamic tradition in Byron's own works, and analyze Byron's Islamic references in the light of these three collective efforts.

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CHAPTER II: ALLAH

In this chapter, I will clarify Byron's views and uses of three groups of Islamic references to Allah-oriented-practices: 1) Muslim belief in Allah (in relation to Byron's deistic-belief in God), 2) Byron's Muslim characters' calls to Allah in various situations, 3) Byron's Muslim characters' use of Allah's name in oaths.

Islamic Tradition

The belief in Allah is the first article of Muslim faith, and the keystone to understanding all aspects of Islamic beliefs and practices. The belief in Allah's existence is based on reason, intuition, and enlightened contemplations of the universe, man, life, and their sophisticated systems. Once one solves this problem, the belief in Allah, he will be able to solve all other problems of beliefs, devotions, and transactions in Islamic life.

Belief in Allah in Islam means the absolute belief in His Unity or Oneness. The doctrine of the unity of God is present in all Suras (chapters) of the Qur'an. In 112:1-4, Allah commands the prophet: "Say (Muhammad), He is Allah, the One! Allah the eternally Besought of all! He begetteth not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable to Him." The belief in the Unity of Allah requires the rejection of Trinity and divinity of Jesus, as many Suras of the Qur'an command (4:171-172; 19:88-93).

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The belief in Allah and His Unity requires also a belief in "His Most Beautiful Names" or Attributes (17: 110). The Most Beautiful Names of Allah are ninety-nine and present in the Qur'an. They include the following: Able, Absolute, Answerer, Aware, Beneficent, Benign, Bestower, Blameless, Bountiful, Clement, Compassionate, Compeller, Creator, Deliverer, Disposer, Embracing, Eternal, Ever-lasting, Refuge, Evident, Exalted, Exalter, Faithful, Fashioner, First, Forgiver, Gatherer, Generous, Gentle, Giver, Glorious, God, Gracious, Grateful, Great, Guardian, Guide, He, Hearing, High, Holy, Honorable, Informed, Inheritor, Inward, Irresistible, Judge, Kind, King, Knower, Last, Laudable, Light, Living, Lord, Loving, Majestic, Master of the Kingdom, Merciful, Mighty, Omnipotent, One, Originator, Outward, Overseer, Pardoner, Peaceable, Powerful, Praiseworthy, Preserver, Protector, Provider, Quickener, Reckoner, Sagacious, Seeing, Shaper, Splendid, Strong, Sublime, Subtle or Subtile, Sufficient, Superb, Supreme, Sure, Tender, Thankful, True, Trustee, One who Turns, Watcher, Wise, and Witness. When one refers to any of Allah's attributes, one must use the definite article "The" with the attribute. The attributes of God can help one understand Islamic issues in English and Byron's traditions.

Prayers, invocations and supplications establish contact with God. Common expressions a Muslim uses in different situations include "Allah Akbar," "God is

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Great;" "La ilaha illa Allah," "There is no God but God;" "Insha'allah," "God willing" or "if God chooses;" "Subhan Allah," "I extol the holiness of Allah;" "Ma Sha'a Allah," "All glory is due to Allah;" "Al-Hamdu lillah," "All praises are due to Allah alone;" and "Inna Lillah wa inna ilaihi rajiun," "Surely we belong to Allah and we surely to Him shall return."

There are at least two reasons for such calls. Calling upon God is a duty enjoined in the Qur'an. God asks the believers to call upon Him: "Call upon God, or call upon the Beneficent" (17:110), and "Show us the straight way" (1:5-6). The Muslim also calls upon God because he believes in Allah and his Attributes. Allah relates that Prophet Abraham says, "Praise be to Him, who hath granted unto me in old age Isma'il and Isaac: for truly my Lord, is He, the Hearer of Prayer" (14:39).

Oath is another form of Allah-related practices. A Muslim may swear by Allah or His Attributes in certain situations--when testifying in a court of law, doing good, or making peace among people (2:224). However, it is illegal to make deceptive oaths in the name of Allah. If one does, he must expiate his oath (5:89).

English Tradition

English writers' attitudes toward Muslim beliefs in God (and use of Islamic belief) are unsympathetic, sympathetic, or at times a combination of both.

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Those who are primarily unsympathetic are writers of the Middle Ages. Their information about Islam and Allah was distorted, blasphemous, and entirely false. Generally they refused to believe that Islam is the religion of God. They described Islam as a false religion and imposture, and Muslims as idolaters worshipping idols and false gods, as Smith's, Chew's, Hitti's, and Said's studies indicate.

English writers who wrote sympathetically on the Muslim belief in God are Montagu, Sale and Gibbon. Sale's translation of the Qur'an and his Preliminary Discourse present Islamic beliefs in a realistic context. Sale writes: "the most significant doctrine expressed in the Qur'an is the oneness of God and the oneness of true religion (Preliminary 63). Gibbon defends Islam as if he were a Muslim. He praises Muslims for their destruction of idolatry, images, icons; as well as for their invariable, constant, and unshakable beliefs in the unity of God, as opposed to the doctrine of Trinity and divinity of Jesus. Gibbon identifies the Muslims as the truest unitarians (Birth 32). He severely condemns the Latin scholar, Marraci, for making man after God's image. In his attack of Marraci, Gibbon strongly argues that God has no similitude, a position similar to the Muslim one. On the other hand, Montagu praises the Muslims as unitarians, and blames the Greek and Latin priests for falsifying Muslim beliefs in their writings about Islam (1: 8-9). In general, deists and

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unitarians are sympathizers with views held by the followers of Islam (Hitti, Islam 60).

In reference to Muslim calls upon Allah in English writing, there are two types of transcriptions, agreeable and disagreeable with Muslim tradition.

Some writers are not concerned about accuracy of form or meaning and, therefore, their transcriptions of the Muslim war cry appear to be sarcastic. Beckford's "lili-lies," "Lilaila," and "Hila hilaila" (225) and Shelley's "Allah--illa--Allah" and "Allah, Illah, Allah!" (Ellis 290) are inaccurate in form and confuse the meaning of the Islamic tradition--"La ilaha illa Allah," "there is no God but Allah."

Of the English authors who use accurate Islamic transcriptions are Sale, Gibbon, Hobhouse (30) and Lane (3: 541). To Gibbon, the Muslim war cry is "Allah Ackbar, 'God is victorious,'" (Birth 85).

John Hobhouse reports that Muslims attribute fate entirely to God when they say "Inshallah," if God chooses. That is, the safety of a ship and passengers, in the Muslim belief, is up to God alone, not to skill in navigation (164). Hobhouse thinks this is not right (162-164).

Byron's Tradition

Lord Byron's writings contain several allusions to "Allah." Common ones refer to the Muslim belief in Allah,

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invocations to Allah, and oaths by Allah. Let us clarify Byron's opinion and use of Allah-related practices.

Byron's poetry and notes contain references to the Muslim belief in Allah and His unity. In several situations, the poet is highly sympathetic with the Muslims.

First, in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron's persona strongly states:

> There is no god but God!
> Lo! God is Great! (II 203)

The Muslim belief in God is firmly stressed, as is the belief in the oneness of God and the greatness of God, two attributes of Allah.

Second, Byron emphasizes the Turkish Muslims' powerful belief in God with noticeable admiration and comparison:

> . . . The Ottomans, with all their defects are not a people to be despised . . . . They are faithful to their sultan till he becomes unfit to govern, and devout to their God without an inquisition . . . (Byron, Complete 884)

In this situation, Byron enthusiastically hails the Muslims' belief over the Catholics' belief.

Third, the poet reiterates his appreciation for the Islamic belief in Allah and His unity in his frequent use of the phrase "Allah Hu!," which means "Allah is the One and the only God."

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> 'Allah Hu!' the concluding words of the Muezzin's call prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice, which is frequently the case, the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.
>
> (Byron, Complete 892)

He again compares the Muslim practice to the Christian practice, showing preference for the Muslim practice. With much admiration, he discusses "Allah Hu!" in his notes to Don Juan.

> All the sounds it pierceth, "Allah! Allah! Hu!" Allah Hu is properly the war cry of the Mussulmans and they dwell on the last syllable, which gives it a wild and peculiar effect. (914)

Fourth, the narrator in Don Juan eloquently describes the vibration of the eternal name of Allah. Muslim fighters, in the battle of Ismail against the Russians, energetically shout "Allah! Allah! Hu!"

> And one enormous shout of 'Allah!' rose.
> In the same moment, loud as even the roar
> Of war's most mortal engines, to their foes
> Hurling defiance: city, stream, and shore
> Resounded 'Allah!' and the clouds which close
> With thick'ning canopy the conflict oe'r,
> Vibrate to the Eternal name. Hark! through

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All sounds it pierceth, 'Allah! Allah! Hu!'

(VIII 754)

In this context, there is no doubt of a mighty praise to Allah and His attribute "The Eternal."

Fifth, Byron deeply appreciates the Muslim belief in Allah, His unity, and His attributes when he focuses on "Ayat-ul-Kursee" or "the Throne verse" of the Qur'an. Focusing on the belief in Allah and His unity and many of his attributes--the One, the Living, the Self-sustaining, the Eternal, and the Perfect, among others--the poet praises the verse as "the most sublime sentence" of the Qur'an. Muslims view this text as the most glorious in the Qur'an.

These illustrations reflect Byron's acknowledgement of Islamic belief in Allah.

Like his remarks on Allah, Byron also presents Muslim calls to Allah in numerous situations--in time of warfare, peace, and distress. Byron's attitudes and his characters' attitudes towards calls on Allah show no sympathy with this Islamic tradition. Furthermore, Byron's transcriptions of these calls disagree with Muslim tradition.

Byron's note to "The Bride of Abydos" is one example.

> Ollahs, 'Alla il Allah,' the 'Leilies,' as the Spanish poet calls them, the sound is Ollah; a cry of which the Turks, for a silent people, are somewhat profuse, particularly during the jereed, or the chase, but mostly in battle. Their

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> animation in the field, and gravity in the chamber, with their pipes and combolios, form an amusing contrast. (Byron, Complete 894)

In a second instance, the narrator in "The Corsair" uses the call "Alla il Alla!" (289)

Let us examine the form and meaning of the calls mentioned above. First, Byron's transcriptions of certain calls differ drastically from orthodox Muslim transcriptions. Byron's "Ollahs," "Alla il Alla," and "Leilies" certainly differ from the Islamic form "La ilaha illa Allah." Byron's forms are not acceptable to Muslims. "Alla il Allah" or "God but God" is not a true representation of "La Ilaha Illa Allah" or "There is no God but God." In the same way, "Leilies" does not convince a Muslim that it stands for "La Ilaha Illa Allah." "Ollahs," a plural of "Allah" or "La Ilaha Illa Allah" in Byron's language does not represent the Muslim transcription. Byron's forms sound odd in comparison to the Islamic tradition.

Second, Byron's message does not sound Islamic. His contrast between the Turkish Muslims' invocation of Allah in wartime and their lack of invocation of Allah in peacetime suggests a depiction of Muslim hypocrisy. Byron's contrast suggests that Muslims call upon Allah in time of war to seek help, but they refrain from this devotional practice in time of peace, or after danger has passed. However, according to orthodox Muslim tradition, Muslims call upon Allah in all

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circumstances and times. This practice is simply an application of the Islamic creed. Byron's forms of calls and attitude behind them are not acceptable by Muslim teachings.

The following call situations reflect a lack of sympathy with the Muslim tradition. The persona's message is clear: Muslim calls to Allah are useless and hypocritical.

First, Sultan Seyd's call is useless. There is confrontation between the Greek corsair and the Ottoman Sultan. Seyd calls upon Allah for help, shouting "Allah il alla" ("The Corsair" 289). However, this call does not help him. No sooner does he call to Allah, than he is overpowered by the corsair. He is eventually killed, his imperial palace destroyed, and his mosque burned.

Secondly, Sultan Hassan's calls are useless, too. Involved in a routine activity, Hassan reaches a place to rest. Feeling secure from the danger of the giaours, Greek outlaws against the Ottoman state, Hassan and his company sit in a pine grove to rest and thank Allah for safety:

'Bismillah! now the peril's past; . . . . (257)

However, no sooner does he say "Allah," than he hears the giaour's carbine shot, feeling the danger of his enemy.

During the confrontation with the giaour, Hassan calls to Allah to aid him in his battle against the "infidel," who is taking revenge on Hassan for Hassan's assassination of his wife Leila for her infidelity with the Giaour, or, according to Gleckner, for Hassan's occupation of Greece.

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Byron's narrator informs us that Hassan's plea for aid from Allah against the Giaour goes unanswered. When the Giaour is in pursuit of Hassan to avenge the death of Lelia, a symbol of Greece, Hassan,

> . . . called on Alla, but the word
> Arose unheeded or unheard.

This is the point when the Giaour addresses Hassan as a "Paynim fool" (258). As Hassan lay shot and dying,

> One cry to Mahomet for aid,
> One prayer to Alla all he made. (262)

Both his cries go unheeded.

In another situation, Byron's Muslim character, Selim doesn't care about calls to Allah. Selim, a rebel against Sultan Giaffir, refuses to participate in the "jareed," or mimic war with all its tradition of invocations to Allah. Instead, he prefers hanging around Zuleika, enjoying incestuous love, drinking the forbidden wine, and plotting against the sultan. So he does not hear "their Ollahs wild and loud" ("The Bride of Abydos" 267). Selim is portrayed as a Muslim indifferent to his faith.

Ship distress calls, as well, are useless. A Turkish warship, in which the poet was sailing into the Levant with Hobhouse and the rest of his company, is confronted with a violent sea and the "ignorance of a Turkish captain." All passengers, except the poet, call to God for assistance.

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> Two days ago I was nearly lost in a Turkish ship of war, owing to the ignorance of the captain and the crew, though the storm was not violent. Fletcher yelled after his wife, the Greeks called on all the saints, the Mussulmans on Alla; the captain burst into tears and ran below deck, telling us to call on God; the sails were split, the mainyard shivered, the wind blowing fresh, the night setting in, and all our chance was to make Corfu, which is in the possession of the French . . . I did what I could to console Fletcher, but finding him incorrigible, I wrapped myself up in my Albanian Capote (immense cloak), and lay down on deck, to wait for the worst. I have learnt to philosophise in my travels; and if I have not, complaint was useless. (Byron, Works 1: 253-254)

As it turned out, the wind lessened and the ship ended up on the coast of Sulli.

Byron's account mocks Muslims and Christians who call to God. The captain bursts into tears and runs below deck, telling others to call on Allah. The Greeks call on their saints, while the Turks to Allah to save them from drowning. Fletcher calls on his wife instead of God, while Byron does all he can to console his servant. The poet, in a sharp contrast, wraps himself in an Albanian "Capote, an immense coat" and lies down on deck, crying out to no one.

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In the next situation, the focus is on war cries during the Siege of Corinth, in Greece, between the Turks and the Greeks. The situation reflects no sympathy for Muslim war calls to Allah. Consider the vizier's or the Muslim leader's advice to his soldiers.

> Leave not in Corinth a living one--
> A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
> A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
> God and the prophet--Alla Hu!
> Up to the skies with that wild halloo!
>
> ("The Siege of Corinth" 326)

Byron describes the vizier as promising the dearest wish to the one who downs the red cross in the battle at Corinth. The message behind this situation goes against humane Islamic manners of war and religious toleration.

The final point to consider in Byron's treatment of Allah-related practices is Muslim oaths by Byron's Muslim characters. In his works, their oaths are hypocritical and do not correspond with the orthodox Muslim traditions on oaths.

The first instance occurs in "The Bride of Abydos" when Zuleika makes a hypocritical oath. She swears by Allah in vain, in a pre-Islamic manner, over her incestuous relationship with her half-brother Selim. To Selim, Zuleika says,

> For, by Alla! sure thy lips are flame:
> What fever in thy veins is flushing?

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> My own have nearly caught the same
> . . . . (268)

In reality, she knows the Qur'an severely condemns false oaths (Ali 1784). She must know that incest is a crime against Allah and humanity. In this situation, Byron uses dramatic irony. Zuleika acts as if nobody knows of her incest, while the audience is aware of it.

In the second case of oaths by Allah, Byron again uses irony. In an outward appearance, a dervish of piety, penance and simplicity swears falsely by Allah that he was held captive in the "pirates' nest" (288). With pale cheeks from penance, not fear, the Dervish

> Vow'd to his God--his sable locks he
> wore, ... ("The Corsair" 287).

He persuades Sultan Seyd that his information about the pirates is true, when he is actually lying. He is not a dervish, but Conrad, a Christian corsair who is leader of the pirates in disguise. He uses an oath by Allah and Islam as a cloak for his hypocrisy. Conrad achieves his objective, for the Pasha naively believes him. Then, suddenly the dervish shows his true identity; he and his men set the sultan's palace, haram, and mosque on fire. They also free the slaves, and Seyd's slave wife kills her husband.

The third situation involving a Muslim character's oath to Allah is ironic as well. Sultan Seyd is portrayed as a hypocrite. In appearance, Seyd swears falsely by Allah to

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victor over the pirates and seize their riches. At the feast, the night before the planned battle, he has "Sworn by Allah and his sword" to drag home the corsairs before he even meets them ("The Corsair" 286). Somewhat ironically, Seyd achieves defeat instead of victory. The corsair and his men take the sultan and his force by surprise. Damage to Seyd's palace and ships, and injury to his people is great. The sultan's wife kills her husband and takes off with the Corsair, a Byronic hero.

In the fourth situation of an oath to Allah, Byron's irony falls on the fisherman's hypocrisy. A Muslim fisherman swears by Allah against Muhammad in order to jest or mock the prophet. He contends that if Muhammad said Lelia has no soul, "By Alla! I would answer nay" ("The Giaour" 257). Byron is being satirical about Muhammad and Islamic creed. He insinuates that Muslims do not accept everything Muhammad said. As well, what the fisherman swears against is contrary to Islamic belief. Yet, this treatment is not surprising, since many Westerners of Byron's time and before also inaccurately thought that Muslims believed women had no souls.

How do these characters' oaths clash with the Islamic tradition? First, oaths in Allah's name, in wrongdoings, are unacceptable under Islam. Second, Byron's swearing characters--Zuleika, the dervish, Sultan Seyd, and the fisherman--do not represent orthodox Islamic personalities.

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It is hard to believe that an orthodox Muslim woman would commit incest with her brother and swear by Allah about it. The poet's allusion may even reflect his own incestuous relationship with his half-sister Augusta. In the same way, no sincere Muslim dervish would be like Byron's corsair, deceiving others in the name of Allah. Even the mere impersonation of Muslim personalities is unlawful in Islam. As for the sultan, he is unreal. The Sultan or Caliph in Islam is appointed to apply the Qur'anic law in the Islamic state. If he becomes unfit, he is to step down. Additionally, it is hard to imagine that a naive fisherman believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment, and swears that Muhammad's creed is wrong or jest upon the prophet of Allah. These characters and their oaths to Allah disagree with the orthodox teachings of Islam.

Evaluation and Understanding

Let us now evaluate and understand Byron's tradition of Allah-related practices. Since we have just identified Byron's sympathetic views of the Islamic belief in Allah, His unity, and some of His attributes, let us discuss major reasons behind the poet's sympathy. His agreeable views can certainly be attributed to his deistic beliefs, which correspond in some ways to orthodox Muslim belief. First, let us put his deism in perspective, and then closely scrutinize Byron's detailed deistic views on the belief in God, His unity, and His attributes.

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Fairchild argues that critics charge Byron with atheism, saying he was an "unbeliever" (429), and that "for the incomprehensible mysteries of religion . . . his mind floated in doubts . . ." (346). Their grounds for the accusation stem from Byron's close relationship with the renowned atheist Charles Skinner Mathews (398). Yet, Byron denies the charge firmly. In a conversation with Dr. James Kennedy, he said, "Lord Calthrope . . . was the first who called me an atheist when we were at school at Harrow, for which I gave him as good a drubbing as ever he got in his life" (qtd. in Kennedy 49; Galt 336). The poet's remark in a letter to his mother shows his rejection of atheism: "I am no 'good soul,' and not an atheist, but an English gentleman . . ." (Works 1: 259). Additionally, in his April 16, 1807 letter to Edward Noel Long, Byron frankly confesses his belief in deism. ". . . I have lived a Deist, What I shall die I know not--however come what may, 'ridens moriar' . . . ." (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115).

Despite critics' charges, Byron genuinely expresses belief in God. "I believe doubtless in God, and should be happy to be convinced of much more" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 408). He also respects and loves God: "I reverence and love my God" (Byron, Critical 1: 168). In another reference, the persona states his obedience to God: "I'll never submission to my God refuse" (Byron, Works 1:

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6). Moreover, Byron desires his daughter to believe in God, too (Marchand, Byron's Letters 6: 32).

Byron acquires his knowledge of God through God's natural revelation or natural religion, rather than through revealed religions.

Let us consider several references that illustrate this point. To Pietro Gamba the poet poses this question: "How, raising our eyes to heaven, or directing them to the earth, can we doubt the existence of a God ?" (qtd. in Kennedy 204) That Byron's natural speculations lead him to God is prevalent in his works. In Childe Harold's Pilgrimage the persona admits that nature is "the wonder-works of God," and speculation over nature is the means to the knowledge of God (III x). Then, the poet concludes, "Metaphysics," and "Nature," "open a vast field" of speculation about God (Medwin 77). The mountains and stars teach Byron about the "Spirit of the Universe" (Works 4: 41). More specifically, the poet contends that God's natural temple is the earth, ocean and heavens (Works 3: 224-228). Byron describes his altars of worship being the mountains, ocean, earth, air and stars in "Ave Maria" (III cii-ciii). Finally, the poet praises the natural world God created, for it is gentle and unspoiled.

> Dear Nature is the kindest mother still:
>
> . . .
>
> Oh! She is fairest in her features wild,

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Where nothing polished dares pollute her path:
. . . . (Childe Harold's Pilgrimage II xxxvii)

Part of Byron's knowledge of God is through nature, while another part of his knowledge of God is through instinct. The poet writes, "Man is born passionate of body, but with an innate thought and secret tendency to the love of God in his Mainspring of Mind" (qtd. in Byronic Thoughts 31). This understanding of God agrees with Muslim perceptions. According to Islam, monotheism is instinctive, and for this reason Islam is the religion of "Fitrah" or instinct.

Another major creed in natural revelation which Byron subscribes to is knowing God through reason. Relying on reason, Byron says he ". . . will accept no creed (religion) which cannot be 'proved . . . '" (qtd. in Fairchild 440). He implies that he will only accept what he can prove through reason. Additionally, the poet writes: "It is useless to tell men not to reason but to believe. You might as well tell a man not to wake but sleep . . ." (qtd. in Byronic Thoughts 51). Furthermore, he contends that he relies on reason, instead of religion or faith (Byronic Thoughts 31).

Deists believe there is an obligation for Divine worship and ethical conduct (Harrison 452). Personal worship of God is desired over organized, ritualistic prayers. Byron indicates that he worships God by observing and

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appreciating His creation. Newton and Locke believed the best way to worship God was by living a moral life. Deists believe in moral laws of the universe. They also think the Bible should be studied only for its moral value. Byron argues that men are born with ethics, like the instinct to know God. For this reason, God does not have to teach men morals (McGann 249). Furthermore, God is not against man's own natural morals (Moore, Life 696). Byron likes the morals of natural religion. "I hold virtue, in general, or the virtues severally, to be only in the disposition, each a feeling, not a principle" (qtd. in Byronic Thoughts 14). Byron also believes Jesus was a good moralist and philosopher. He prefers and feels much more comfortable with natural religion, with its stress on morals, than with revealed religions.

On the other hand, Byron believes in no revealed books. He rejects the "Mosaical speculations on the origin of the world" (Medwin 77). His disbelief in revealed religion, however, does not influence his belief in God:

> If I do not at present place implicit faith in tradition and revelation of any human creed, I hope it is not from want of reverence for the Creator but the created.
>
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 408)

Moreover, Byron's works condone belief in the unity of God. Byron states,

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> . . . the First Principle and Cause of all the primordial Seat of Power, the energic source of the Universe a single reigning deity.
>
> (McGann 251)

Like the Muslims, this persona believes in the unity of God.

Linked to the poet's belief in God's unity is his rejection of the Trinity. To support this understanding, Byron denies Jesus as the son of God, contending that neither does God beget, nor is he begotten. The poet believes it is a degradation to God to ascribe to Him the begetting of children (Collins 61). Byron explains to Hodgson,

> You degrade the Creator, in the first place, by making Him a begetter of children; and in the next you convert Him into a tyrant over an immaculate and injured Being, who is sent into existence to suffer death for the benefit of some millions of scoundrels, who, after all, seem as likely to be damned as ever . . . . Besides I trust God is not a Jew, but the God of all mankind; and as you allow that a virtuous Gentile may be saved. You do away with the necessity of being a Jew or a Christian.
>
> (Collins 61; Byron's Letters 2: 29)

Like Muslims, he rejects the Trinity and Jesus as the son of God. While the Qur'an expresses the idea of God

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having a son as "monstrous," Byron says it is "degrading." In one passage from Don Juan, the persona mocks the idea of the trinity. One should wish

> . . . the three were four,
>
> On purpose to believe so much the more.
>
> (XI v-vi 789)

The poet denies vehemently Jesus being God Himself or His son. He argues, "God is not a Jew, but the God of all Mankind . . . (Byron's Letters 2: 29, 52). Tied to this view is deism, which denies belief in any elect people, such as Israel or the church (Harrison 162). Byron goes on to reject God as a begetter of children (Byron's Letters 2: 29). Therefore, he does not consider Jesus God's son; and he denies the idea of savior, salvation and atonement. Byron does not believe that Jesus sacrificed himself for sinners; a son of God sacrificing himself for the guilt of all men "no more does away with man's guilt than a schoolboy's volunteering to be flogged for another . . . " (Collins 60). Additional proof of the poet's denial of Jesus as a savior is his refusal to take the sacrament (Byron's Letters 1: 173). Byron mocks Catholics who "swallow their deity . . . in transubstantiation . . .," and find him easy to digest (qtd. in Byronic Thoughts 29). Another evidence to support the poet's rejection of Jesus as God's son appears in Don Juan.

> The Virgin-Mother of the God-born Child

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> With her son in her blessed arms, . . .
> This may be superstition, weak or wild . . . .
> (XIII lxi 815-816)

He argues that Jesus and the Virgin Mary are superstition. Byron similarly calls these beliefs "mythos."

Rather than being God Himself or God's son, the poet and other deists think Jesus is just a man. Gibbon and Voltaire, both of whom accept deistic views, reject the Trinity. They accept Jesus as a ". . . mere man, divine by the office rather than by nature . . . ." Jesus was a man quite aware of the power and presence of God. The Church misunderstood and distorted the original simplicity of Jesus, calling him the son of God (Juergensmeyer, vol. 10). To Byron, Jesus is ". . . that exemplum of the best man . . . ." (McGann 251). Additionally, the poet praises Jesus for his "moral precepts," placing him next to Socrates as man of ethics (Moore, Life 696).

Again, since he rejects revelation, why does he have to accept prophethood? Consequently, Byron denies Jesus as a messenger of God sent to Judea. "It is a little hard to send a man preaching to Judea and leave the rest of the world" (qtd. in Perkins 928). The poet concludes, "The rest is with God, who assuredly, had He come or sent, would have made Himself manifest to nations, and intelligible to all" (qtd. in Perkins 927-928).

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Aligned with Byron's belief in God and His unity is his belief in certain attributes of God. Like Muslims, Byron believes God is "The First Cause," "The Creator," "and The Eternal." The poet explains to Hodgson that the Great First Cause was "the least understood by the Church," and the former "must do what is most proper" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 29). Concerning God as creator, he writes:

> Things must have had a beginning, and what matters when and how? . . . Creation must have had an Origin and a Creator; for a Creator is a more natural imagination than a fortuitous concourse of atoms. (qtd. in Byron, Byronic Thoughts 15)

Allah as the creator of all is stressed in "Ave Maria."

> . . . the mountains, and the ocean,
> Earth, air, stars,--all that springs from the
> great Whole
> Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.
> (III cii-civ)

Also, in a letter to Gamba Byron writes, "'Say what they will, mystery for mystery, I still find of the Creation the most reasonable of any'" (Fairchild 437). Yet, while accepting God as the Creator, the poet rejects the Mosaic Chronology about the creation of the world (he believes the world to be many times older than the Mosaic Chronology, a view that "knocks up Adam and Eve and the Apple and Serpent" (Byron, Byronic Thoughts 15; McGann 249). As well, Byron

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believes in the "eternity of God" (Don Juan VIII 754). Marchand views the previous text as praise of Allah.

Byron still alludes to more Islamic attributes of God: "The One" and "The Single," "The Most High" and "The Most Great," "The Powerful," "The Mighty," and "The Truth." As already stated, Byron speaks of the unity of God, identifying Him as a "single reigning Deity" (McGann 251). "The Most High" and "The Most Great" are alluded to when the poet calls God the "Supreme Being" and the "Omnipotent." He describes man as ". . . an object of benevolent interest to the Supreme Being" (qtd. in Elwin 190). Similarly, God is spoken of as "Thy dread Omnipotence" in "The Prayer of Nature" (Byron, Works 3: 224-228). "Supreme" addresses God as the highest and greatest, while "omnipotent" suggests supreme and all powerful. Next, Byron refers to God as "The Almighty" in a conversation with James Kennedy. He criticizes the Catholics for placing ". . . Jesus above the Almighty" (Kennedy 529; McGann 250). Finally, the poet writes that "The Truth" is the "prime attribute" of God (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173).

However, in spite of Byron's belief in God, His unity, and many of His attributes, there are attributes of God which the poet rejects. Concerning these, he disagrees with Islam, as well as Christianity and Judaism. He does not believe in God "The Resurrector," "The Punisher," and "The Rewarder" (McGann 247-250; Collins 60-62; Perkins 927-928).

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The poet also denies Resurrection. To him, "Material resurrection" is "absurd" because its purpose is punishment (Byron, Byronic Thoughts 51). He contends the next life should be a sleep for the weary.

Then, Byron emphatically rejects the doctrine of damnation, hell, and punishment. He argues that God does not punish men in another life. Byron reiterates this view in a letter to Hodgson: "God never made anything to be tortured in another life" (Letter to Hodgson). He repeats that God who punishes in this life does not punish in the next.

In a deistic manner, the poet tries to reason why God does not punish in a deistic manner. He says, "And who will believe God will damn men for what they were never taught?" (qtd. in Perkins 928)

Byron denies that God threatens to send men to hell. God "menaces" men by sending them to Hell. He gives a deistic reason:

> . . . all punishment, which is to revenge rather than correct, must be morally wrong. And when the World is at end, what moral or warning purpose can eternal tortures answer?
>
> (qtd. in Byronic Thoughts 51)

Moreover, the Biblical God who punishes people is antagonized. In "Cain," Cain criticizes God's punishment of Adam.

> Who didst permit the Serpent

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> to creep in,
> And drive my father
> from paradise? (I i 18-20)

Byron rejects God as a punisher because he does not accept original sin and hell whatsoever. Cain argues that he should not be subject to death because his parents erred.

> . . . What is that
> to us? They sinned, then let me die!
> (III i 75-76)

Fairchild points out that Byron was always in conflict with his belief in man's sinful nature and man's good nature. His strong position against God as a punisher and revenger may also be based on personal sentiments (394).

Also, the poet does not believe that God rewards in the life to come or resurrects the dead. Death to Byron is an eternal sleep (Perkins 928). For more details see Chapter Six.

Byron also rejects God's attribute of revelation. In one of his letters, he clarifies that he believes in God, but not in the "revelation of any human creed" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 408). In "Cain," the main character denies the God of revelation (I i 18-20). Moreover, Byron argues that if the Church damns him for not believing in revealed religion, he will seek the mercy of God (Byron's Letters 2: 29). He contends God "could have made His will

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known without books." Furthermore, he writes: "I abhor books of religion, though I reverence and love my God, . . ." (qtd. in Moore, Life 84). Byron believes that God does not reveal Himself through prophets because he denies the mission of Moses, Jesus (McGann 251), and Muhammad. As well, the poet does not believe in miracles (Galt 336). Byron does not think God sent messengers to reveal Himself to man (Perkins 927-928).

Deism is behind Byron's rejection of certain attributes of God. As a deist, Byron rejects God's attribute of reward, punishment, and revelation, among others.

Besides Byron's own deistic views being responsible for his acceptance of Muslim belief in God and His unity, the deistic and unitarian tradition in English and Western literatures is an influential factor on Byron's deistic position. The poet's view on the Muslim belief in God's unity is similar to that of Gibbon, Voltaire, Goethe, Carlyle, Montagu, and other major romantic writers. Byron's monotheistic views are also similar to unitarian's beliefs, including Sale's. Deism, Socinianism, unitarianism, universalism, and other monotheistic philosophies in Byron's world, were sympathetic with Muslim belief in God and the Unity of God, says Hitti in Islam and the West, and Byron has a place in this monotheistic tradition.

Byron is unsympathetic with the faith calls discussed above. The calls are mistranscribed. The "Turks'" calls

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are hypocritical. Calls made by Seyd and Hassan are not answered. Selim does not care about faith calls. The Muslim ship captain's call, the Muslim passengers' calls, and the Christian passengers' calls are laughed at and go unanswered. The vizier and Muslim fighters calls and actions are misrepresented.

Let us now consider several factors behind Byron's disagreement and unsympathetic attitude towards Muslim faith-invocations.

Deism is certainly one reason behind Byron's disagreement with Islam. Deists believe God is "a Divine Creator, who did not intervene in the world he had created" (Brandon 228; Murray et al. 152). Information in Baker's Dictionary of Theology confirms that deists deny any direct intervention in the natural order by God.

In sharp contrast, orthodox Muslims believe in all of the 99 attributes of God. Muslims believe God hears, sees, acts, and interferes with the universe, life, and creatures. God, in the Muslim view, calls upon believers to praise His name and invoke his help always, and He answers the callers who believe in Him.

Byron, on the other hand, as a deist, does not believe in God's attributes or involvement and interference with people's lives. He considers calls to God useless, false, or hypocritical. Deism considers man, not God, the master

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of his destiny. For this reason, Byron and his writings present Muslim and Christian calls to God as useless.

Fairchild writes that Byron never turned to God for assistance. He "was never able to entrust the fragments of his being" (395). To Byron, God does not involve Himself with man. "Man acts upon himself and others, or upon multitudes," and God has no influence on the universe (qtd. in Byronic Thoughts 30).

Byron feels man is responsible for what happens to him in this life. In his "Epistle to Augusta," he states,

> The fault is mine; . . . .
> I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
> The careful pilot of my proper woe (Works 4: 58)

Byron's wife criticizes him for thinking God does not involve Himself with man. She says, "In regard to the despicable opinion you hold of man--true, we are atoms in the universal scale, but is an atom nothing or worthless to the Infinite Being?" (qtd. in Elwin 190)

He even satirizes Christians turning to God on their sickbeds (Trueblood 78). In Don Juan, the persona mocks Christian calls. The persona states when he is sick,

> . . . as I suffer from the shocks
> of illness, I grow much more orthodox.
> (Don Juan XI v-vi 789)

In "Manfred" the character refuses to call for God's help. He surely believes man alone is the master of his destiny.

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Byron's transcriptions of calls to Allah are similar to those of some English authors, who also depart from the Islamic transcriptions. Bedwell, Herbert, Beckford, Cervantes, and Shelley are examples. Byron uses "Leilies" for "la ilah illa Allah," and Beckford does the same; both rely on Cervantes. The poet's "Alla il Alla" is exactly like Shelley's.

On the other hand, Byron's version of Muslim war cries clashes with the correct forms employed by Gibbon, Sale, Hobhouse, and Lane. The poet deviates from both Muslim usage and some English usage. Overall, he appears to mock the callers but not the called-upon.

In the Middle Ages, Christian clerics, due to ignorance of Islam, wrongfully accused Islam of being a false religion and Muhammad of being an impostor or false god. Such ideology influenced English writers since then, including Byron. When God does not respond to Muslim calls, there is a possibility that reference is made to medieval thinking that God does not respond to false believers. Hassan's call has such references. The Giaour calls Hassan "Paynim fool" and "heathen," and Hassan calls on "Mahomet." All of these references are typical of medieval English authors, and incorrect allusions to Islam, according to Chew, Smith, Daniel, and Hitti. In another poem on the fall of Muslim Spain, Byron alludes to such medieval thoughts. Here Muslims are made to worship stars. The poet sticks to the Middle

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Ages' false beliefs about Islam, which medieval polemicists circulated.

The description of the ship in distress is like the Biblical account of Jonah on board a ship before being swallowed by a whale. Let us take a close look at the biblical ship incident and consider the similarities.

> And the Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up. Then the sailors became afraid, and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship onto the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone below in the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep. So the captain approached him and said, 'How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish.'
>
> (Jonah 1:4-6)

Both situations look alike. The captain orders Jonah to call on his God to save the ship and passengers, and Jonah goes below to lay down and falls asleep. Likewise, the Muslim captain calls on Allah to save his ship and passengers, but Byron wrapped himself in a cloak and laid down on deck. Did Byron actually take Jonah's story and build on it to create a fictional account to stand as his own personal experience? If we conclude that his ship distress story is

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taken from the Old Testament story, one might understand that Byron has modified a Biblical story to make a point.

Byron's disagreeable attitude towards Muslim faith-calls, especially the war cries, is also somewhat due to panhellenism. Byron maintained a special love for Greece all of his life, and he died in Greece fighting the Muslims to liberate the country from their occupation. The personages or callers represent Muslim sultans or occupiers of Greece. Their calls to Allah for help against the Greek warriors, the giaours and corsairs, do not receive a response from God. Those Greek fighter manage to kill the sultans and destroy their palaces. There is a pattern in Byron's Turkish verse tales--war against the Muslims and victory for the Greeks--most of the time. Byron's tales serve the Greek cause against the Muslim Turks. His corsairs and giaours are Byronic heroes according to the majority of Byron's critics. Byron himself is a freedom fighter, as well as a social and religious rebel.

In taking such a stand, Byron also corresponds to the English tradition on Greece. Hobhouse, Rycaut and Shelley, like Byron, are with the Greeks against the Muslims. Rycaut and Shelley directly call for the destruction of Muslim power, as does Byron. Politically, England was behind the liberation of Greece.

The poet's oath allusions may have been influenced by the English tradition. One character in Lane's edition of

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the Arabian Nights swears by the Qur'an. The dervise who swears by Allah is similar to Morier's dervise and his goal. Hajji Baba of Isphan, "As seen through the eyes of trickster, Islam is only a cloak of hypocrisy." Hajji Baba turns into a "dervise," humble and ignorant to reach his goal. His friend the dervise who encouraged him to be a dervise said to him, "you can be a Prophet not by learning but by impudence" (Smith 164-165). Byron creates a dervise who uses the same technique of hypocrisy to reach his goal. So in the same way of Morier, Byron portrays Islam as a cloak of hypocrisy. The two dervises are comparable, both in form and purpose.

Deism also shapes Byron's portrayal of oaths. The poet may be showing that revealed religion is hypocritical and false by presenting characters making inappropriate oaths to God. The characters are weak believers who swear by God for different reasons: Zuleika on her passion for Selim, the Corsair on being held captive by pirates, Seyd on overtaking the corsair. Most are involved in evil deeds, so they take God's name in vain as well. Or, it could be that Byron's deistic belief does not acknowledge oaths by God since he believes in the first place that God does not interfere with people.

Byron's treatment of Islamic calls help one to understand the poet's view of God, revealed religions, and reaction to Muslims' Allah-related practices. In the use of

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calls, oaths and other Allah-related practices, one finds examples of Byron's deism and panhellenism. His deistic beliefs are quite powerful. When Byron accepts Islamic views of God, it is because of deism. Numerous characters involved in Allah-related practices also convey many of Byron's deistic beliefs. In contrast, the influence of Christianity is very insignificant, since the poet criticizes Christianity very strongly. Byron successfully utilizes Islamic material on Allah to express his deism, satirize aspects of organized religion he rejects, and speak out in favor of panhellenism.

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CHAPTER III: ANGELS AND JINN

In addition to allusions to Allah, Byron also makes references to Muslim angels and jinn. General Islamic beliefs concerning these invisible beings provide a background to this chapter.

Islamic Tradition

The second article of Islamic faith is the belief in Allah's angels. A brief Islamic account of the nature and duties of the angels and jinns is helpful in understanding Byron's allusions.

According to the Qur'an, angels are different from men. They are immortal beings (7:20) who inhabit the heavens (17:95). Angels are pure spirits. As such, Gabriel is "the faithful spirit" (26:193-195), "Our spirit" (19:17), and "the Holy Spirit" (16:102). Angels, as described in 35:1, are "Messengers with wings, two, or three, or four (pairs). However, we need not suppose that angelic wings have muscles and feathers, like the wings of birds (Ali 1152).

Secondly, God endowed angels with life, but no sex, being created neither male or female. Despite this, the unbelievers, the Pagans, attributed sex to angels (17:40; 53:27-28; 37:150; and 43:19). However, the Muslims attribute no sex to the angels. It is an unpardonable sin to attribute sex to them (37:150; 53:27-28; 17:40).

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Next, angels can take on human form when appearing to men. This was true when Gabriel appeared to Muhammad (83: 5-18). Angels also appeared in human form to Abraham and Lot, as well as Maryam (19:17), and Isa or Jesus (2:90, 159), among other prophets.

Another characteristic of angels is that they do not eat. Two angels visited Abraham, but when he offered them food they abstained from eating and identified themselves as angels (51:24-28; 11:69-71).

Angels also have speech. Gabriel revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad in a clear Arabic tongue (53:5-18; 81:19, 25). The Qur'an has accounts of dialogues between Gabriel and Mary. Angels spoke with Abraham and Lot, as well as other prophets.

Additionally, angels have no free will, and are without emotions. Allah sanctified angels from the disturbance of anger and carnal desires.

Being servants of Allah, angels have certain duties to perform. As Suras 42:3, 2:34 and others point out, the essence of the angels' duty is to obey Allah, pray to Him, celebrate His Glory, and intercede for man. Angels are God's messengers. He chooses messengers from angels and from men (22:75). Allah sends them only for just cause (15:8). He sent angels to the prophets with His Word, His laws, and ordinances for mankind (16:2).

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A more significant responsibility of angels is to aid Allah's believers. Allah helped Muhammad with angels during his Flight from Mecca to Medina (9:40), in the Battles of Badr 8:12) and Hunain (9:25-26), and in the Siege of Medina (33:9).

Besides these general tasks of angels, special duties are assigned to certain ones. Gabriel is the chief of angels who brought messages to the prophets of Allah (26: 192-195). Mikail is the angel who provides sustenance to the world (2:97-98). Israfil is the angel who will sound the trumpet the Last Day (36:51).

Another important angel is Izrael, the angel of death. "It is God that takes the souls (of men) at death . . ." (39:42). "At length, when death approaches one of you, Our angels take his soul, and they never fail in their duty" (6:61).

There are two angels called Munkir and Nakir, or the inquisitors of the dead in their graves. They punish the unbelievers and the hypocrites. Allah says: "But how (will it be) when the angels take their souls at death, and smite their faces and their backs" (47:27). But the righteous will be safe from torture.

> . . . . 'Those whose lives the angels take in a state of purity, saying (to them), 'Peace be upon you; enter ye the Garden, because of (the good) which ye did (in the world).' (16:32)

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Sura 4:97 includes more questioning and forecasting of what will become of evil souls.

The traditions of Muhammad offer detailed descriptions of the inquisition of the dead in their graves by Munkir and Nakir. The believer will be complimented for his faith, and insured a place in paradise; whereas, the unbeliever will be tormented to the point that his ribs are pressed and ". . . clasped together and he would not be relieved of the torment till Allah would resurrect him from his resting place" (Al-Tabrizi 1: 86).

Malik, the keeper of Hell (43:77), is another Islamic angel. He is assisted by 19 angels called "Zabaniyah" (40:49). There also exist guardian and recording angels over the humans (86:4; 50:17-18). As well, there is a multitude of angels who guard the walls of heaven against the listening of the jinn and demons (37:8; 38:69). Eight angels, moreover, will support the throne of Allah on the Day of Judgment (69:17).

Another issue is the concept of fallen angels. The theory of fallen angels is not accepted in Muslim theology (Ali 25). There are no corrupt or evil angels under Islam. Iblis, otherwise known as Shaitan or Satan, is a jinn, not an angel (18:50), who disobeyed Allah by refusing to bow down to Adam.

Furthermore, Harut and Marut are not angels; they were simply good men of knowledge, science (or wisdom), and power

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(2:102). This story is different in the Jewish tradition, which tells ". . . of two angels who asked God's permission to come down to earth but succumbed to temptation" (Ali 45). Stories of corrupt angels sent down for punishment were accepted by Christians (Ali 45), but not by the Muslims.

A jinn, in distinction from an angel, is simply a spirit or invisible or hidden force (Ali 319). In many passages of the Qur'an, jinn and men are spoken of, often together. In 55:14-15, God states that He "created man from sounding clay like unto pottery, and the Jinns from fire free of smoke" (55:14, 15). In folklore stories and romances like the Arabian Nights jinn are personified in fantastic forms, which is not Qur'anic (Ali 319).

Iblis (Shaitan or Satan) is chief of the evil jinn. Satan and his progeny are also viewed as enemies of man (18:50). Iblis became chief of the jinn when he rebelled against Allah's command to bow to Adam (2:34-36; 7:11-18; 17:61-65; 18:50). Iblis' reason for not obeying Allah was because Adam's status was higher: Allah taught Adam the nature of things and raised him above the angels. Allah places Iblis in the lowest part of hell. Muslims are to seek refuge with Allah from the wicked Satan (22:52-53).

The ifrit is one species of jinn mentioned in the Qur'an in the service of Solomon (34:12-13). "And of the evil ones, were some who dived for him, and did other work besides; and it was We who guarded them" (21:82). In Sura

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27:39 an Ifrit offered to bring Solomon the Queen of Sheba's "magnificent throne" (27:39).

A group of Christians or the People of the Book, however, rejected these Qur'anic teachings about Solomon and jinn (2:101-102).

English Tradition

Now we turn to the English treatment of the topic. Sale emphasizes the importance of Muslim belief in God's angels.

> The existence of angels and their purity are absolutely required to be believed in the Koran; and he is reckoned an infidel who denies there are such beings, or hates any of them, or asserts any distinction of sexes among them. (Preliminary 71)

If they do not believe in angels, they are not considered Muslims.

He informatively discusses the qualities of Muslim angels. Sale describes Muslim angels as possessing pure, "subtil" bodies which are actually created from fire. According to Muslim tradition, angels are created of light. They do not have physical desires such as eating, drinking, or producing offspring. Angels do, however, hold offices and perform duties: adoring Allah, singing praises to Allah, recording the actions of men, and interceding for mankind (Preliminary 71).

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Yet, Sale is misinformative in his reference to the angels' creation from fire; the angels are not referred to in the Qur'an as being made of fire, and they are different from the jinn because of their immortality.

English writers such as Thevenot, Sale, Beckford, Southey, Moore, and Lane speak of particular angels. The first of those are the four archangels.

Sale informs us briefly about the four well-known Muslim angels--Gabriel, angel of revelations; Michael, "friend and protector of the Jews;" Israfil, the sounder of the resurrection trumpet; and Azrael, angel of death (Preliminary 72). However, Sale's reference to Michael as a friend and protector of the Jews is not Islamic.

Other critics inform us about the Muslim angel of death. In William Hodson's tragedy Zoraida (1779), Azrael is present in every scene (Smith 130-131). Lane mentions a tyrannical king and Azrael in one chapter of his edition of the Arabian Nights. One character has no less authority than Azrael in Robert Southey's tragic poem "Thalaba." When Okba kills his daughter with a dagger, "'Azrael, from the hands of Thalaba, received her parting soul'" (Smith 308).

Both Thevenot (Smith 21-22) and Sale (Preliminary 72) briefly inform readers about the guardian angels. These angels attend every man to observe and record his actions. But the two critics do not explain their protection of men against evil.

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About the Inquisitors of the Dead, Munkir and Nakir, three writers speak. Their descriptions of the angels' nature and office both agree with the Islamic tradition. Thevenot is one Renaissance writer to mention "Munkir and Quaneqir [sic]" as "formidable inquisitors of the dead" (Smith 21). Sale provides a rather extensive discussion of the "black livid angels, of terrible appearance".

> These order the dead person to sit upright and examine him concerning his faith, as to the unity of God, and the mission of Mohammed: if he answers rightly, they suffer the body to rest in peace, and it is refreshed by the air of paradise, but if not, they beat him on the temples with iron maces till he roars out for anguish so loud that he is heard by all from east to west, except men and genii. (Preliminary 76)

Beckford describes Munkir and Nakir as huge black angels who examine the dead. If the person's account is unsatisfactory, he is "cudgelled with maces of red-hot iron and tormented more variously" (226).

Sale, Moore, and Lane wrongly state that some Muslim angels are evil or fallen. Sale says Eblis ". . . was once one of those angels who are nearest to God's presence, called Azazil . . ." (Preliminary 72). He fell because he refused to "pay homage" to Adam (Preliminary 72). Sale is applying the Christian perception, rather than the Islamic,

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which places Eblis as the leader of the jinn. Lane explains that "Azazeel" is an angel taken prisoner by the jinn (known as Iblees afterwards). He grew up among the jinn on earth and became their leader, and then returned to heaven for a time (1: 44). In the Islamic tradition of the angels, Iblis is a jinn rather than angel. Herbelot (whom Byron read), also incorrectly defines Iblis as "the prince of the apostate angels, exiled to infernal regions for refusing to worship Adam at the command of God" (Beckford 147). He too errs in considering Iblis a fallen angel. Lane identifies Eblis as an angel "elated with pride, and refusing to prostrate himself before Adam, God transformed him into a Sheytan" (45). He also incorrectly considers Iblis a fallen angel rather than a Jinn.

Moore's presentation of Harut and Marut in The Love of the Angels is another misrepresentation of the Islamic tradition of angels. He describes Harut and Marut as fallen angels, a belief not existing in the Islamic tradition of angels. Moore's portrayal is derived from the Hebrew story of Harut and Marut. The two angels in Moore's version are sent to earth to be tempted. Both face temptation and sin. They choose to be punished immediately for their transgressions rather than wait until the Day of Judgment. Harut and Marut remain suspended by their feet in a pit at Babel. The two angels experience the same desires as human beings, particularly lust and passion for women. One has a sexual

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relationship with a woman and acknowledges committing a sin. In his poem, the angels' punishment is to wander the earth as long as it exists.

Lane is more detailed than Moore in his account of Harut and Marut, yet still inaccurate. He incorrectly attributes the story to the Islamic tradition. Referring to them as "Haroot and Maroot," the angels who show compassion for the weaknesses of mankind, they are sent to earth to be tempted and to tempt men with magic without first warning men of the evil. The two sin and are suspended in a pit closed by a mass of rock; they resemble "two huge mountains upside-down with irons on knees and necks" (1: 290-291).

English writers discuss the Jinn, as well. Sale's account of the jinn agrees with the Islamic tradition. On the pre-Adamite belief, he writes:

> Besides angels and devils, the Mohammedans are taught by the Koran to believe an intermediate order of creatures, which they call Jinn or Genii, created also of fire, but of a grosser fabric than angels; since they eat and drink and propagate their species, and are subject to death. Some of these are supposed to be good, and others bad, and capable of future salvation or damnation, as men are; . . . . (_Preliminary_ 72-73)

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Beckford's information on the jinn in Vathek agrees somewhat with the Islamic tradition. The jinn, he acknowledges, are created in various forms (41).

Sale, Beckford, and Lane refer to the jinn as pre-Adamites, preceding the creation of Adam. Sale ridicules Muslims for believing in their pre-Adamite creation.

> The Orientals pretend that these Genii inhabited the world for many ages before Adam was created, under the government of several successive princes, who all bore the common name of Solomon; but falling at length into an almost general corruption, Eblis was sent to drive them into a remote part of the earth there to be confined: . . . . (Preliminary 73)

Beckford's Vathek and notes contain many references to the jinn or pre-Adamites. He agrees with Sale that they governed the world before Adam (41). Lane also contends that the species of Jinn was created 2,000 years before Adam (1: 41, 43). He continues that the "pre-Adamite Jinn" were governed by 40 kings referred to by Arab writers as Suleyman or Solomon (1: 43).

Sale and Lane stress species of jinn. Sale says there are different ranks and degrees among the jinn. Some are only spoken of as Jinn; others are referred to as Peri or fairies, Dive or giants, or Tacwins or fates (Preliminary 73). There are different species, but no peris in the

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Islamic tradition. The jinn consist of five orders or classes: Jann, Jinn, Sheytans, Efreets, and Marids (Lane 1: 41). All of these terms are mentioned in the Qur'an. English writers refer to Iblis, afrits, ghouls, and jinn of Solomon.

Lane speaks of histories that describe the jinn inhabiting the earth, covering the land, sea, plains, and mountains. But the jinn became wicked, so an army of angels was sent to overtake the earth. The angels drove the jinn to the islands and mountains (1: 43-45). Such detail about the jinn reign is not referred to in the Qur'an.

Eblis is the first jinn. The name is referenced in Beckford's Vathek, Sale's Preliminary Discourse, and the Arabian Nights. Beckford reiterates the Qur'an in one of his references to Iblis (228). However, Sale and Moore describe Eblis as a fallen angel rather than a jinn.

Beckford and Lane write about the jinn under Solomon. Beckford describes the jinns erecting the temple for Solomon (209). Lane describes the jinn transporting a fountain made of molten brass to El-Andalus, Spain, the city they built, and where Solomon deposited his books and treasures (3: 540). Lane identifies this group of jinn as divers in the seas. They are an evil order of jinn inhabiting the low places (2: 433). Divers in the service of Solomon are mentioned in the Qur'an.

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Lane also refers to two other classes of the jinn: afrits and ghouls. The "efreet" is "a powerful, evil Jinnee" (1: 42). Accordingly, some sheytans are turned into ghouls as punishment. They are female creatures that travel and assume various forms, commonly appearing to men in the desert, conversing with them, and sometimes seducing them (1: 52). Beckford's definition of the ghoul agrees with Lane's (222). The ifrit is in the Islamic tradition; whereas, the ghoul is not. The ghoul may belong to a fairy tale or superstition.

Finally, Moore, Beckford and Sale mention the peri as a fairy of the jinn species of genii, which they attribute to Islam (Sale, Preliminary 73). There are no references to the peris in the Qur'an. The peri is actually a Persian mythological creature.

Sale, Moore, Beckford, and Lane offer most of the information of English scholars about the Islamic angels and jinn. Some of it agrees with the Islamic tradition, while some is taken from Jewish, Christian, or Persian traditions.

Byron's Tradition

Islamic allusions to angels and jinn are found in Lord Byron's poetry and letters. Angels in general, individual angels, Azrael or the angel of death, and Munkir and Nakir appear in Byron's writings. Byron's treatment of Muslim angels, on the whole, is in disagreement with orthodox Muslim tradition. The poet provides fewer references to the

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jinn; he speaks of the genii of the sea, Eblis, afrits and ghouls, and Solomon's jinn. Byron's treatment of jinn, on the whole, is critical.

Byron's references to Muslim angels as fallen does not conform with the Muslim tradition. In his notes, Byron views Muslim angels as mythical, mutilated, corrupt and sinful. He prefers Christian angels over Muslim angels. Such disagreeable views to the Muslim tradition present themselves in Byron's advice to Moore concerning Moore's representation of angels. Byron advises Moore to mutilate and distort Muslim angels in "Love of the Angels." Dr. Henry Muir reports a conversation he had with Lord Byron on October 19, 1823 on this subject. Byron contends that Moore's angels were "'too warm--too much of the Houri . . . that mutilated Angels could only make Mahometans at best and never Christians, so it was better to leave them Angels as they were'" (Byron, Works 4: 429).

Moore's poem caused controversy among the clergy. "Moore has allowed the priests to menace his angels into Mahometans--a concession which I suspect will not stand him in stead," argues Byron (Works 6: 168; Critical 2: 380). Byron condemns Moore directly, saying, "And you are really recanting to the clergy. It will do little good for you--it is you, not the poem they are at" (Works 6: 168). In a footnote, Byron explains that Moore tried "to make the angels completely Eastern," or as he was advised "to turn

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them into Turks" (6: 168). Obviously, Byron is critical of Moore for revising "Love of the Angels" to suit the priests, and in a way that follows the Islamic tradition. Yet, Byron believes it is best for Moore to depict the angels as he originally did, sinning over women. He calls such angels "mutilated," probably because they are fallen. But Byron's remark that such angels could only be "Mohammedan," not Christian, is a severe criticism of Islamic angels. That angels are corrupt, mutilated, and similar to human beings is contrary to orthodox Islamic teachings already mentioned.

Consequently, Byron's "Heaven and Earth" depicts angels as fallen, for they partake of human passion. He portrays the angel Samiasa enjoying lovemaking with Aholibamah, a human female. Noah scolds Samiasa, and the male angel justifies his conduct.

> Was not man made in high Jehovah's image?
> Did God not love what he had made? And what
> Do we but imitate and emulate
> His love unto created Love? (III 477-480)

This image of Byron's angels is in sharp contrast to the Muslim pure beings who are neither male or female, nor experience carnal pleasures.

Fairchild condemns Byron for depicting Samiasa as a corrupt angel. He calls the poet's presentation of angelic and human love affairs in "Heaven and Earth" "distasteful and absurd," as well as "dishonest" (433).

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What are the possible sources of Byron's references to fallen angels? His preference to present Muslim angels as corrupt is traced to Moore. At another level of interpretation Byron's portrayals of angels succumbing to human passion are not just a result of Moore, but of Beckford's and Dante's influence. Such presentations may also be traced to the poet himself. Byron's wife contends he thought he was a fallen angel.

> His [Byron's] imagination dwelt so much upon the idea that he was a fallen angel that I thought it amounted nearly to derangement, and the tradition that Angels, having fallen from Heaven had become enamoured of mortal women, struck him particularly, and he said he should compose upon it, and that I should be the woman, who was all perfection . . . . (qtd. in Elwin 263)

Dwelling on fallen angels, therefore, inspired Byron to depict them in his works.

Next, let us examine Byron's treatment of individual Muslim angels. First, Byron alludes to the angel of death: Azrael. Byron uses Azrael on three occasions. In these situations, Byron's description of Azrael differs from the Islamic tradition, serving Byron's own ideals instead.

On the first occasion, Byron uses Azrael for a political ideal, a Hebrew ideal. He employs Azrael in the Hebrews' service as a freedom fighter. In "The Destruction

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of Sennacherib," the angel of death is fighting bravely with the Hebrews against the Persians.

> For the Angel of Death spread his wings
> on the blast,
> And breathed in the face of the foe
> as he pass'd; . . . . (ll. 115-12 85)

Yet, according to the Islamic traditions, Azrael is not a fighter.

Byron's second reference to Azrael does not match the Muslim context. His Azrael is mythical rather than theological. In "The Bride of Abydos," Azrael is armed with a bow and arrows to hunt human souls. This description reminds us of the Greek god Cupid. Zuleika believes Azrael uses bows and arrows to grab human souls, but she swears that Azrael will never divide her from Selim, her incestuous lover.

> 'The Sultan should not have my hand!
> Think'st thou that I could bear to part
> With thee, and learn to half my heart?
> Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,
> Where were thy friend--and who my
> guide?
> Years have not seen, Time shall not see,
> The hour that tear my soul from thee:
> Ev'n Azrael, from his deadly quiver
> When flies that shaft, and fly it must,

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That parts all else, shall doom for ever

Our hearts to undivided dust!'

("The Bride of Abydos" ll. 316-326 267)

Byron transfers Greek mythology to the Muslim tradition on the angel of death, and Zuleika resembles a Greek pagan.

In the third example, Azrael is made a Byronic hero. He is a hero against the Muslim sultan, Hassan. Taking the job of Azrael, the giaour, a Greek freedom fighter, kills Hassan in revenge for the latter's murder of his wife for her infidelity and elopement with the giaour. After the sultan is slain by the giaour, Hassan's Tartar slave tells Hassan's mother that Azrael took her son's life at the hand of the Giaour.

He drew the token from his vest--

Angel of Death! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest!

His calpac rent--his caftan red--

'Lady, a fearful bride thy son hath wed:

. . . . (ll. 715-718 258)

Byron, here, uses Azrael as a giaour for a panhellenistic reason. The political purpose is the liberation of Greece from Muslim occupation. The killing of Sultan Hassan symbolizes the destruction of Muslim power that destroyed and occupied the Eastern Roman Empire, which Byron admired.

Byron correctly identifies Azrael as the angel of death. However, since he describes Azrael's searching for souls with a bow and arrow, one thinks of him as a

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Cupid-like mythological character, rather than one of God's angels. This presentation could mean that the poet views the angel of death as fictional or pagan. Byron also depicts this angel as a Jewish freedom fighter against the Persians, and as a Greek freedom fighter against the Muslim sultan and Muslims. These tasks do not belong to the Muslim angel of death; therefore, the poet's depictions of Azrael are not Islamic.

English influence on Byron's allusions to Azrael comes from Southey. Byron's giaour seems to possess the same authority of Azrael in Southey's "Thalaba" when he grabs the Sultan's soul.

Next, Byron's treatment of Munkir and Nakir, or the inquisitors of the dead is not Islamic. His notes ridicule these angels. Through exaggeration, Byron indicates the human corpse undergoes a period of training for damnation. If his responses to Munkir and Nakir's questions are not acceptable, according to Byron, "he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red-hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations" (Complete 892). The poet points out that Munkir and Nakir's "hands are always full" with souls awaiting damnation, since those entering paradise are so few (892).

Of course there is a good reason in the text beyond Byron's cynicism. Those angels will torture the giaour, a Byronic hero, in his grave for his infidelity.

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> But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
> Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe; . . . .
>
> (259 ll. 747-749)

And if we think of the giaour as a Byronic hero, we know why Byron ridicules Munkir and Nakir.

Once again, Byron correctly alludes to Munkir and Nakir as angels who are inquisitors of the dead. While this is Islamic, Byron ridicules this belief. The poet's treatment of Munkir and Nakir is quite similar to the English tradition. Byron may have received inspiration from Thevenot, Sale and Beckford. His vivid description is like theirs, but is satirical.

Why the poet conveys such satirical images of Munkir and Nakir, the Inquisitors of the dead, is reflected in his deistic views, which have roots in the English tradition. Byron does not believe in the life to come or future punishment. For example, he rejects the doctrine of damnation in his defense of Socinians, one group of deists, when he questions Kennedy's condemning them to hell. "'Why should you exclude a sincere Socinian from the hope of salvation'"? (qtd. in McGann 249). There is no reason for him to think there are angels who prepare the soul for damnation, since Byron is

> . . . constantly opposing the doctrine of the eternity of hell, asserting the primacy of the

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> forgiveness of sins, and emphasizing the need for and the means of spiritual reformation.
>
> (qtd.in McGann 248)

Kennedy confirms that the poet rejects the eternity of hell (529). McGann points out that "Byron pleads against the idea of damnation" in "The Vision of Judgement," stanzas 13-15. In one remark, the poet questions why man should be condemned to Hell (Works 3: 224-228), supporting his opposition to damnation. In his letters, Byron conveys this deistic view. ". . . nor . . . can such a scene as a seat of eternal punishment exist, it is incompatible with the benign attributes of a Deity to suppose so" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 19). In a letter to Hodgson, Byron argues: "You degrade the Creator by converting Him into a Tyrant over an immaculate and injured Being" (Byron's Letters 2: 29). He also states that God never made anything to be tortured in another life (Letter to Hodgson). This remark certainly rules out damnation after death by God or His angels. Along the same lines, the poet views eternal punishment as a "bullying threat which is inconsistent with belief in a loving God (Byron's Letters 6: 457). He states, " . . . And to bully with torments! and all that! I cannot help thinking that the menace of Hell makes as many devils as the severe penal codes of inhuman humanity make villains" (qtd. in Byron, Byronic Thoughts 51). Instead, Byron contend that death is simply an "eternal sleep" (Byron's

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Letters 2: 19). Therefore, there is no need for punishment at the hands of Munkir and Nakir.

Remarks of critics and Byron himself in his works also show deistic influence. According to Fairchild, Byron rejects any hope for eternal life (403), and is "uneasy" about the whole subject of Hell (435). First, in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, the poet states,

> . . . I
> Look not for Life, where life may never be:
> I am no sneerer at thy Phantasy;
> . . . . (Works 2: 103-104)

Next, Byron questions dying in order to live on. ". . . If men are to live, why die at all? And if they die, why disturb the sweet and sound sleep that 'knows no waking'"? Then, the poet expresses more opposition to life after death and punishment in another statement. Byron wrote that when he was ill in Turkey,

> I looked to death as a relief from pain without any wish for an after-life, but a confidence that the God who punishes in this existence had left that last asylum for the weary.
>
> (qtd. in Perkins 928)

Furthering his rejection of damnation, the poet says:

> . . . and who will believe that God will damn men for not knowing what they were taught?
>
> (qtd. in Perkins 928)

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Byron goes on to condemn punishment after death when he speaks of the material resurrection being strange, unless it is for punishment. He describes punishment as meant "to revenge rather than correct," and this is "morally wrong."

> And when the World is at an end, what moral or warning purpose can eternal torture answer? Human passions have probably disfigured the divine doctrines here, but the whole thing is inscrutable. . . . (Byronic Thoughts 51)

This statement makes it clear why Byron ridicules Munkir and Nakir: they bully men's souls with torments.

Moreover, the poet's persona rejects demons taking his soul in Manfred.

> . . . I stand
> Upon my strength--I do defy--deny--
> spurn back, and scorn ye [demons]!
> . . . Back to thy hell!
> Thou has no power upon me, that I feel;
> Thou never shalt possess me, that I know:
> What I have done is done; . . . . (III iv 61-63)

In essence, he is denying Hell, and the belief that men are punished for their sins in the afterlife. Once life is lived, it is over and done with.

Byron's rejection of damnation, which led to his mockery of Muslim angels Munkir and Nakir, is carried to Christianity. He is extremely critical of the stress on

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damnation. Most importantly, his repulsion to the Christian concept of damnation is rooted in Calvinism, which Byron was taught as a child. According to both Jump and Battenhouse, the Calvinistic doctrines of predestined damnation and innate evil horrified the poet (26; 61). He questions the sincere Christian's belief in reward, and indicates there is no punishment for the unbeliever in these lines:

> Indisputably, the firm believers in the Gospel have a great advantage over all others,--for this simple reason, that, if true, they will have their reward hereafter; and if there be no hereafter, they can be but with the infidel in his eternal sleep, having had the assistance of an exalted hope, through life, without subsequent disappointment, since (at the worse for them) 'out of nothing, nothing can arise' not even sorrow.
>
> (Byronic Thoughts 28-29)

Byron's denial of damnation also results in his mocking portrayal of Catholic mass for souls in purgatory.

> When over Catholics the ocean rolls,
> They must wait several weeks before a mass
> Takes off one peck of purgatorial coals,
> Because, till people know what's come to pass,
> They won't lay out their money on the dead--
> It costs three francs for every mass that's said.
>
> (Don Juan II lv)

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Furthermore, Christians consigning each other to hell, he writes, is exemplified in the Athanasian Creed.

> 'Tis so sententious, positive, and terse,
> And decorates the Book of Common Prayers,
> As doth a rainbow the just clearing air
>
> (Don Juan VI xxiii)

Besides, Byron rejects other Christian beliefs, as well (Byronic Thoughts 15; McGann 249).

So the whole concept of damnation and hell, whether Muslim or Christian is condemned by Byron. These are precepts of natural religion which correspond to deism.

Byron's deistic theme of Islam and other religions being superstition is also continued in his treatment of angels and jinn. Hints of this are present in many of the preceding quotes. He likes Greek and Roman mythology, so he applies them to Islam. Deviating from the orthodox Islamic belief in angels as real, Byron views angels as myth. The poet relies on superstition and myth when he depicts Azrael as a bow hunter.

In addition to the angels, Byron refers to the jinn, or genii. He mentions "Shaitan," "Iblis," or Satan and he alludes to "afrit", and "ghoul." His term, the "pre-Adamites" (Complete 895) also covers the subject. "Azazil" is another hint to the jinn. Aside from the terms themselves, Byron's usage of the jinn does not harmonize with the orthodox Muslim tradition. Byron does not use Muslim jinn

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in an Islamic context, but he uses them for his own political purposes--as a crusade against the Muslim power in Greece. His heroes, the giaours and the corsairs, become Satan, jinn or afrits during their attack of Muslim sultans and Muslim power.

To begin with, " The Giaour" refers to the jinn or genii. On one occasion, Byron allows the giaour to think of the genii. While awaiting the Muslim sultan to take revenge on him, the giaour watches and thinks of the vanishing tide in the channel.

> And all its hidden secrets sleep,
> Known but to the Genii of the deep,
> which, trembling in their coral caves,
> They dare not whisper to the waves.
>
> ("The Giaour" 256 ll.384-387)

Interestingly, the giaour depicts the genii of the sea, living under water in coral caves, a pre-Adamite idea used by English writers. The idea of the pre-Adamites he must have taken from Sale, Beckford and Galland, among others. Those critics see as pretense the Muslim knowledge of the pre-Adamites. Besides the genii of the sea, Byron slips in a few allusions to Eblis, Zatani, afrits, ghouls. Most commonly, characters in his poetry display behaviors like these beings.

Eblis, the leader of the jinn, is also alluded to by the poet. First, Byron portrays his hero, the corsair

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disguised as a dervise, as that "Zatanai" or Satan, the head of evil demons confronting Sultan Seyd. "Zatania" is derived from "Sheytan" and means one far from the truth. Byron seems to employ it to mean the devil.

Second, he refers to Eblis when he speaks about the Eblis' throne in "The Giaour."

> But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
> Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;
> And from its torment 'scape alone
> To wander round lost Eblis' throne;
> And fire unquench'd, unquenchable,
> . . . . (259 ll.747-751)

M. K. Joseph is one modern critic to contend Byron's Eblis is a Byronic hero (44).

It is most likely that Byron's mention of Eblis is influenced by the English tradition rather than the Islamic. Iblis is Satan or Shaitan, the leader of the evil jinn, according to Islam. Also, the term "throne of Iblis" is not part of the orthodox Islamic terms, although the poet's has the Giaour wandering around "the throne of Eblis." Since Lane suggests "Iblees" was an earthly ruler of the jinn, perhaps he is described as having a throne. This might explain Byron's reference. Sale, Lane, Beckford, and Herbelot all mention Azazil (Iblis), and incorrectly depict him as a fallen angel rather than a jinn. Byron does the same. Byron's allusion to the throne of Iblis is,

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therefore, present in the Arabian tales of Galland and Lane. Furthermore, Lane uses the term "Sheytan" when referring to the children of Eblis (Joseph 45). Byron depicts Satan as a fallen angel. But according to Islam, Satan is not a fallen angel, but an evil Jinn.

As well, Byron's "The Corsair" alludes to afrits and ghouls. On another occasion, the corsair (Conrad) who may be viewed as a Byronic hero, is presented as an afrit. This afrit, disguised in a dervise garb, deceives the Muslim sultan, Seyd, the occupier of Greece, and ruins his palace and ships.

> His close but glittering casque, and sable
> plume,
> More glittering eye, and black brow's
> sable gloom,
> Glared on the Moslems' eyes some Afrit
> sprite,
> Whose demon death-blow left no hope for
> fight.
> The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
> Of flames on high, and torches from be-
> low;
> The shriek of terror, and the mingling
> yell--
> For swords began to clash, and shouts to
> swell--

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Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of hell!

(288 ll. 148-156)

Conrad, with the look in his eyes of a young Afrit, brings death to the sultan who "tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight, . . ." (288 l. 181).

As for afrits and ghouls, English authors Lane, Beckford, and Dante predominate in molding Byron's allusions to these creatures. Byron depends on folkloric tradition, and more likely the fantasy of the Arabian tales in his reference to ghouls. He calls Dante's demons interesting characters (Works 4: 193-194).

The poet describes Solomon as "a necromancer" (Notes 895) for dealing with jinn. Solomon, in the Muslim tradition, is a messenger of God, and as such among the sign of his prophethood is the command of a group of the jinn--ifrits and divers. This group was placed in his service to build and move things, among other tasks. These jinn had magical powers. Byron's note appears to ridicule Solomon and the Muslim belief in jinn.

Hints of English influence may be at the root of the poet's reference to Solomon's afrits and divers. The jinn that served Solomon are extensively alluded to by Lane and Beckford. Consequently, the Arabian Nights and Vathek may be major sources for Byron's remark.

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Evaluation and Understanding

Byron shapes Islamic material to suit his own personal views and beliefs. He does some name-dropping when he makes references to specific Muslim angels and jinn, which reflects some knowledge of the subject, but his allusions do not conform to what is accurate. His name-dropping may be similar to the way other poets allude to Greek and Roman mythology. As for Byron thinking any of the angels and jinn are creatures who actually exist, the idea is unlikely.

Byron depends heavily on several members of the English tradition in his depictions of angels and jinn. He may have relied on Sale's Preliminary Discourse, Beckford's Vathek, Moore's "Fall of Angels," and Galland's edition of the Arabian Nights for information on angels and jinn. It is clear that in many instances Byron shaped allusions of angels and other creatures around references contained within the pages of Vathek and the Arabian Nights. He was influenced by Sale and Moore to some extent.

The poet turns to Galland, Herbelot, Beckford, Sale, and possibly Dante for the images of jinn appearing in his poetry. He most heavily relies on the Arabian tales, in which the jinn appear in "fantastic forms" rather than theological ones (Ali 319). Vathek is another major influential source. When not corresponding to the English tradition, Byron is reinforcing his own deistic and pan-hellenistic beliefs, doing so at the expense of Islam.

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Deism is responsible for his views on Munkir and Nakir. The poet mocks these angels, and presents them satirically all because, as a deist, he rejects eternal life, of which punishment is a part, according to Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

Panhellenism also plays a role in Byron's handling of angels and jinn. Some characters representing Greece, like the giaour and corsair, take on characteristics of Azrael or Satan and afrits when confronting their Muslim enemies, representing Turks who in Byron's time still dominated Greece. Byron's key political objective is freedom, so he encourages wars of independence. To achieve this goal, he calls for the liberation of Greece from the Muslims. Practically, he died fighting with the Greeks against the Muslims. He fought with his poetry, his money, and his person.

Byron's use of angels and jinn, to a great extent, is for a panhellenistic political purpose. He associates Azrael and afrit with the giaour and corsair, Zatani (Satan) with the corsair, and Azrael with the giaour. All of these characters Byron likens to angels and jinn who will achieve that cause. In the case of the Giaour and the Corsair, the cause is Greek liberation from the Muslims. These two Byronic heroes defy Sultan Seyd, Sultan Hassan, and other Muslims for the sake of political freedom, not simply because they are Christians opposing Muslims.

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Religion is not the issue for Byron; it is more a desire for Western politics and government systems to destroy the Muslim power that occupy Greece and many parts of Europe. It has already been established that Byron accepts little of Islam and Christianity except for the unity of God and His being the creator of this world. Therefore, it is clear that panhellenism is what is on the poet's mind with his allusions to Azrael, Satan, and afrits.

Byron's treatment of angels and jinn is mythological. He attacks Muslim power, and mocks Munkir and Nakir. His portrayals are not Islamically accurate because he blends mythology and superstition with Islam. Yet, what more can be expected when he relies mostly on Vathek, The Love of the Angels, and the Arabian Nights?

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CHAPTER IV: THE QUR'AN

The Qur'an is another significant allusion in Lord Byron's poetry and prose. Before exploring Byron's use of the Qur'an, let us discuss the Islamic tradition, followed by the English tradition.

Islamic Tradition

The belief in Allah's sacred scriptures, from Adam to Muhammad, is the third article of Islamic faith (2:4). Allah refers to several of these sacred revelations and their purpose.

> We have sent thee inspiration, as We sent it to Noah and the Messengers after him: We sent inspiration to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave the Psalms. Of some apostles We have already told thee the story; of others We have not;--and to Moses God spoke direct;--Apostles who gave good news as well as warning that mankind, after the coming of the apostles, should have no plea against God: For God is Exalted in Power, Wise. But God beareth witness that what He hath sent unto thee He hath sent from His own knowledge, and the angels bear witness: But enough is God for a witness.

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According to Islamic tradition, Allah revealed 104 books and portions to mankind. The portions were given as follows: 10 to Adam, 50 to Seth, 30 to Idris or Enoch, and 10 to Abraham. As for the books, one was given to Moses (the Taurat), another to David (the Zabur), another to Jesus (the Injil), and the fourth to Muhammad (the Qur'an).

In the Islamic belief, the Qur'an is the word of Allah. Allah says, "verily it is in the Mother of the Book, (the Preserved Tablet), in Our Presence, high (in dignity), full of Wisdom" (43:4; 85:22). Also, the Qur'an is revealed to Muhammad: "it is We who have sent down the Qur'an to thee by stages" (76:23). Many Suras, including 6:92; 17:105-107; 17:6; and 56:80 confirm that Allah revealed His word to Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel (2:97; 16:101-103; 42:7), in a clear Arabic tongue (16:103). Further, Allah says earlier books, the Book of Moses and the Book of Jesus, foretold of the Qur'an (26:195-196; 41:43).

Allah describes the Qur'an as a guide for healing. Sura 17:9 states it is a guide to the "most right" (17:9). Most importantly, it offers healing and mercy to believers: "We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe" (17:82). The Qur'an was also sent to the Jinn for the same purpose.

The Qur'an is a message sent to the whole human race. "Verily this is no less than a Message to all the Worlds: with profit to whoever among you wills to go straight"

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(81:26-29). This Message makes things clear (15:1). Moreover, the Qur'an answers all questions in detailed explanation (25:33; 15:1; 26:2; 27:1; 28:2; 36:69-70; 43:2).

Most significant of all is the fact that the Qur'an is a comprehensive Book of the Islamic laws: religious, political, and social. The purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an is that it functions as a constitution for Muslim life--to assist significantly in solving all of life's problems. "And We sent down the Book to thee for the express purpose, that thou shouldst make clear to them those things in which they differ, and that it should be a guide and a mercy to those who believe" (16:64). Allah commands that the believers follow the holy constitution. "And this is a Book which We have revealed as a blessing: so follow it and be righteous, that ye may receive mercy" (6:155).

In the Qur'an, there is a text called "Ayat Al-Kursee." This text is translated as follows:

> God! There is no god But He,--the Living, The Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him Nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permiteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After Or Behind them. Nor shall they compass Aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne doth extend over the heavens And the earth, and He

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feeleth no fatigue in guarding And preserving them for He is the Most High, The Supreme (in glory).
(2:255)

This text is used by Muslims to express their belief in the unity of Allah and it is also used in Muslim devotions, Muslim supplications and constant praise of Allah. In Muslim custom, some Muslims use the throne text in amulets or lockets.

However, the Unbelievers fabricated many charges against the Qur'an. They said the Qur'an was the "poetry" of Muhammad (37;36; 25:227), a forgery of Muhammad (42:124), or a mere fiction (83:13). Some said it was dictated to Muhammad by outsiders (40:14), while others viewed the Qur'an as Satanic verses (80:27; 23:69).

But, Allah defended His Holy Book and His Prophet against all the charges in many suras of the Qur'an-- 69:41; 924:224-227; 69:42; 69:43-47; 25:4; 46:8; 25:5-6; 23:69; 55:1-4. In addition, Allah challenges the world, mankind and the Jinns to produce a Book, a Sura, or an Ayat or verse like the Qur'an, but they could not (11:13-14; 2:23-24).

English Tradition

The works of numerous English scholars since the Middle Ages contain allusions to the Qur'an. In their perception of the Qur'an, the English writers can be divided into three groups. The first group is totally unsympathetic to the Qur'an by denying its revelation to Prophet Muhammad. The

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second group is somewhat sympathetic with the Qur'an by being praiseworthy of it, or by giving correct information about it. The third group is sympathetic by accepting it as a Word of God.

Unsympathetic medieval critics charge the Qur'an of being a pagan god called "Alkaron." They also charge the "Saracen" of worshipping Alkaron together with other "pagan gods--Mahomet or Mahoun, Termagant, Apollo, Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Pluto, and Margot" (Smith 2, 9; Hitti, Islam 55). The romance plays, according to Smith, offer the shocking perception that Muslims worshipped the Qur'an. Tamburlaine is one work to provide such a disagreeable perception (Smith 2, 9). Chaucer, Mandeville, Herbert, George Sandy, Shakespeare, Humphrey Prideaux, Alexander Ross, Isaac Barrows, Samuel Butler, Dryden, and Thomas Moore are among English writers who are not sympathetic with the Qur'an.

Some charge Muhammad of being the author of the Qur'an. Alexander Ross wrote an English translation based on Ryer's 1649 translation entitled The Alcoran of Mahomet. He retained the title, but prefixed his volume with "The Life of Mahomet, the Prophet of the Turks, and Author of the Alcoran" (Arberry 7). Ross claims it was written by the "impostor" Muhammad (Chew 451; Smith 28). Robert Southey contends the book is from the "meagre mind" of Muhammad (Smith 157). As well, both Andre du Ryer and Ross deny that the Qur'an was revealed (Arberry 7). Landor views the

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Qur'an as the poetry of Muhammad. He writes that the Arabic poet, Labid, after reading the first chapter of Muhammad's Qur'an, cried "O Mohomet, thou art a greater poet than I am, . . . " (qtd. in Smith 60) (Byron must have known about Labid from Herbelot's Bibliotheque Orientale and from Beckford's Vathek and its notes.).

On the other hand, other writers are somewhat sympathetic with the Muslim tradition on the Qur'an. The first one is Sale. He translated the Qur'an from Arabic and annexed his translation with a Preliminary Discourse on the life of Muhammad and his prophethood. However, Sale's remark--"That Mohammed was really the author of the Koran is beyond dispute; though it is highly probable that he had no small assistance in his design from others . . ." (Preliminary 46)--does not go with the orthodox Islamic tradition. The author of the Qur'an is Allah, and not Muhammad. However, Sale's belief in Muhammad's illiteracy, and his belief that Muhammad received no help from anybody goes along with the Islamic tradition.

Gibbon depicts correctly the orthodox Muslim belief of the revelation of the Qur'an. He states that "the chain of inspiration was prolonged from the fall of Adam to the promulgation of the Koran." The Muslims, he adds, believe that the Qur'an is revelation from God. The orthodox doctrine of Islam does hold the Qur'an to be the "eternal, uncreated word of God, inscribed on the Preserved Tablet in heaven"

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(Rise 1737). Furthermore, Gibbon explains that the Qur'an was revealed bit by bit to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. He adds the Qur'an "denotes the hand of a single artist" (1735). The miracle of the Qur'an is stressed, when Gibbon writes that Muhammad was an "illiterate barbarian" who never learned to read and write. Yet, "the book of nature and of man was open to his view" (1735). However, Gibbon's reference--that prophethood is "a necessary fiction"--does not conform to Islam. To me, Gibbon's last remark is ambiguous, like Sale's. But on the whole, Gibbon's position on the Qur'an remains sympathetic. Keep in mind that critics view Sale and Gibbon as Muslims. Also, Beckford's information, to some extent, corresponds with the Muslim belief in the inspiration of the Qur'an (223).

Furthering acceptance of the Qur'an as revealed are Carne, Bunyan, Goethe, and Carlyle. Sir John Carne contends that no orthodox Muslim would say that the Prophet made any part of the Qur'an--it is the eternal decree of God (Smith 136-137). Bunyan argues that Muslim's scriptures prove that Muhammad is the Muslims' savior, as Christian scriptures prove Jesus a savior (Smith 25). Goethe refuses to believe that the Qur'an is created, or Muhammad is not a Prophet. So does Thomas Carlyle (Hitti, Islam 60).

As for the Qur'an's content, language and style, some English authors disagree with the orthodox Muslim tradition,

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while a number of writers agree with the orthodox Muslim tradition.

Prideaux offers the harshest words against the Qur'an of any critic, identifying it as "palpable falsehood" (29). George Sandys writes, ". . . it is farced with fables, visions, legends" (Smith 11). Butler reiterates Sandy's opinion (Smith 38). Like others, Barrows believes the stories of the Qur'an are pieced together from corrupted, old history (Smith 26). Richard R. Madden holds a low opinion of the Qur'an, suggesting the content is absurd.

Ross severely condemns the content and language. He warns ignorant Christians not to read the Qur'an, "lest they should be polluted with it" (Chew 451). On the content, Ross says the Qur'an is "'fraughted with Fables, lyes, blasphemies, and a mere hodge-podge of fooleries and impieties'" (Smith 28).

Backing Ross in his failure to recognize the beauty of the Qur'an is Robert Southey, who denies the eloquence of the language of the Qur'an. In Southey's mind, the holy book

> . . . does not elevate the imagination, nothing that enlightens, the understanding, nothing ameliorates the heart; no beautiful narrative, no proverbs of wisdom or axioms of morality; chaos of detached sentences, a mass of dull tautology.
>
> (Southey 231-232)

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A number of English scholars, however, appreciate the content, style and sublimity of the Qur'an. Authors who emphasize content are Sale, Gibbon, and Montagu. Sale writes that the Qur'an is the fundamental truth of the oneness of God, and that there is only one true religion (Preliminary 63). Gibbon concurs with Sale when he refers to the Qur'an as ". . . a glorious testimony to the unity of God" (Rise 1737). He also emphasizes the oneness of God.

In addition to Sale and Gibbon, Montagu praises the Qur'an for its morals. She describes the Qur'an as being the "purest morality" (2: 8-9).

Now, what do sympathetic English authors have to say about the language and style? Sale believes the style is beautiful, concise, and sublime.

> The style of the Koran is generally beautiful and fluent . . . and concise. . . . and in many places especially where the majesty and attributes of God are described, sublime and magnificent.
>
> (Preliminary 61)

Sale adds the reader ". . . must not imagine the translation comes up to the original, notwithstanding my endeavours to do it justice" (Preliminary 61). Sale stresses the language and sublimity of the Qur'an in another remark (60).

Additionally, in his Preliminary Discourse, which prefixes his reputable translation of the Qur'an, Sale

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acknowledges his attempt to be fair to Muhammad and the Qur'an.

> I have not in speaking of Mohammed or his Koran, allowed myself to use those opprobrious appellations, and unmannerly expressions, which seem to be the strongest arguments of several who have written against him. On the contrary, I have thought myself obliged to treat both with common decency, and even to approve such particulars as seemed to me to deserve approbation . . . . (v)

So he attempts to be fair and accurate, and his 1734 version is said to be made from the original Arabic (Hitti, Islam 54). Indebted to Maracci's Latin translation (Richardson v-vi), Sale's translation dominated "the English field for over a century and a half" (Hitti, Islam 54). Robert D. Richardson praises Sale's as the single most influential source of English knowledge of Islam (v-vi). Nearly all English and American writers between 1750 and 1850 used Sale's edition: Beckford, Gibbon, Southey, Moore, Carlyle, Shelley, Byron, and Poe (Richardson v-vi).

Although he does not believe in the Prophethood of Muhammad, Voltaire (a deist) recognizes the sublimity of the Qur'an. His recognition of the sublimity of the Qur'an is apparent in his reference to the Qur'an as sublime--"'des morceaux qui peuvent paraitre sublimes'" (Hitti, Islam 59). Hitti contends that Voltaire's knowledge of the Qur'an came

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from English sources, particularly Sale (59). This would account for the fact that they both use the word "sublime" when praising the Qur'an.

Mary Montagu, moreover, offers a good opinion of the Qur'an when she addresses its language:

> [The Qur'an] . . . is so far from the nonsense we charge it with, that it is purest morality, delivered in the best language, I have since heard impartial Christians speak of it in the same manner; and I do not doubt but that all our translations are from copies got from the Greek priests, who would not fail to falsify it with the extremity of malice. (8-9)

Montagu calls the Romish and Greek clergy "ignorant, corrupt, heretics, schematics" (8-9) for their false translations of the Qur'an.

Byron's Tradition

There is some evidence that Byron was familiar with the Qur'an. First, Byron's extensive reading list of the world's books and authors includes the Qur'an (Moore, Life 48). The Qur'an he read is Sale's translation. His knowledge of this translation is evident in the poet's reference to Sale in "Farewell Petition to J. C. H., Esq.," a poem Byron wrote in Constantinople, June 1810, after the departure of his companion and friend, John Hobhouse, to England. He addresses Hobhouse saying, "So may'st thou

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prosper in the paths of Sale." Though his message may seem ambiguous, he certainly refers to Sale's translation of the Qur'an (Byron, Works 224). Another evidence of Byron's knowledge of Sale's translation lies in his notes. In his notes to "The Giaour," following an explanation of Munkir and Nakir (already discussed in Chapter Three), Byron instructs his readers to refer to "Relig. Cermon. and Sale's Koran" (Complete 892). His several references to individual texts of the Qur'an which include the "Kursee text," "Bismillah," "Koranic chanters," Qur'anic customs, and so on indicate Byron's familiarity with the Qur'an.

Although Byron's knowledge of the Qur'an is somewhat important, our major concern is not primarily to clarify Byron's knowledge of the Qur'an, but to clarify his opinions and use of Qur'anic allusions.

Let us first look at Byron's allusions to Muslim knowledge of the Old Testament in the Qur'an. Byron says "that every allusion to any thing or personage in the Old Testament, such as the Ark, or Cain, is . . . the privilege of a Mussulman" (Complete 895). He also writes: "It is, therefore, no violation of custom to put the names of Cain, or Noah, into the mouth of a Moslem" (895). Byron then adds:

> The Turks profess to be much better acquainted with the lives, true and fabulous, of the patriarchs than is warranted by our own sacred

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> writ; and not content with Adam, they have a biography of Pre-Adamites. (Complete 895)

As well, the poet identifies Solomon as a monarch and necromancer (895). Finally, he refers to Moses as follows: ". . . Moses a prophet inferior only to Christ and Mahomet . . . " (895).

Byron shows no sympathy with the orthodox Muslim tradition since he calls the Muslims' knowledge of the Old Testament and the pre-Adamites a pretense. He claims the Muslims "profess to be much acquainted" with the Old Testament. He adds they are "not content" with Adam, but they pretend the knowledge of the pre-Adamites. Also, the phrase in Byron's note, "to put the names [Abel, Lot, Ark, Solomon] into the mouth of a Moslem," supports our point. The Muslim's knowledge of the Law of Moses, other Messengers's books, and the pre-Adamites news in the Qur'an is not pretense. The primary source of such knowledge is the Qur'an, a revelation from Allah. So the giver of this knowledge is not man, but Allah.

Regarding the reference to Prophet Solomon, Byron disagrees with the Qur'an when he presents Solomon as a magician. He also differs from the Qur'an when he speaks of Solomon as a king. According to the Qur'an, Solomon is a Messenger of Allah and not a magician or a king. Like all of God's messengers, Solomon is endowed with certain

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miracles that have already been discussed in the Islamic tradition.

The final disagreement with the Qur'an is Byron's charge that Muslims believe in the inferiority of Moses to Jesus and Muhammad. Byron violates the orthodox Islamic tradition. The Qur'an is explicit on the subject--there is "no distinction" among the Messengers of Allah.

However, Byron does have limited agreement with the Muslim tradition. He tells us that Muslims have extensive knowledge of the "Old Testament" including Adam, Cain, Noah, the Ark, Moses, Solomon. He also mentions Muslim knowledge of the "Pre-Adamites" or angels and jinns. Unfortunately he does not elaborate on any of these points. The Qur'an contains a detailed account of the pre-Adamites, as well as the prophets and their peoples from Adam till Muhammad, with much emphasis on the People of the Book, the Jews and Christians.

Byron, in his own way, appreciates the Qur'an. In a note, he calls the Qur'an "sublime." In another note, he describes the "Korsee Text" or "Ayat-ul-Kursee" as "the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences" of the Qur'an (Complete 895). Now, if we consider the synonyms of the words "sublime" and "esteemed," Byron is praiseworthy. If we consider his view of the "Ayat-ul-Kursee," he is almost in full agreement with Muslim tradition. The Korsee verse

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is exceptionally glorious in Muslim tradition because of its focus on the belief in Allah, His Unity, and His attributes.

Byron's high opinion of the Qur'an's sublimity is due to two reasons. One is the influence of the English tradition. Sale describes the Qur'an as "sublime." Voltaire, influenced by Sale, also calls the holy book "sublime." Gibbon, another great sympathizer with Islam and the belief in Allah and His unity, views the Qur'an as glorious. Moreover, such sympathy with the Qur'an is shown by Montagu, Beckford, and Goethe. There is no doubt that Byron's praise is influenced by such critics. He read these scholars who praise the sublimity of the Qur'an, as well as the content and style. Yet, there is still a special reason for Byron's appreciation of the Qur'an: deism. The Qur'an's focus on the existence of Allah, the Unity of Allah, and the attributes of Allah agrees considerably with Byron's deistic beliefs.

However, Byron's sympathy with the Qur'an is one thing, and his belief in the revelation of the Qur'an is another. That Byron believes in the Qur'an as a revelation from Allah to Muhammad is far from being proven. There are substantial evidences of Byron's disagreement with the Islamic position. The poet depicts the Qur'an as poetry, not God's revelation. First, he directly states in a note that the Qur'an is poetry. The "Koran contains . . . poetical passages" (Moore, Life 48).

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Second, he compares the Qur'an's "poetical passages" with the poetry of Europe, which supports his idea that the Qur'an is poetry. Byron says, the "Koran contains most sublime poetical passages, far surpassing European poetry" (Moore, Life 48). His praise is disagreeable to Islam because it does not even indicate the Qur'an's unsurpassability by all European and all world poetry, if we presumably can call the Qur'an poetry (no Muslim can).

Third, Byron employs poetical terminology in his allusions to the Qur'an. He refers to a "sura," chapter of the Qur'an, as "a poem." For example, in his notes, Byron refers to "Surat Yusuf," or the Joseph Chapter of the Qur'an as a beautiful Persian poem. The story of Zuleika, "Potiphar's wife" and Joseph, Byron writes, "constitutes one of the finest Mussulman poems" (Complete 895). Then Byron refers to an "ayat" or verse from the Qur'an as "a hymn." In "The Bride of Abydos," the narrator describes "Koranic chanters" as reciting the "hymn of fate" at the funeral of Zuleika.

> The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear?
> Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,
> The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate
>
> ("The Giaour" ll. 627-629 275)

Byron reiterates the same idea in "The Giaour." Byron is perhaps mixing his knowledge of Christian hymns with Qur'anic texts.

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"Sublime" is another poetical term with no religious connotation Byron applies to the Qur'an. His usage is not surprising, since he applies "sublime" to the Bible, as well. Byron identifies the witch of Endor as "one of the most sublime passages in the scripture" (Critical 2: 265; Stanhope 517). Additionally, he speaks of the Book of Job as "too sublime," and offers a significant moral lesson (Byron, Critical 2: 265). The poet also applies the term "sublime" to pagan literature like Homer's. He speaks of the Illiad and the Odyssey as "one Grand historical poem" (Critical 2: 259, 325). He calls Aeschylus "sublime." In fact, Byron praises all grand literatures as such, which is clear in his attitude towards literature.

Yet, that is not all the evidence. The fourth and most important point of Byron's disagreement with the Islamic tradition is his perception of the Qur'an as the poetry of Muhammad. Byron again directly states that the poet of the Qur'an is "Mahomet." Byron's 1806 reading list of the world's poets he read includes Muhammad: "Arabia--Mahomet, whose Koran. . . ." (Moore, Life 48).

Fifth, attitudes of Byron's Muslim characters suggest a disregard for the Qur'an as a revealed book from Allah. Consider the following situations.

In one situation, Zuleika disregards the Qur'an. She reads the Qur'an while spending time in the bower with her

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half-brother, Selim, with whom she has an incestuous love relationship. They reached the bower:

> Where oft her lute she wont to tune,
> And oft her Koran conn'd apart.
>
> ("The Bride of Abydos" 330)

The bower is their frequent meeting place, a place where the two lovers carry on their relationship, and where Zuleika also plays her lute and reads the Qur'an. For this character, there is nothing extremely meaningful in reading the Qur'an; it is simply one of several activities.

In a second situation, Zuleika is described as wearing her mother's "sainted amulet" with the Kursee text engraved on it:

> And o'er her silken Ottoman
> Are thrown the fragrant beads of
> amber,
> O'er which her fairy fingers ran;
> Near these, with emerald rays beset
> (How could she thus that gem forget?),
> Her mother's sainted amulet,
> Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,
> Could smooth this life and win the
> next; . . . .
>
> ("The Bride of Abydos" ll. 64-71 270)

For Zuleika, the amulet has sentimental value because it was her mother's.

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Related to Zuleika and the amulet is Byron's explanation of an amulet in his notes to "The Bride of Abydos":

> The belief in amulets engraved on gems, or enclosed in gold boxes, containing scraps from the Koran, worn round the neck, wrist, or arm, is still universal in the East. The Koorsee (throne) verse in the second cap. of the Koran describes the attributes of the Most High, and is engraved in this manner, and worn by the pious, as the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences.
>
> (Byron, Complete 895)

Byron is appreciative of the Islamic amulet tradition, namely the Koorsee verse amulet. The "Koorsee" verse amulet practice sounds interesting to Byron since the Qur'anic verse inscribed on the amulet focuses on Allah, the "Most High" and His Attributes. Byron, as a deist, has an undeniable belief in God. Secondly, the practice is extremely novel to the romantic poet.

On the other hand, Zuleika, from the Islamic point of view, is far from being "pious;" her character violates that of orthodox Muslim women. Zuleika's attitude is deistic. She resemble Byron's half-sister, Augusta.

In a third situation, Baba, the black eunuch and chief harem guard, swears by both the camel and the Qur'an, which is disagreeable with Islam. Consider Baba's oath.

> Juan was given in charge, as hath been stated;

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> But not by Baba's fault, he said, and swore on
> The holy camel's hump, besides the Koran.
>
> (Don Juan VI 865)

In Islam, a Muslim may swear only by Allah, as discussed in Chapter Two. He may also swear by the holy book of Allah, the Qur'an. But it is unlawful for the orthodox Muslim to swear "by the camel and the Qur'an" as Baba does. This situation, presented in Byron's poetry, is satirical and critical. When Byron uses the camel and the Qur'an allusion, he may have in mind the English tradition's fabricated story about the Qur'an and the camel. If so, he aims to criticize Muhammad and Islam. One cannot fully comprehend this allusion unless he is aware of such legends in the English tradition.

A sixth evidence behind Byron's rejection of the Qur'an as a revelation from Allah to Muhammad is Byron's broader rejection of the entire Muslim creed, except for the belief in Allah and His unity. Byron denies the Prophethood of Muhammad, the Day of Judgment, paradise, hell, angels, predestination. Byron also rejects Muslim social laws, such as polygamy, slavery and criminal laws such as the prohibition of wine (liquor) and infidelity.

Evaluation and Understanding

We have argued that Byron disagrees that the Qur'an is a revealed holy book. Let us now explore even more insightful proof of his rejection of Islam as a revealed religion

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by showing his rejection of other revealed religions: Judaism and Christianity.

To start with, the poet takes a deistic position on revealed religion, since he states:

> . . . I do not believe in any revealed religion, because no religion is revealed: and if it pleases the Church to damn me for not allowing a nonentity, I throw myself on the mercy of the 'Great First Cause,' least understood.
>
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 29, 52)

Byron contends revealed religions are a "nonentity" or nothing. Kennedy himself accused the Socinians, one group of deists, of representing ". . . the whole necessity of revelation, as perfectly useless (qtd. in McGann 250). Byron, by the way, is a Socinian deist, as is his wife.

He also speaks out generally against religion. "Religion . . . is something beyond human powers, and has failed in all human hands . . ." (Byron, Works 5: 554). Consequently, Byron tells his friend Edward Noel Long, "Of religion I know nothing, at least in its favour" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115).

More specifically, the poet does not believe in revealed books. "God would have made His will known without books, considering how very few could read them when Jesus of Nazaret lived" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115; Collins 60). Moreover, Byron writes,

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> I abhor books of religion, though I reverence and love my God. without the blasphemous notions of sectaries, or belief in their absurd and damnable heresies, mysteries, and Thirty-nine Articles. (Moore, Life 84; Critical 1: 168)

The poet goes on to say:

> . . . why should I believe in mysteries no one understands because written by some who chose to mistake madness for inspiration, and style themselves Evangelicals?
>
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 19)

Next, Byron indicates his rejection of Christianity and Judaism. He does not accept the Genesis story of creation and the fall, the Mosaical speculation of the origin of the world, or the Ten Commandments. In response to Kennedy, who speaks out in favor of original sin, the poet argues:

. . . these doctrines, which you mention original sin and atonement] lead us back to the difficulties of original sin, and to the stories of the Old Testament, which many who call themselves Christians reject . . . . [T]he history of the creation and the fall is, by many doctors of the Church, believed to be a mythos, or at least an allegory.

(qtd. in McGann 249)

In the above remark to Kennedy, and elsewhere, he refuses to accept the Biblical creation of Adam and Eve (Byron, Byronic Thoughts 15). Galt acknowledges that the poet told Kennedy

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he had no belief in miracles (336), which suggests that Byron rejects all of the miraculous events that happen to Old and New Testament prophets, as well as to some of the apostles of Jesus. One example of his denial of miracles in the Bible is his refusal to accept the virginity of Mary in Don Juan (XI v-vi 789; XIII lxxii 816). Instead, Byron favors metaphysical and natural speculation (Critical 1: 86).

In reference to the Ten Commandments, the poet states that he prefers Confucius' sayings to the Ten Commandments (Byron, Byronic Thoughts 13). The fact that he views revealed religion as myth is prevalent in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage when he refers to Islam and Christianity as cross and crescent, and states they are "foul superstition" (XLIV 201).

Byron rejects the "Taurat" and the Bible, since he sees no reason to be a Jew or Christian. ". . . [A] virtuous Gentile, may be saved, you do away with the necessity of being a Jew or Christian . . . Christianity is of no avail" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 29). As for Christians, Byron condemns the 72 sects who fight each other for the Lord (Perkins 928), and burn each other with good conscience (Don Juan I lxxxiii 646). They are "hollow hypocrites" (Don Juan V xxviii 715). Besides, Byron tells his friend Hodgson, a Christian, that the foundation of Christianity is injustice because ". . . the son of God, the pure, the immaculate, the

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innocent, is sacrificed for the Guilty" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 29, 52). The poet contends more harshly, "You degrade the Creator, in the first place, by making Him a begetter of Children; and in the next place you convert Him into a Tyrant over an immaculate and injured Being" (2: 29, 52). Moreover, Byron believes "Christianity is not the best source of inspiration for a poet. No poet should be tied down to a direct profession of faith" (Medwin 77; Critical 1: 168).

Catholics are faced with the brunt of Byron's criticism against Christianity. Fairchild argues that Byron attacks Catholic abuses (402). The poet ridicules the Virgin Mary, the Pope, priests, vicars, Catholic mass for the dead, and the Catholic sacrament. According to Kennedy and McGann, the poet also attacks some Catholic beliefs: placing the Virgin Mary before Christ, placing Christ before God, substituting the Apostle Paul for the Virgin, placing Paul above Jesus, and placing Jesus above the Almighty (529; 250).

The poet expresses dislike for Methodists and Calvinists, additionally. He criticizes Methodists for their "Mania" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115). As well, he opposes the Calvin concept of damnation (McGann 248). In fact, Byron's personal rejection of Calvinism led to his religious skepticism (Battenhouse 161).

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Byron also views revelation as unnecessary because he thinks men are born with ethics; they do not need to be taught morals through God's books. Men think for themselves, without reliance on religion for morals (Kennedy 568; McGann 250). Byron argues that there are no "moral equations" between man and God (McGann 249). Reinforcing this interpretation is Byron's comment that God does not dictate morals through revealed religions (McGann 247).

The poet prefers poetry to religion due to its moral qualities:

> In my mind, the highest of all poetry is ethical poetry, as the highest of all earthly objects must be moral truth. . . . What made Socrates the greatest of men? His moral truth--his ethics. What behoved Jesus Christ the Son of God hardly less than his miracles? His moral precepts. And if ethics have made a philosopher the first of men, and have not been disdained as an adjunct to his Gospel by the Deity himself, are we to be told that ethical poetry, or didactic poetry, or by whatever name you term it, is not the very first order of poetry? . . . . It requires more mind, more wisdom, more power, than all the 'forests' that ever were 'walked for their description,' and all the epics that ever were founded upon fields of battle. (Byron, Works 5)

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And in another place, Byron writes ethical poetry makes men better and wiser. Then he raises the question, ". . . and are we to be told this too by one of the Priesthood?" (Moore, Life 696).

However, Byron does not deny the Bible's ethics. Consider what the poet writes about the Bible and the message of Jesus in it, and his perception of the Qur'an as ethical poetry becomes clearer. Byron expresses the moral importance of the life of Jesus (McGann 251), calling Jesus the greatest of men for "His moral precepts" and "his miracles" (Moore, Life 696). Byron believes ". . . the ideas of Jesus worthy of imitation; he showed in his actual history that he had lived as he had said life ought to be lived" (qtd. in McGann 250). Consequently, the importance of Jesus' life ". . . lay in its exemplary value" (qtd. in McGann 250). This conception of the life and teaching of Jesus possessing ethical value, Byron transfers to the Bible. Furthermore, his stand for the moral value of the Bible is based on careful reading. Byron explains:

> I have read with more attention than half of them teachers with their own denunciations and doctrines, the Book of Christianity, and I admire the liberal and truly charitable principles which Christ has laid down. (qtd. in McGann 250)

Battenhouse believes the Old Testament gave Byron "positive moral grandeur" (161).

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Because of all of these deistic principles, Byron expresses criticism of organized religion (Fairchild 402). Fairchild contends,

> Any form of religion which imposed outward control upon his passions would have been repugnant to Byron, but his unwillingness to deny the faith which he could never accept arose from his interwoven scepticism and superstition . . . . (397)

In the place of organized religion, Byron and other deists favor natural religion. Accordingly, man knows what is morally right from his own natural instincts. The poet likes natural religions and philosophies, since they entail no revelations, laws or fighting. In one statement, Byron says he prefers other philosophies and primitive religions over Christianity.

> I am no Platonist, I am nothing at all; but I would sooner be a Paulician, Manichean, Spinozist, Gentile, Pyrrhonian, Zoroastrian, than one of the seventy-two sects who are tearing each other to pieces . . . . (qtd. in Perkins 928)

In another remark, he states that he prefers Confucius and Socrates to the Ten Commandments and St. Paul (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173). Instead of being inspired by Christianity, Byron, the poet, chooses to be inspired by

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". . . metaphysics, Nature, anti-Mosaical speculations on the origins of the world, and sources of poetry that are shut out by Christianity" (Medwin 77). These sources of poetry are found in pagan religions, other philosophies, and ethics. Philosophers, according to the poet, teach us moral good, rather than the clergy. Byron also emphasizes that the philosopher's gospel is not disdained by God (Moore, Life 696).

It is clear that Byron favors natural religion over organized religion. It has also already been established that he denies revealed religions and revealed books, so the poet cannot accept the Qur'an as revealed by God. He can only attribute the Qur'an to Muhammad. And, in fact, the poet is not alone in this view that is extremely disagreeable with Islam. That the Qur'an is the work of Muhammad, rather than the work of Allah, is the perception of many members of the English tradition. It was a popular belief among the majority of English authors. Among English writers who hold views similar to Byron's on this point are Mandeville, George Sandy, Humphrey Prideaux, Alexander Ross, Isaac Barrows, and Samuel Butler.

One reason they may have so readily accepted Muhammad as the Qur'an's author is because, as Smith and Chew point out, most Renaissance scholars were ignorant of the Qur'an, and attacked it (11; 389). These critics reject the Islamic holy book as revelation. They prefer to accept legends

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alluding to those who wrote the Qur'an--the pigeon, Sergius, and others. So, they react with hostility towards the holy book.

Yet, a minority of English writers sympathize with Islam, praising the Qur'an as sublime in language and content. But still, it appears that they dismiss the holy book as a revelation from God. Members of this camp include Sale, Gibbon, and Voltaire.

On the whole, the poet is in conflict with orthodox Muslim beliefs concerning the Qur'an. Most of his treatment is disagreeable with the Islamic tradition. Byron's deistic beliefs take the lead in having the most significant influence on his references to the Qur'an, followed closely by the English tradition's influence.

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CHAPTER V: PROPHET MUHAMMAD

This chapter will discuss Prophet Muhammad in Byron's writings. But first, let us focus on the Prophet in Islamic and English traditions.

Islamic Tradition

The belief in all prophets of Allah including Prophet Muhammad is the fourth article of the Islamic faith (3:83-85). There were 124,000 prophets and 315 messengers, according to the traditions of Muhammad. Mentioned in the Qur'an are Adam, Enoch, Noah, Heber or Hud, Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Lut (Lot), Moses, Aaron, Jethro or Shuaib, Zacharias, John the Baptist or Yahya, Jesus, David, Solomon, Elias, Elisha, Job, Jonah or Yunus, Aesop or Lukman, Isaiah or Zu'l-Kifl, Methusaleh or Salih, and Muhammad.

In the Islamic belief, Muhammad is the Prophet and Messenger of God (36:1-6; 48:29) and the "seal of the prophets" (23:40). Muhammad's Prophethood, Allah says, was announced by Moses in the Taurat or the Law (46:10), and by Jesus in the Injil or the Bible (7:157).

According to Muslim doctors' interpretation of the Bible, the Greek word "Periclytos," "Paracletos" or "Paraclete" means "the Comforter" or Muhammad. The present Gospel of John (14:16; 15:26; 16:7), they add, refers to Prophet Muhammad (Ali 388, 1540). Muslim scholars argue

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that the Gospel of St. Barnabas makes a specific reference to Muhammad (Ali 144, 388).

Since he was illiterate, Muhammad's miracle, the sign of his Prophethood, is the Holy Qur'an (2:97). Allah says to Muhammad: "And thou wast not (able) to recite a Book before this (Book came), nor art thou (able) to transcribe it with thy right hand . . ." (29:48).

Like Adam and all prophets, Muhammad was a man, having been created from dust (3:5; 21:7-8). "Muhammad is no more than a messenger; messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him . . ." (3:144). Also, Muhammad would die and face the Judgement Day as other men (39:30-31). Muhammad was a Servant to Allah and sincerely worshipped his Lord. Allah commanded Muhammad "to be the first of those who bow to God in Islam" (39:11-14).

Being the seal of prophets, Muhammad's message is universal until the Day of Judgment: "We have not sent thee but as a universal Messenger to men" (34:28), including the People of the Book, the Jews and the Christians (5:19).

Muhammad was to fulfill several responsibilities as a Prophet. The major one was to call for the unity of God and the rejection of Trinity (112:1-4). Muhammad was sent to preach against idolatry in Arabia (21:22). He cracked down ruthlessly on idolatry and destroyed it. Allah strongly condemns idolatry. In Suras 52:45-43 and 9:28, the idolaters are declared unclean and forbidden to enter the

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Sacred Mosque of Mecca. "O ye who believe! Truly the pagans are unclean; So let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the Sacred Mosque" (9:28). Additionally, idolatry is viewed as the unpardonable sin in Suras 4:48 and 9:113.

Allah states Muhammad had no lust for power, wealth, or women. He had no attraction for wealth (20:131), and his life was very simple (25:7). He stood above all low motives (6:162), bearing his mission with patience (46:35) and asking for no rewards (42:23). He was kind to his followers (15:88) and forgiving to his enemies (15:85).

As a Prophet, Muhammad was a guided person; his behavior is ever under Allah's guidance. Of Muhammad's character, Allah says: "And thou standest on an exalted standard of character" (68:4; 94:1-4).

Respect and obedience to Muhammad and his tradition are commands from Allah. Allah asks the Muslims to "Obey God, and obey the Apostle" and to settle differences according to the Qur'an and the tradition of Muhammad (4:59).

However, Prophet Muhammad did not escaped the criticism of the Unbelievers. They doubted and rejected Muhammad's Prophethood (40:34), calling him a liar and Impostor (3: 184). They accused him of forgery (34:7-8), reception of tutoring (40:14), madness (68:2,51), sorcery (37:45) and soothsaying (36:69-70). Additionally, the Unbelievers mocked the Prophet and his followers: "And when they see

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you, they do not take you for aught but a mockery: Is this he whom Allah has raised to be an apostle?" (25:41-42).

But, Allah refutes all the charges against Muhammad, in many chapters of the Qur'an. Muhammad was not an impostor (25:4-6), mad (68:1-8), soothsayer (69:41-52), or a poet (26:224-227). Above all, Allah says, the Unbelievers as a rule have denied all the prophets before Muhammad (43:6-7).

Finally, here is a brief Islamic note on the correct name of the Prophet, his religion and his followers. "Muhammad," or one who is worthy of praise, is the Prophet's name. Another name of the Prophet is "Ahmed." "Muhammad" is mentioned in the Qur'an, in Suras 47, 3:138, 33:40, 47:29. The religion of Allah, or the religion that He revealed to Muhammad and all prophets before him is called "Al-Islam" or the "submission to Allah" (3:19, 83,85). Al-Islam is the natural religion for every human; Muhammad says: "every one is born a Muslim." Those who profess the religion of Al-Islam are called Muslims or Mu'mins (2:133).

It is incorrect to substitute Muhammadanism for Al-Islam, and Muhammadans, Arabs, Saracens, Turks, Moors, Tartars, among others as alternatives for Muslims. These terms are Western ethnic terms meant to deny Islam as a religion. Al-Islam rejects such ethnic terms. Discard "nationalism," Muhammad says, it is rotten. Many European scholars consider such terms offensive to Muslims (Hughes 400).

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English Tradition

Most English writers are hostile to Muhammad. They corrupt "Muhammad," "Islam" and "Muslims." They accuse him of lust and power, view him as an impostor and false god, and attack his descendants and followers.

First, English writers express disagreement with Islam by using corrupt versions of the Prophet's name, Islam and Muslims. They corrupt "Muhammad" to "Mahomet," the vulgar English term. In his famous biography of the Prophet (which Byron read) Dr. Humphery Prideaux confesses that "Mahomet" is the corrupt form of "Muhammad."

> Only as the name of the impostor himself, I rather choose to make use of the vulgar manner of writing it, than make any change . . . and therefore I call him everywhere Mahomet, although Mohammad be the alone true and proper pronunciation of the name. (xxii)

Rycaut (97) and Beckford (111) also refer to the Prophet as "Mahomet." The Oxford English Dictionary refers to "Mahomet" as the most popular corrupt form and to "Mohammad" as the correct form; yet, English writers use the corrupt version "Mahomet" (Murray et al. 249). Samuel Chew writes that "Mahomet" is incorrect; whereas, "Mohammad" is the correct name of the Prophet (vii). The Oxford English Dictionary contains over 73 variations and spellings used by

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English writers, "Mahomet," "Mahimet," "Mahumet," "Mahmet," "Mawmet," "Maumet," and "Mawhow," along with others.

These corruptions of the Prophet's names, employed by English writers, according to the Oxford English Dictionary and Smith's research are derogatory; they view Muhammad as an idol or false god. This idea is further manifested in "Mahound" and its derivations--"Mauhound," "Mahount," "Mahownd," "Machound," "Machoun," "Mahoun," "Mahown," "Mahone," "Mahon," "Mahun," and "Macon" (Byron uses "Macon") (Murray et al. 249). "Mahound," carrying the most negative connotation than any other form, is employed by Rushdie in Satanic Verses. "Mahound" in English usage means false prophet, false god, devil, idol, heathen, and monster (Murray et al. 249; Smith 1; Chew 388-97; Ostling 31; Hitti 50). To Gibbon (27), Ockley(3), and Sale (1), however, the correct name is "Mohammed."

English writers also corrupt Islam and Muslims. "Muhammadanism" is used for Islam, and "Muhammadans" and ethnic names for Muslims. Labeling Islam as "Muhammadanism" was to view Islam as a false religion; whereas, Muslim ethnic labels did not acknowledge Islam as a religion (Lewis 61). Edward Said explains that "Mohammadan" is an "inslulting European designation," while "Islam" is the "correct Muslim name" (66). Several critics present unfavorable religious terms for Islam and Muslims. Rycaut speaks of "Mahometanism" (98), Richardson of "Mahometan religion" (Beckford

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195), and Prideaux of "Mahometans." Gibbon uses "Mahometans" (Rise 1743) and "Moslems" (Rise 1728).

English authors also employ ethnic terms for Muslims. According to Lewis, an authority on Islamic matters, English writers use "Arabs," "Persians," "Hagarenes," "Assayrians," "Tartars," "Moors," "Turks," and "Saracens" instead of "Muslims" (Gibbon 61). The majority of English scholars choose to employ disagreeable terms for Muhammad, Islam, and Muslims.

English writers also violate the Islamic tradition by charging the Prophet with lust for power and women. Humphrey Prideaux accuses Muhammad of imposing Islam by the sword and "pandering carnal interests." This is the perception of Southey (Smith 107), Rycaut (104-105), Knolles, and Moore. However, writers like the author of The Golden Medley and G. Higgins justify the Prophet's conduct against idolaters (Smith 154).

English scholars show their hostility to Islam most when they accuse Muhammad of being a false prophet or "impostor." Sir John Mandeville, a medieval writer, calls Muhammad false because of the polygamy law and the supposed sexual license. George Sandy accuses Muhammad of wickedness, worldliness, cruelty, treachery, repugnance, and false prophethood (Smith 10-11). Andre Sieur du Ryer, translator of the Qur'an in 1649, calls Muhammad an impostor (Smith 27). Issac Barrows harshly addresses Muhammad as an

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inhumane, ignorant impostor (Smith 26-27). Lancelot Addison states that Muhammad deceived and fooled mankind with his "cursed religion" and "heresy" (Smith 30).

Ockley, professor of Arabic at Cambridge University, speaks of Muhammad in The History of the Saracens as "the great impostor," "this false prophet," and of Islam as "the "superstition" (79-80).

In The True Nature of Imposture Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet, Humphrey Prideaux argues that Muhammad and the Pope are impostors (150). He violently attacks Muhammad, contending that he propagated Islam by fraud and was a deliberate impostor (134). The Prophet was a master of deceit, extraordinarily cunning and cautious (38). Moreover, Prideaux views Muhammad's fasting and praying at Mt. Hira as pretentious (10-11). He even encouraged deists to read his work to learn the real nature of a false prophet (134). Unfortunately, Prideaux's work became a standard reference on Muhammad, quoted by subsequent English writers for more than a century (Smith 32).

Voltaire's Essays on Universal History calls Muhammad an impostor who played the role of a prophet and pretended to receive revelations (Smith 112-113). David Jones' history of the Turks; Bayle's 1709 translation of Dictionnaire historique et critique (Smith 69); Four Treasties concerning the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Mahometans (Smith 68), all identify Muhammad as an Impostor.

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In the 1700's and 1800's, this animosity toward Muhammad continued. William Paley (1794) insinuates that Muhammad was a liar (Smith 107). A visitor to Jerusalem, William Rae Wilson went so far as to call Muhammad an "arrogant worm" (Smith 137). The anonymous Life of Mahomet (1799), depicts Muhammad as worse than Julian the Apostate, Judas, Nero, and Caligula, and places him in hell (Smith 149).

Muhammad, Moses and Jesus are also impostors in a treatise, De Tribus impostoribus Mundi, attributed to and discussed in circles of deists in different countries in the 18th century (Chew 405-406). The 1802 The life of Mahomet or the History of that Imposture. which was Begun, carried on, and finally Established by him in Arabia also portrays Muhammad as a false prophet (Smith 245).

After the death of Byron, the view of Muhammad as an impostor was kept alive. Muhammad is defamed by Edward Upham in A History of the Ottoman Empire (Smith 147), Cook Taylor (Smith 152), and William Sime in The History of Mohammed and His Successors (Smith 151).

Others depict Muhammad as false in their literary works. Lydgate (Hitti Islam 55), Landor, Cowley, Dante, and Southey (Smith 40, 159, 324) are examples. Voltaire's Le Fanatisme, ou Mahomet le prophete presents Muhammad as an "impostor, tyrant, and libertine" (Hitti Islam 59).

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Additionally, Thomas Moore portrays Muhammad as a veiled or false prophet in Moore's Lalla Rookh (185).

> Ye shall have miracles, and sound ones too,
> Seen, heard, attested. ev'ry thing--but true.
> A heav'n too ye must have, ye lords of dust,--
> A splendid Paradise,--pure souls ye must:
> That Prophet ill sustains his holy call,
> Who finds not heav'ns to suit the tastes of all;
> . . . . (383)

The idea of the impostor is also believed by John Sheffield, Lillo in The Christian Hero, and Rev. James Miller in Mahomet, the Impostor (Smith 86, 91, 98). In Hajji Baba of Ispahan, James Morier describes Muhammad and his religion as the cloak for hypocrisy (Smith 164-165).

And what about Salman Rushdie in 1989? Satanic Verses continues the long history of condemning Muhammad as false, so common among English authors. The majority of English writers accuse Prophet Muhammad of being an impostor.

English writers have also fabricated false "legends" about Muhammad to enhance the impostor charge (Chew 406). Legends include the coffin, resurrection, camel and dove.

The most well-known legend among Western writers from the Middle Ages on is the coffin legend. Accordingly, the Prophet's body is placed in an iron coffin suspended in the air by loadstones fixed to the roof of the temple at Mecca.

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The coffin legend is utilized in the poetic verse of Tamburlaine.

> My sacred Mahomet, the friend of God,
> Whose holy Alcoran remain with us
> Whose glorious bed, when he left the world
> Closed in a coffin mounted up the air,
> And hung on stately Mecca's temple-roof,
> I swear to keep the source inviolable. (Smith 10)

Samuel Butler's Hudibras, in 1663, refers mockingly to the myth, depicting Muhammad's coffin hanging in a house of mirth (Part II, Canto III, ll. 436-442). In the October 9, 1711 issue of The Spectator, Addison equates an ass between two bundles of hay to Muhammad's coffin between the load-stones.

A century later, Isaac Brandon depicts Muhammad's coffin swinging in the air with throngs of Arabs and lying dervises surrounding it (Smith 195). Southey mentions the coffin legend in "Roderick, the Last of the Gothes." He contends that Muhammad's coffin is suspended by miracle, not magnetism (Smith 1760). Finally, Thomas Moore describes the tomb suspended between heaven and hell (Lalla 385).

English and Western writers fabricated many stories about Muhammad and his camel. One story is that the Prophet was given a certain book by Bahira, Sergius, with instructions to fasten it to the horns of a cow or camel that had been secretly trained. The animal would bring the volume

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upon its horns to the Prophet in public. Then Muhammad would proclaim the Qur'an as God's Word miraculously sent to him from heaven (Chew 465-66). Rycaut, Alexander Ross, Moore, and Beckford refer to the camel myth (Smith 30).

The fictional pigeon legend is another popular legend. Muhammad supposedly trained a white dove or pigeon to sit on his shoulder, pick grains of corn from his ear, in return bringing him heavenly or angelic messages and calling it "the holy Ghost" (Hitti Islam 54; Chew 399, 409). Writers invented this story to support their theory of Muhammad as an impostor. Vincent of Beauvais (Chew 406), John Lydgate (Hitti Islam 55), Henry Smith, Thomas Coryat (Chew 407), and Andre Sieur du Rye (Smith 27) believed the pigeon legend. In Henry VI, Act I, Scene II, lines 140-141, Shakespeare writes:

> Was Mahomet inspired by a dove?
> Thou with an eagle art inspired, then.

Reginald Scot calls it Muhammad's "Holie-ghost" which "came and told a tail in his eare . . . also brought him a scroll, wherein was written, Rex esto, and laid the same in his neck" (qtd. in Chew 408).

Dryden's The Hind and the Panther (258-259), John Sheffield's "Dialogue between Mahomet and the Duke of Guise" (Smith 86), De Quincy's Confessions of an English Opium-Eater (Smith 158), Thomas Moore's "The Love of the Angels" (Smith 188), and Sir Walter Raleigh (Chew 409) allude to the

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legend. It remained in the 18th century along with other fables. Eighteenth century bird-fanciers even gave the name Mahomet to one type of pigeon (Chew 408).

In addition to the coffin, camel and dove legends, a variety of others are discussed by some English authors. John of Trevisa, refers to Muhammad being poisoned by his followers to test his miracles (Smith 9). Both Francis Bacon and Charles Lamb allude to "Muhammad's moving the to the hill" (Smith 7). Alexander Ross believes Muhammad was a slave and the son of a Jewess (Smith 30). He also believes the turban story. Supposedly the prophet wore a turban because he had a "scald head" and his followers did the same to imitate him (Smith 27). William Sime accuses the Saracens of having tails (Smith 151). Sir Walter Scott (1827) states that he believes the legends about Muhammad (Smith 167).

Most of the legends depict Muhammad as an impostor. They are fictitious interpretations based on invention and fabrication. The myths of the Middle Ages were accepted by most Renaissance and later writers without question. The false view of Muhammad as an impostor was widely accepted in the English tradition, with false legends to support it.

The most degrading of all criticism directed against Muhammad is the charge that the Prophet of God was a pagan god or idol. As Gibbon and Smith ironically put it, "the man who preached that there is no god but God becomes

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himself a god" (Smith 2). Viewing Muhammad as an idol or pagan god was common in the Middle Ages. "Mahomet" or "Mahoun," and other derivations including "Mammet" or "Maumet" stood for idol or false god. Rycaut refers to votaries in a chapter entitled "The Turkish Monasteries and Votaries."

Medieval and Renaissance romances, mysteries, and other works such as Mary Magdalene and Piers Plowman portray Muhammad as an idol. Chaucer, Lydgate, William Dunbar, and Shakespeare refer to Muhammad as an idol, as well. In some plays of the time, characters like pharaohs, Herod, Caesar, the heathen of northern Europe and Saracens are represented in the romances of the Renaissance as worshipping "Termagant," "Apollo," "Jupiter," "Juno," "Mars," "Plato," "Margot," the "Alkoran," and "Mahomet" (Smith 1-2). John Lydgate claims Mahomet "caused an image of Venus to be set up. He made the Sarasyns perform their acts of worship on Friday" (Chew 399). In "The Fall of Princes," Lydgate writes that the idolater Mahomet became the governor of the Arabians, Sarasyns, and the Turks with the folk of Persia and Media. He gathered people together, "gan to wex a werreiour," and conquered Alexandria "with many mo cities." Being "lecherous of courage," Muhammad made an image of Venus and made the Saracens worship it on Friday (Chew 399). Priests and congregations possessed holy relics of "Mahomet" such as his neck bone and eye lid. Since the ancient Arabs

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before Islam prayed to idols, many writers applied the same trend to Muslim characters in their works.

In the romance plays of the Renaissance, fictitious Saracens are considered pagans who worship Muhammad as God (Smith 27). Saracen (Muslim, Arab, Turkish, etc.) characters in plays of the Middle Ages are depicted as swearing "by Mahomet," "by Mahoun," "by Sir Mahoun," and "by Saint Mahoun" (Smith 2). Notice that the corrupt form of Muhammad's name is used in these oaths. Writers of such dramas commonly use the name "Mahoun" (indicating false god or idol) in the oaths. The concept of Muhammad as God and Muslim characters praying to "Mahomet" did not cease with the Middle Ages; it persisted through the middle of the 17th century (Smith 3). Muslim characters in Edward Young's 1721 tragedy pray to Muhammad as if he were God (Smith 93), as do those in Francis Gentleman's drama (Smith 129). Gentleman depicts characters swearing to Muhammad (Smith 129). Swearing by the beard of Mahomet is described in the 1815 play by Pocock entitled The Net-Maker and His Wife (Smith 202).

However, some English critics deny the idol charges against Muhammad. Sale states that Muhammad possessed admirable intentions of eliminating idolatry. The "Muhammadans" are "far from being idolaters, as some ignorant writers have pretended" (Preliminary 16). The Golden Melody (1720) depicts Muhammad as truly honorable in abolishing idolatry and putting the worship of God in its

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place (Smith 73). Henri Comte de Boulainvillier's Life of Mahomet praises Muhammad for retaining the natural notion of God (Smith 75).

Gibbon makes the most admirable remarks on this issue. He argues why Muhammaad destroyed idolatry:

> The prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principle that whatever rises must set, that whatever is born must die, that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish. (Rise 1737)

Then he states Muhammad's followers, "from India to Morocco" are "Unitarians" assigned to "recall their country from idolatry and vice" (Rise 1737). In addition, the danger of idolatry has been prevented by the interdiction of images" (Rise 1737). In Gibbon's mind, the objective of most prophets has been to restore the worship of the "One God."

The historian contrasts Muhammad's precepts to those of Christianity. Gibbon considers any religion that gives "sons, or daughters, or companions, to the supreme God" as "guilty" (Rise 1736-1737).

> . . . the Mohammedans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. 'I believe in one God, and

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> Mahomet as the apostle of God' is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. (McCloy 47)

He emphasizes that Muhammad never encouraged the image of God be degraded by any visible idol.

Others convey Gibbon's view of Muhammad wiping out idolatry. Rev. Charles Forster, a romantic writer, praises Muslim worship, and contrasts it to the "idols in Catholic churches." He also points out that Islam has its roots in Christianity, from the line of Isaac and Abraham (Smith 153). Some objective English scholars suggest that accusations of Muhammad as a false god or idol are unfounded.

Members of the English tradition are generally highly critical of Muhammad. They refer to him by derogatory names, accusing him of lusting for power and women, being an impostor, and being a false god or idol. Despite their attack, a smaller group of English scholars refers to Muhammad with acceptable names and defends him against the accusations of lust for power and women, impostor, and false god or idol.

Byron's Tradition

The poet expresses strong antagonism for Muhammad in his poetry and prose. Byron calls the prophet "Macon," accuses him of power and lust, refers to him as an impostor, and idol or false god.

Byron does not use the Prophet's proper name, Muhammad. Instead, he employs the vulgar English term: "Mahomet,"

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like the majority of English writers before him. Sometimes Byron mentions the word "prophet," but he does not recognize Muhammad as such. This fact will become apparent in the impostor section of this chapter. Several times he refers to Muhammad as "Macon," which in the English tradition means an idol or a false God.

Byron also differs with Islam in reference to the term "Islam." He never addresses the word "Islam" in his writings. If he refers to Islam, he merely uses such terms as "Mahometan," "Mohammedan," "Mussulmans," typical English references.

Byron is even unsympathetic towards the followers of Islam. He does not simply speak of them as Muslims, but also calls them "Arabs," "Turks," "Persians," "Albanians," "Mussulmen," "Turkuman," "Tartars," "Moors," and "Saracens." He often refers to Muslims with ethnic terms, all typically English or Western.

Charging Muhammad with lust for power and women is another proof of Byron's hostility towards the Prophet, Islam, and Muslims. Muhammad, whom Byron views as a soldier, strove for power and control. The idea of the founder of Islam as a fighter comes to the poet since he places Muhammad in a catalog of the world's well-known soldiers (Moore, Life 53). The passage below exemplifies the idea of the prophet seeking power.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,

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> The shrieks of the conquered, the conqueror's
> yell;
> The roofs that we fired, and the plunder
> we shared,
> The wealthy we slaughter'd, the lovely we
> spared.
> I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
> He neither must know who would serve the
> Vizier:
> Since the days of our prophet the Crescent
> ne'er saw
> A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.
> . . .
> Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand.
>
> (Childe Harold 205-206)

The emphasis is on Ali Pasha's might, spoil, and plunder when battling the Greeks at Previsa. His power is compared to Muhammad's when he was spreading Islam. Byron suggests that the Prophet was as victorious as Ali, but was powerful without mercy; destroying, stealing, and killing to fulfill his ambitions. Such an association is not particularly agreeable with Islamic tradition. Reference to lust for power is found in the vizier's announcement to soldiers to destroy the Christian's Corinth in the name of Allah and the Prophet. Occupation of the Eastern Roman Empire, including Constantinople and the occupation of Spain and so on also

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demonstrates Muslim lust for power. Any reference to Muslim holy war is to Byron a reference to Muhammad's lust for power, since Islam focuses on warfare in the cause of God, which Muhammad initiated by orders from God.

Byron links the view of lust for women to his knowledge that the Prophet kept many women as wives and mistresses, as well as instituted polygamy for his followers. The poet suggests that Muhammad was promiscuous and his wives were not virtuous. Muhammad encouraged having concubines and was himself a womanizer, states Byron. This subject is discussed thoroughly in Chapter Ten.

Byron's viewing Muhammad as an impostor is another sign of his enmity. He expresses this indirectly in his general beliefs that religion and prophets are impostors. One passage from Childe Harold's Pilgrimage stresses this attitude.

> Foul Superstition! howso'er disguised,
> Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent,
>   cross,
> For whatsoever symbol thou are prized,
> Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss!
> Who from true worship's gold can separate
>   thy dross? (More 26)

Islam and Muhammad are included since Byron mentions "prophet" and "crescent." Another reference further substantiates Byron's belief of Muhammad as an impostor.

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> As to miracles, I agree with Hume that it is more probable men should lie or be deceived, than that things out of the course of Nature should so happen. Mahomet wrought miracles, Brother the prophet had proselytes, and so would Breslaw the conjuror, had he lived in the time of Tiberius.
> (Collins 61)

In this excerpt Byron's contention is that miracles are lies and deceptions of human beings. Immediately he points out that "Mahomet" brought miracles, implying that he deceived people. Then, Byron ridicules the Prophet when he associates Muhammad with Richard Brother (1757-1824), who believed himself the revealed prince of the Hebrews and ruler of the world. The poet links Muhammad with a magician named Breslaw. He does not place Muhammad in the same category of Abraham, Moses, Jesus or other prophets, but alongside a madman and a conjuror.

An allusion to impostor is made by Byron in reference to Thomas Moore's poem Lalla Rookh (Critical 379). Muhammad is identified in the verse as the "Veiled Prophet" (379). Byron praises Moore's successful portrayal of the false prophet.

Byron substantiates the imposter claim in a five-act play entitled "Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice." The character Doge speaks to Ber:

> As we went forth to take our prey around

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> The isles wrung from the false Mahometan;
> . . . . (III 527)

Byron's statement of taking the island from the "false Mahometan" certainly implies that Muhammad and his religion are false.

Byron still believes Muhammad is an impostor and, therefore, ridicules the prophet. If not, why does he look down upon Muhammad and sarcastically view him as inferior to the following personalities in a journal entry dated November 22, 1813? "I think I rather would have been Bonneval, Ripperda, Alberoni, Hayreddin, or Horuc Barbarossa, or even Wortley Montague, than Mahomet himself" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 329-330). One can grasp Byron's satire by examining the positions of Byron's favorite men, in contrast to Muhammad. One of Marchand's notes explains that Bonneval was a French soldier of fortune, Ripperda a Dutch adventurer who became Prime Minister of Spain under Philip V and later turned Muslim, and Alberoni an Italian adventurer. Hayreddin and Barbarossa were Algerian pirates. Montagu (son of Mary), who served at Fontenoy, was a member of British Parliament and lived as a Moslem with Caroline Dormer, his mistress (Marchand, Byron's Letters 329-330).

Moreover, if Byron believed in the prophesy, he would not refer to the Prophet of Allah as having no "atom of sense" in "To Eliza." He writes,

> Had their prophet possess'd half an atom

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of sense,

He ne'er would have women from para-

dise driven; . . . . (ll. 5-6 29)

Instead, the poet is critical of Muhammad, as these lines suggest. Byron also claims that Muhammad invented the "Turkish heaven" and the houris.

Byron also alludes to several misconstrued legends concerning Muhammad, further strengthening his condemnation. One of these legends pertains to Muhammad's tomb. The poet refers to it in a March 4, 1824 letter to Thomas Moore, which he wrote in Messolonghi, Greece where he died.

> . . . I had an attack of Apoplexy or Epilepsy--the physicians have not exactly decided which--but the alternative is agreeable,--My constitution therefore remains between two opinions--like Mahomet's sarcophagus between the Magnets--All that I can say is--that they nearly bled me to death--by placing the leeches too near the temporal Artery--so that the blood could with difficulty be stopped even with Caustic.
>
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 11: 125)

Byron alludes to the legend of Muhammad's coffin being suspended in midair, as if in limbo between heaven and hell. At this time, Byron's physical health was in a state of limbo.

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In addition to the coffin legend, Byron may have some awareness of the camel legend. The following lines of Don Juan allude to this notion.

> Juan was given in charge, as hath been
>   stated;
> But not by Baba's fault, he said, and
>   swore on
> The holy camel's hump, besides the
>   Koran. (VI 742)

Baba swears by the camel, together with the Qur'an, when confronted by Gulbeyaz about Juan placed under Dudu's charge. The camel is viewed as a holy animal in the pre-Islamic tradition, but Byron is in error to consider the camel legend Islamic.

A third legend involving Muhammad Byron may allude to in his correspondence and in "The Giaour" is the pigeon or dove legend. The poet refers to Davies' favorite quotation from Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra that the "Dove would peck the Estridge" (Murray I: 21). Two lines in "The Giaour" also refer to the dove. Byron also alludes satirically to the "turban" many times.

> But this was taught me by the dove
> To die--and know no second love.
>
> (ll. 1165-1166 321)

This passage may ironically and indirectly relate to the dove supposedly whispering in Muhammad's ear, teaching him

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God's word, written down in the form of the Qur'an. Since Byron uses these references to the dove, he may possess knowledge of the dove or pigeon legend.

Because Byron alludes to the coffin, camel, and dove legends; he must have been aware of the legends through the works of other English authors. He also appears to use them in a satirical manner.

Byron's portraying Muhammad, not only as a false prophet, but also as a false God further substantiates the hostility he expresses for the last prophet. In "Morgante," Byron cites Muhammad five times as "Macon," which connotes false God. Paul E. More explains it as another form of "Mahomet" or "Mahound" in his notes to <u>The Complete Works of Byron</u> (1028). Using the term, Byron writes, "And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed" ("Morgante" XXXV 383). This statement suggests Muhammad is spoken of with irreverence. Another passage reads,

> The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,
> I have had an extraordinary vision;
> A savage serpent fell on me alone,
> And Macon would not pity my condition;
> Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone,
> Upon the cross, preferr'd I my petition;
> His timely succour set me safe and free,
> And I a Christian am disposed to be.
>
> (I xliii 384)

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Muhammad is depicted here as one who would not aid the Saracen (Arab or Muslim) in his dream. Thinking that a poisonous snake had attacked him,

> Mahomet he call'd; but Mahomet
> Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd
> him. (XL 384)

Yet, when the character petitions to Jesus (God), he is freed from danger. The Saracen concludes he is inclined to be a Christian rather than a Muslim. So in this passage Muhammad is juxtaposed against Jesus (God). The stanza certainly indicates that the Saracen perceives him as a false god whom he rejects. This is true for Hassan also. When his life is in danger, Hassan calls upon the Prophet, but Muhammad's power is in vain against the revengeful Giaour ("The Giaour" 258). This serves as an additional evidence that Byron views Muhammad as a false god.

A contrast similar to that made in the lines about the Saracen exists in a third section of "Morgante." Muhammad is compared to the Christian Jesus (God). Morgante is advised as follows:

> The Lord descended to the virgin breast
> Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
> If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest
> Without whom neither sun nor star can
> shine,
> Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,

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Your renegado god, and worship mine,--
Baptize yourself with zeal, since you re-
pent.
To which Morgante answer'd, I'm con-
tent. (XLV 384)

There is no question that Muhammad is perceived as a traitorous pagan god by the speaker in the poem since he is labelled "bad," "false," and "renegado." All these terms are derogatory. Muhammad is directly addressed as a false God in another passage. The character Orlando tells an abbot that Morgante "'hath denounced his Macon false'" (LVI 384). In "The Giaour," Hassan calls on "Mahomet" for aid, but Mahomet is indifferent to him.

In the same way, Muhammad is presented as the "False One" in one of Byron's Hebrew Melodies, "On Jordan's Banks." He is depicted here perhaps as a false God.

On Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries
pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep--
Yet there--even there--oh God! thy
thunders sleep:
There--where thy finger scorch'd the tab-
let stone!
There--where thy shadow to thy people
shone,

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Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself--none living see and not ex-
pire!
Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear;
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's
spears:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be
trod!
How long thy temple worshipless, O God! (217)

Byron describes Sion's hill, the location of the Muslim holy places: the Al-Aqsa's Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. He stresses domination of the area by Turks, and the desire to dismiss them from the holy places. He alludes to the Arabs as idolaters worshipping a false god. "False One," "Baal-adorer," "tyrants," and "votaries," "Arab's camels" serve the purpose of idolatry.

Along with all of his other criticisms of Muhammad being a false god, Byron implies that the Prophet encouraged idol worship by instructing his followers to worship the stars. In one stanza of "A Very Mournful Ballad on the Siege of and Conquest of Alhama," Byron mocks the Moorish king for losing his mind as his major city in Spain was captured by Christians.

Then the Moors, by this aware,
That bloody Mars recall'd them there,
One by one, and two by two,

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> to a mighty squadron grew.
>
> Woe is me, Alhama! (99)

So it is clear that Byron views Muhammad as an idolater.

In addition, Byron and his characters view Muhammad as a false God. The poet equates Muhammad with God on several occasions. Byron swears by Muhammad; in a journal entry or letter he comments,

> Ward--I like Ward. By Mahomet! I begin to think I like every body;--a disposition, not to be encouraged;--a sort of social gluttony, that swallows every thing set before it.
>
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 215)

Byron's oath is like that of swears medieval characters in romance plays who are known to swear by Muhammad, whom they depicted as a false god. He pokes fun at the Prophet here using irony, jokingly referring to Muhammad as God. Parallel to this allusion is a similar one in a letter to Lady L. Mary. The poet writes "Mahomet forbid!" concerning assistance in pursuing a woman named Caroline (Murray 1: 90). This is again like saying "God forbid," associating the Prophet with God.

The same is true in one of Byron's notes to Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Contrasting the charity and toleration of Muslims and Christians, the poet contends, "And shall we then emancipate our Irish Helots? Mahomet forbid! We should then be bad Mussulmans, and worse Christians: at

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present we unite the best of both--. . ." (Complete 885). Muhammad is here placed on the same level as God, and one to swear by--again medieval ideology.

Further, while Byron was in the Orient, he wrote a letter begging his estate manager not to sell Newstead. He pleads with him in the name of Muhammad and others.

> No, ox, yok, yeo (Albanesico), Noa (Nottingham-shirico) Now, . . ., ouk, having given my negative in all the tongues I can refuse in, I call Christ, Mohamet, Confucius and Zoroaster to witness my sincerity and Cam Hobhouse to make it manifest to the ears and eyes of men, and I further ask his pardon for a long postscript to a short letter. (Murray 1: 20)

Byron's characters swear by Muhammad, just as the poet does himself. In "The Bride of Abydos," Selim remembers Giaffir's tyranny.

> . . . for Giaffir's fear
> Denied the courser and the spear--
> Though oft--oh, Mahomet! how oft!--
> In full Divan scoff'd,
> As if my weak unwilling hand
> Refused the bridle or the brand: (272)

He calls out to Muhammad as one will call on God.

As well, Gulbeyaz tells Don Juan that the palace is where the "truly wise anticipate the Prophet's paradise" (V

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184). This statement indicates that Muhammad is the maker of paradise.

The character Baba appeals to Muhammad when pleading with Gulbeyaz not to drown Don Juan. He ". . . Begg'd by every hair of Mahomet's beard" (VI 743). Again, the allusion implies seeking assistance from Muhammad as if he were God (Medieval characters in romance plays carry relics of god Mahoun when they go to the temple to worship him) (Smith 2).

These examples reiterate the medieval notions of Muhammad as a false god or idol. The poet and his Muslim characters do more to tarnish the image of the Islamic Prophet. They mock Muhammad, the laws he established, and his wives.

Evaluation and Understanding

Byron's deistic (Socinian or Unitarian) views are most significant in molding his critical treatment of Muhammad. Deistic views were quite prevalent among the thinkers before and during the 17th and 18th Century in England and Europe. Notable deists were Copernicus, Kepler, Descartes, Boyles, Newton, Sir Thomas Moore, Bacon, Harvey, Gilbert, members of the Royal Society, Gibbon, and Voltaire (Willey 3-4). Deistic beliefs relevant to Byron's treatment of Muhammad include rejection of miracles and prophets, revealed religions, the Trinity, acceptance of one God, and belief in natural religion. As for Socinianism, a type of deism, Byron's wife was a follower of this philosophy. Some of its

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principles are rejection of original sin, atonement, the divinity of Jesus, Virgin birth, and revelation. But Socinianists, like all deists, insist on the unity of God (Kennedy 529; McGann 250). Byron contends that his views are very similar to his wife's views. Therefore, Socinianism, as a brand of deism, has some influence on him.

Because the poet holds many deistic views, why would he accept Islam as revealed, or Muhammad as the Prophet of Islam? Such revelation is too miraculous for Byron, a man without a vision for the intangible. As a deist, his perception is limited only to the physical elements of man's existence, rather than the spiritual. Consequently, it is simply easier for Byron to accept accusations by English critics that Muhammad is a "false prophet" of a "false Religion," and treat him as such in his works. Now, let us consider how Byron's deism and other philosophical opinions have shaped specific aspects of his treatment.

Being a proclaimed Deist (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115), and holding some Socinian (McGann 249-250) beliefs, Byron does not accept Muhammad as a Messenger of Allah. He adheres to the deistic principle of there being no special providence, miracles or divine intervention (P. Wiener 646-652). Notions of any miraculous events are incompatible with the deistic belief that God created the world so perfectly that it needed no other adjustments ("Deism," Encyclopedia Americana 7: 644). In connection

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with Byron, Galt reports that the poet told Kennedy that he had no belief in miracles (336). In a letter to Hodgson, Byron conveys the idea that miracles are ridiculous. "As for miracles, surely Hume has said the last word on their absurdity (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 29). In another comment in which the poet uses irony, he is critical of miracles. "I like his Holiness [the Pope] very much, particularly since an order, which I understand he has lately given, that no more miracles shall be performed." It is not surprising then, that the poet also rejects the miracle of the virgin birth.

> The first attack at once proved the Divinity
> (But that I never doubted, nor the Devil);
> The next, the Virgin's mystical virginity;
> . . . . Don Juan XI lxi)

He believes Mary's virginity is just superstition, along with the origin of evil and the Trinity, when he employs irony to ridicule them all.

Next, from a deistic perspective, the poet argues that revelation is useless (McGann 250; Kennedy 529). Deists contend that any revelation by God is unwarranted and contradictory of no divine intervention after creation of the world ("Deism," Encyclopedia Americana 7: 644). Byron explicitly contends that no religion is revealed: ". . . I do not believe in any revealed religion, because no religion is revealed . . . nonentity" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2:

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29). Byron also argues that God could have made His will intelligible to people without revealed books (Perkins 928).

God's message revealed to Muhammad is, therefore, unacceptable to Byron. This explains why the poet rejects Muhammad's prophethood and perhaps so consistently expresses animosity towards him. We should remember, too, Byron's words in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage:

> Foul Superstition! howso'er disguised,
> Idol--Saint--Virgin--Prophet, Crescent--Cross
> For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
> Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss
> Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross? (II XLIV 201)

He stresses that he believes all prophets are "Foul Superstition." Along the same lines, Byron denies prophets and their messages to mankind in the following statement:

> . . . We have fools in all sects and Impostors in most; why should I believe mysteries no one understands because written by some who chose to mistake madness for inspiration, and style themselves Evangelicals?
>
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 19)

In Don Juan, Canto XVI, stanza VI, the poet speaks of remembering "Those holier mysteries" wise men receive, and become more widely held the more people argue against them.

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Byron is critical of such revelation. Another example involves the rejection of prophets' laws.

> Father: no prophet's law I seek, --
>
> . . . . ("Prayer of Nature" l. 37 42)

It is not surprising that Byron denies Jesus, Abraham, Moses, and all other prophets. Job, considered an Islamic prophet of God, is satirized by Lord Byron.

> The respectable Job says, Why should a living man complain? I really don't know, except it be that a dead man can't. (Critical 2: 265; Works 5: 391)

About the book of Job, Byron contends it provides an "excellent moral lesson" (Critical 2: 265; Medwin 142). This statement suggests that the poet only perceives Job as a philosopher, not a prophet. David, another Islamic prophet, is also mocked in Don Juan. He jokes about David and Bathsheba.

> . . . the physicians,
> Prescribed by way of blister, a young
> belle,
> When old King David's blood grew dull
> in motion,
> And that the medicine answer'd very
> well; . . . . (I clxviii 655)

The poet is critical of David in a mocking way. Of Solomon, Byron sees a necromancer or magician. The poet falsely states this, but Muslims actually view Solomon as a prophet

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of God. These examples show that Byron's hostility for Muhammad and denial of his Prophethood is not isolated.

Concerning Jesus, Byron rejects his divinity and the need for a savior; he refers to these two beliefs as useless (McGann 250; Kennedy 529). As already stated, deists deny the divinity of Jesus (Murray et al. 361), just as the poet does. The idea of Jesus as the son of God is preposterous to Byron. Furthermore, making God the begetter of children is degrading (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 29).

Further denying Jesus as a savior or God's son, the poet says that God "would have made Himself manifest to nations, and intelligible to all" if he had "come or sent" (Perkins 928). He continues, "It is a little hard to send a man preaching to Judea, and leave the rest of the world-- Negers and what not . . ." (qtd. in Perkins 927). This statement shows that Byron denies Jesus' coming to the Jews. The poet even refused to take the Christian sacrament or communion.

Byron perceives Jesus as a good man and philosopher. Again, he follows the perception of deism: Jesus is a true man and good moral example (Murray et al. 361). Byron writes:

> Man, including that exemplum of the best man, Christ, dwells apart from the primorial seat of power, the energetic source of the Universe.
>
> (qtd. in McGann 251)

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He believes the significance of Jesus' life lies in its exemplary value; his ideas and lifestyle are worth imitating (McGann 250). Also, he places Jesus next to Socrates, "the greatest of all men" because of his "moral-truth, his ethics" (McGann 250). Therefore, the poet views Jesus as a philosopher for his moral precepts. He contends that the philosopher's "gospel is not disdained by the Deity" because it "makes men better and wiser" (Moore, Life 696). No wonder, then, that he portrays Muhammad as just a man, rather than a prophet. Byron does the same with Jesus, but gives him praise, while completely condemning Muhammad. It is also very important to note that Byron's rejection of the divinity of Jesus goes along with the Islamic tradition.

Just as Byron rejects prophets, he rejects the revealed religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, describing them as superstition. This interpretation is clear because of the poet's reference to cross and crescent in the passage from Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. The ideas of religions being superstition is also clear in a remark about the Virgin Mary in Don Juan. Byron writes,

> The Virgin-Mother of the God-born Child,
> he her son . . .
> This may be Superstition, weak, or wild,
> . . . . (XIII lxi)

His hostility towards Muhammad and Islam is similar to his hostility towards Judaism and Christianity, as is

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already obvious from some of the preceding examples. Yet, there is more criticism. In fact, some of Byron's reviewers condemned the poet of blasphemy of sacred subjects and contempt for Christianity (Trueblood 74). For one thing, Byron argues, "I abhor books of religion . . . love God, without the blasphemous notions of sectaries, or belief in their absurd and damnable heresies, mysteries, and Thirty-nine Articles" (Moore, Life 84; Critical 1: 168). Then, in a letter Byron writes, "In morality I prefer Confucius to the Ten Commandments and Socrates to St. Paul" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173; Byronic Thoughts 13). Anti-Christian sentiments are made known when the poet satirically describes conflicts and killing among the "72 villainous sects."

> A quiet conscience makes one so serene!
> Christians have burnt each other, quite persuaded
> That all the Apostles would have done as they did.
>
> (Don Juan I lxxxiii)

Additionally, Medwin contends that Byron is critical of the Biblical creation. "Byron is with the anti-Mosaical speculations on the origin of the World . . ." (77; Critical 1: 86). The poet refers to the history of the Creation and the Fall, which is ". . . by many doctors of the Church, believed to be a mythos, or at least an allegory" (qtd. in McGann 249). Just as he refers to prophets as superstition, Byron implies the same about creation. While he denies

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Biblical creation, Byron points out that "many who call themselves Christians" reject the stories in the Old Testament (qtd. in McGann 249). The poet makes the overall judgement that Christianity is useless. "If mankind may be saved who never heard or dreamt, at Timbuctoo, Otaheite, Terra Incognita, etc., of Galilee and its Prophet, Christianity is of no avail; . . ." (qtd. in Perkins 928). Byron is quite critical of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity; as his remarks indicate.

As a result of Byron's attack on all revealed religions, his strong disapproval for any organized religion is not out of character. According to Fairchild,

> Byron finds reprobation of Catholic abuse a safe means of expressing his dislike of organized and authoritative religion. (402)

He dislikes organized religion's rituals, directing his attack at Catholicism. He mocks Catholics for the importance they place on Mary and Jesus. The poet is satirical about Mary in a passage of Don Juan. Rather than thinking of "grisly saints" and "martyrs hairy," Juan turned his thoughts to Mary, since he had a liking for women (II cxlix). Concerning Jesus, Byron ridicules Catholics, saying they place Jesus above the Almighty (Kennedy 529; McGann 250). He is critical of the Catholic sacrament. "I have refused to take the sacrament, because I do not think eating bread or drinking wine from the hand of an earthly vicar

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will make the inheritor of heaven" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173).

Byron also reveals dislike for Christian religious leaders. His overall assessment is that organized religions' clergymen are "bigots" and superstitious ("The Prayer to Nature" Works 3: 224-228). For instance, the poet speaks out against a Catholic vicar having any influence on one's future life in the previous quote. One specific religious leader Byron does not accept is the Pope. "I favor the Catholic emancipation, but do not acknowledge the Pope" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173). He goes on to ridicule the hypocrisy of Catholic clergy.

> Soon as the Matin bell proclaimeth nine,
> Thy saint-adorers count the Rosary:
> Much is the Virgin teased to shrive them free
> (Well do I ween the only virgin there)
> From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
> Then to crowded circus forth they fare.
>
> (Childe Harold I xxix)

The saint-adorers pray to Mary and then head for the circus. Byron is also a bit satirical about Mary saving them.

Related to the attack on Catholicism is Byron's belief that Catholicism is mythology, next to Greek mythology (Fairchild 440). His references to Christianity and other revealed religions being superstition seems to have some connection to his idea of Catholicism as mythology. To

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Byron, Catholicism is not revealed or religious; however, it is mythical. He calls it a "tangible religion" with

> . . . by far the most elegant worship, hardly excepting the Greek mythology. What with incense, pictures, statues, altars, shrines, relics, and the real presence, confession, absolution,--there is something sensible to grasp at.
>
> (Byron, Byronic Thoughts 29)

What Byron admires of Catholicism is its rituals, not its doctrines.

Byron is hostile to organized religions. In one statement he explains that he does not believe in any tradition, revelation, or creed, but does believe in God (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 408). To his friend Edward Noel Long, Byron expresses his anti-religion sentiments. ". . . Of religion I know nothing, at least in its favour" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115). In another remark, the poet argues that "Religion . . . fails in all human hands" (Works 5: 554). Furthermore, Byron contends that religion is not the source of moral truth. In fact, he thinks ethical philosophy or law is not revealed (Moore, Life 696). This view is parallel to a principle of deism. For the poet, morals do no come from Islam, Christianity or Judaism. Byron also asserts that Christianity and Judaism are not the best source of inspiration for a poet (Critical 1: 86).

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Deism plays a key role in the poet's rejection of organized religions. In "The Prayer of Nature," he focuses on his position:

> Father! no prophet's laws I seek, --
>
> Thy laws in Nature's works appear; --
>
> . . . . (Works 3: 224)

He desires natural religion with its simplicity, over organized religions. Subscribing to natural religion is a major deistic proposition:

> Men have been endowed with a rational nature which alone allows them to know truth and their duty when they think and choose in conformity with this nature. The natural law requires the leading of a moral life, rendering to God, one's neighbor, and one's self what is due to each.
>
> (P. Wiener 646-652)

The key of natural religions is to be morally good and worship God in nature. Stress on the ethical may explain why Byron prefers Confucius to the Ten Commandments and Socrates to St. Paul (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 19), as earlier stated. Confucianism stresses ethics and morals only.

Consequently, Byron prefers primitive and philosophical religion to organized religions and their prophets.

> I am no Platonist, I am nothing at all; but I would sooner be a Paulician, Manichean, Spinozist,

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> Gentile, Pyrrhonian, Zoroastrian, than one of the seventy-two villainous sects who are tearing each other to pieces for the love of the Lord and hatred of each other . . . . And is there a Talapoin, or a Bonze, who is not superior to a fox-hunting curate? (qtd. in Perkins 928)

According to natural religion, emphasis is placed on observing God's existence in nature. "The Prayer of Nature" best exemplifies Byron's views of natural religion. Countess Guiccioli confirms that the poet did rely on the eighteenth century brand of natural revelation. However, the countess contends that "Nature was not for Byron a consistently satisfying object of devotion: she spelt affirmation or negation according to his mood" (Kennedy 204).

Stress on ethics and morals is also an integral part of deists' natural religion. As for Byron, he holds high regard for ethics and its proponents, philosophers and poets (Moore, Life 696). He does align himself with Confucius and Socrates, both philosophers. And he places Jesus and Job in the same category. The moral precepts of Jesus made him a philosopher, and Job's message provided valuable moral truths. Byron's viewing Jesus as a man of ethics is a perception he carries to Christianity. According to Fairchild, Christ's creed ". . . was interpreted as Christian ethics" (436). Moreover, Byron writes:

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> . . . the moral of Christianity is perfectly beautiful, . . ., yet even there we find some of its finer precepts in earlier axioms of the Greeks. (qtd. in Elwin 172)

The poet links the religion's morals to those of the pagan Greeks. Confirming this interpretation is Byron's wife, who states: ". . . I believe as you [Byron] assert, that the maxims of the Gospel may be found inconnectedly in heathen writings . . . ." (qtd. in Elwin 173). But she goes on to conclude that the doctrines are scattered in the ethics of the ancients (173).

He may view Catholicism similarly, since he likens it to Greek mythology. While Byron is hard on Catholicism, and often ridicules it, he admires it as mythology. Fairchild thinks the poet admires Catholic worship without Catholic beliefs. He describes Catholic worship as interesting (Fairchild 440). Additionally, the poet believes as a spectacle, ". . . the Catholic is more fascinating than the Greek or the Moslem" (qtd. in Elwin 172). Fairchild concludes that if Byron could believe in any faith at all, Catholicism would be the religion for him. Besides, the poet wanted his daughter to be brought up a Catholic so she would believe in God (Marchand, <u>Byron's Letters</u> 6: 32).

The main point of this discussion is the fact that Byron is not simply hostile to Muhammad and Islam, but all other prophets of Christianity and Judaism. If he were to

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present allusions to the prophets of Christianity or Judaism, they too would also be disagreeable to Christians and Jews, since he is hard on all revealed religions. Byron is unfavorable in his treatment of Muhammad since the Prophet is representative of an organized religion, and a religion little understood. Without question, deism is primarily responsible for this handling of Muhammad.

Next, let us focus on the less significant factor of panhellenism in the poet's portrayal of the Prophet of Islam. Panhellenisim colors the poet's depiction of Muhammad as a soldier and political figure seeking power. Byron was agitated about Muslims' destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire. As a result, he condemns Muhammad for his influence in establishing a religion which became widespread, and led to the breakup of the Roman Empire. The Greeks occupied the area before the Muslims. In turn, the Greeks symbolize Western culture, while the Muslims represent Islamic culture. Byron had a strong desire for Greece to be dominant again. As a result, the poet defended Greece not only with his pen, but also with his sword. He fought for the cross over the crescent, so that Western culture would prevail. As a result, Muhammad represents the opposition in Greece's fight for liberty.

By closely scrutinizing Byron's treatment of Muhammad, one finds biting criticism. The poet does not follow the Islamic tradition at all. In contrast, he aligns himself

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with the majority of English authors who make hostile references to Muhammad. This is not surprising, since animosity for the Prophet of Islam has been a trend in Western thought for many centuries and continues today. This is so because of ignorance of Islamic beliefs, as well as rejection of them. Furthermore, the strong underlying current of Christianity interwoven into Western culture is a contributing factor in the longstanding unsympathetic treatment of Muhammad by Byron and other English authors. Elements at the core of Byron's treatment of the Prophet are deism, materialism, and panhellenism. As has been indicated, deism has the most resounding effect on Byron's references to Muhammad and their implications. This factor assists one in arriving at some sense of the poet's religious or philosophical views, which on the surface only appear ambiguous, contradictory, and changeable. However, by exposing strands of deism in Byron's treatment of Muhammad, one definitely arrives at a much deeper understanding of his actual religious beliefs.

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CHAPTER VI: PARADISE

In this chapter, I will clarify Byron's opinions of the nature of paradise: Sirat Bridge, rewards of paradise, houris, martyrs and women. But, first, I will provide Islamic and English backgrounds on the subject.

Islamic Tradition

Belief in the Hereafter--resurrection, the Day of Judgment, paradise, and Hell--is the fifth article of the Islamic faith. In this section, I will focus briefly on a few paradise-related issues.

The traditions of Muhammad describe the Sirat Bridge as finer than a hair, sharper than a sword, and surrounded with briars and thorns. The righteous will pass over the bridge with the swiftness of lightning to paradise, but the evil-doers will fall into hell. Not mentioned in name in the Qur'an, the bridge is referred to in Sura 19: "Not one of you but will pass over it." Allah adds, " But We shall save those who guarded against evil, and We shall leave the wrong doers therein, (Humbled) to their knees (19:71-72; 89:23-30).

Al-Janna, or paradise "will be of the breadth as the breadth of the heavens and the earth," (57:21). In Sura 60:72, there is this description of paradise life.

> Allah hath promised to Believers, men and women,
> Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein,

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> And beautiful mansions in Gardens of everlasting bliss. But the greatest bliss is the Good pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme felicity. Next, paradisal rewards are not similar to earthly pleasures.

The Prophet says Allah "prepared for the righteous what eye has not seen, nor ear has heard, nor has entered into the heart of man" (Al-Nawawi 17: 166).

One of the special rewards of Paradise is "Houris" or the maids of paradise. They are exceptionally beautiful. They have wide black eyes (44:54) that are compared to jacinths and pearls (55:58), "ruby and coral," and "hidden pearls" (52:20), and are "enclosed in pearl pavilions" (55:58, 72).

In addition, the houris are "spotless virgins" (56:36-9) and "purified wives" (2:23). "Pure" means free from bodily impurity and the touch of man or jinn (55:56). Also "modest," the houris will keep their eyes modestly cast down (55:56). These are some of the rewards for "the righteous" (56:22-3), the believers and well-doers, those who obey God and the Prophet (4:69).

In the Islamic belief, the blessed abode is for the righteous, men and women. "Never will suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: ye are members, one of another" (3:195). Muhammad highly honors women.

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"The world and all things in it are valuable, but more valuable than all is a virtuous woman" (Al-Nawawi 9:57-58).

Finally, Allah gives martyrs special attention in paradise.

> Think not of those slain in God's way are dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord; they rejoice in the bounty provided by God . . . . (3:169-171)

The martyrs will have this glory because they have sold "the life of this world for the Hereafter" (4:74).

> The Unbelievers, however, have mocked the Hereafter. The Unbelievers say (in ridicule): Shall we point out to you a man that will tell you, when ye are all scattered to pieces in disintegration, that ye shall (then be raised) in a New Creation? Has he invented a falsehood against God, or has a spirit (seized) him? (34:7-9)

Allah then defends the Prophet and chastises the unbelievers (34:7-9).

English Tradition

Like all other Islamic beliefs discussed so far, English writers deal with the Islamic ideology of paradise. These writers are divided in their views. Many harshly condemn and misinform; whereas, some convey the spirit of

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Islamic teachings. Let us discuss their attitudes, beginning with the "Sirat Bridge."

Sale, Beckford, and Lane describe Sirat Bridge. Sale's describes the Bridge, but he can not imagine its reality (Preliminary 91). Beckford's (115) and Lane's (3: 94) descriptions also agree with Islamic description.

English writers deal extensively with paradise and its joys. Some ridicule Muslim paradise, viewing it as a "sexual license" for Muslim carnal passions. Mandeville, a medieval writer, describes Muslim paradise as a place of sexual license (Smith 11). Thomas Moore mocks harshly the rewards of paradise and Prophet Muhammad:

> A heav'n too ye must have, ye lords of dust,--
> A splendid Paradise,--pure souls ye must:
> That Prophet ill sustains his holy call,
> Who finds not heav'ns to suit the tastes of all;
> Houris for boys, omniscience for sages, and wings
> and glories for all ranks and ages. (Love 383)

In Two Penny Post Bag, he calls paradise a "Persian heaven" and houris a sexual license. Both Moore and Thackeray attack Muhammad, calling his paradise wicked and false (Smith 11). In addition, Dryden's "An Evening of Love, or the Mock Astrologer" mocks paradise and Muhammad. He offers the image of Muhammad sitting

> in his lonely cell,

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> Some dull, insipid, tedious Paradise.

Suddenly, an Arab girl walks by, glancing at him in hopes of being followed. So the Prophet

> took the hint, embraced the flying fair,
> And having found his heaven, he fixed it there.
> (qtd. in Smith 50)

Further, Nicholas Rowe, directly attacks the eternal rewards of paradise in Tamburlaine.

> Prophet, take notice, I disdain thy Paradise,
> Thy fragrant Boe'rs, and everlasting Shades,
> thou hast plac'd women there,
> and all thy joys are tainted. (qtd. in Smith 53)

Fortunately, some English scholars convey the spirit of Islamic teachings. Sale's description of Islamic paradise and its rewards goes along with Islamic tradition--rivers, mansions, eternal life (Preliminary 96). Geoffrey Higgins justifies the Muslim belief of paradise as physical. He argues,

> Persons prejudiced against Mohammed may condemn him for his sensual paradise; but in fact, no paradise can be imagined which is not sensual because . . . no idea can be entertained by man except through the medium of the senses.
> (qtd in Smith 154-155)

He adds that "New Jerusalem" in the Bible is similar to Muslim paradise (155).

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Some of English authors also point out the spiritual side of Muslim paradise. Higgins and Sale, consider incorrect those writers ". . . who pretend the Mohammedans admit of no spiritual pleasure in the next life, but make the happiness of the blessed abode to consists wholly in corporal enjoyments" (Smith 100). Gibbon is yet another to discuss the spiritual aspect of paradise.

> . . . the joys of the Mohammedan paradise will not be confined to the indulgence of luxury and appetite; and the prophet has expressly declared that all meaner happiness will be forgotten and despised by the saints and martyrs, who shall be admitted to the beatitude of the divine vision. (qtd. in Smith 110)

On the subject of the houris, some English scholars describe the houris without conveying the Islamic spirit, while others choose to express, to some degree, the Islamic spirit.

John Sheffield rejects the houris, viewing them as an invention to cause "irresistible attraction of Islam" and warfare, and accuses Prophet Muhammad of being a liar and fabricator (Smith 86). Moore, as well, has the same notion of Sheffield; he views the houris as sexy and unholy (Love 383). William Hodson's 1799 tragedy, Zoraida, is similar to "The Bride of Abydos" concerning characters and plot.

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Hodson states the delights of paradise are for those who die in battle.

> . . . the rose-lipt Houris
>
> Invite him to their arms (qtd. in Smith 131)

However, many English writers depict the houris correctly. Sale (Preliminary 97), Beckford (196), Gibbon (Birth 44), and Lane (1: 454) copy the Islamic tradition on the houris.

The overall beauty of the houris is further described by English authors. Sale calls houris "beautiful youths" (Preliminary 97), and "resplendent and ravishing girls" (96). Gibbon stresses the "resplendent beauty" and "blooming youth" of houris (Birth 44). As already quoted, Hodson describes them as "rose-lipt" (Smith 131). Beckford reports that these creatures are "deemed in the highest degree beautiful" (196). One English author applies the houri image to a female character in Mustapha.

As for martyrs, some English writers are unsympathetic with Muslim martyrdom and paradise. Rycaut harshly condemns martyrdom. He thinks Muslims become martyrs only because they fight and die in "wars against the Christians." Rycaut mocks martyrs because he believes they die cheaply:

> . . . such Multitudes of them run evidently to their own slaughter, esteeming their lives and bodies at no greater price than the value of stones and rubbish to fill Rivulets and Ditches,

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> that they may but erect a Bridge or passage for
> their fellows to assault their enemies. (105)

Like Rycaut, Moore harshly attacks Muslims for believing in martyrdom and paradise. In Lalla Rookh he describes the emir, or the Muslim leader in the battle against the infidel as

> One of that saintly, murd'rous brood,
> To carnage and the Koran given,
> Who think through unbelievers' blood
> Lies their directest path to heaven (416).

Landor's (1812) views in Count Julian are similar to those of Rycaut, Moore, and Joseph Hughes (Smith 195).

Despite the unsympathetic treatment of Rycaut and Moore, some English writers tend to be informative about Islamic martyrdom and paradise.

Sale gives the Islamic description of martyrs. Martyrs' "spirits will rest in the crops of green birds which eat of the fruits and drink of the rivers of paradise" (Preliminary 77).

Gibbon cites correctly the spirit of Muslim teachings on martyrdom rewards. He identifies martyrs as those who die "in the cause of God." The martyr's sins "are forgiven." At the Day of Judgement "his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion and orderiferous as musk." The loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels (Birth 55). Gibbon also ascribes Muslims' readiness to die

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in battle to their belief in the tenets of fate and predestination stated in the Qur'an (55).

Finally, among English critics, some controversy exists over whether or not Muslims believe both men and women will reside in paradise. One group contends that Muslims believe women have no souls and will not enter paradise, while another group argues against this position. Rycaut, Thevenot, Johnson, Kinglake, and Mauley depict Muslim women not entering paradise. Rycaut claims that Muslim women do not have a "future state relating to the rewards or punishments of their good or bad actions," so they possess no religious virtues or morals (153). Pierre Thevenot (Smith 22) and Johnson hold Rycaut's view. The sultan in Irene promises the character Irene a paradise on earth, since she will not enter paradise in the next life (Smith 128). The Qur'an bars the gates of paradise from women, according to Kinglake (Smith 136). In The Arabian Vow, Mrs. Mauley also depicts Muslim women as not entering the "blissful paradise" (Smith 92).

Others take the Muslim position that both believing men and women will enter paradise to partake of its physical and spiritual rewards. Mandeville indicates that men and women will be present (Smith 11). In his Preliminary Discourse, Sale harshly criticizes those authors who suggest Muslim women have no souls and will be excluded from paradise.

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> . . . It may not be improper to observe the falsehood of a vulgar imputation on the Mohammedans, who are by several writers reported to hold that women have no souls, or, if they have, that they will perish, like those of brute beasts, and will not be rewarded in the next life. But whatever may be the opinion of some ignorant people among them, it is certain that Mohammed had too great a respect for the fair sex to teach such doctrine; and there are several passages in the Qur'an which affirm that women, in the next life, will not only be punished for their evil actions, but will also receive rewards of their good deeds, as well as the men, and that in this case GOD will make no distinction of sexes. (102)

Other scholars have the same belief of Sale. Montagu refutes the charge. "It is certainly false . . . that Mahomet excludes women from any share in a future happy state. He was too much a gentleman, and loved the fair sex too well, to use them so barbarously." Hughes also strongly denies the charge: "It has often been asserted by European writers that the Qur'an teaches that women have no souls. Such, however, is not the case. What that book does teach on the subject of women is the opposite" (677). Gibbon (Smith 110), Joseph Hughes (Smith 56), Lillo, and

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John Dallaway (Smith 134) strongly substantiate Sale's defense.

Descriptions of the bridge to paradise, the physical and spiritual rewards of paradise, and dwellers of paradise are alluded to by members of the English tradition, providing similar and dissimilar images of Muslim paradise.

Byron's Tradition

Now that I have introduced the Islamic tradition of paradise and the unsympathetic and sympathetic English perceptions of it, I will discuss Byron's tradition on Muslim paradise. The poet alludes to the nature of paradise, houris, martyrs, and women with an extremely unsympathetic attitude toward the Muslim ideology of these issues. Consider his disagreement with the orthodox Islamic tradition.

Byron's works contain several disagreements with Islam on the nature of paradise. Byron's characters call Muslim paradise non-Islamic names such as "heathenish heaven" in Don Juan (l. 825 648), "Turkish heaven" in "The Giaour (l. 1045 261); and "Mahomet's Paradise" in Byron's Letters and Journals (Marchand 3: 65); and the "Prophet's Paradise" in Don Juan I lix 189). These works also disagree with Islam on the creation of paradise. They claim that Muhammad is the inventor of paradise. They describe Islamic paradise as "Mahomet's paradise;" the "Prophet's Paradise"; and "his heaven" ("The Giaour" l. 10 29; Marchand 3: 65; "To Eliza" 116). In addition, Don Juan makes Muhammad and Thomas Moore

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the authors of Muslim paradise. The persona calls paradise

> . . . that heathenish heaven
> Described by Mahomet, and Anacreon
> Moore,
> To whom the lyre and laurels have been
> given,
> With all the trophies of triumphant song--
> (Don Juan ll. 825-828 648)

On these points, Byron differs from Islam. In Islam, the Almighty God alone is the creator of the heavens and the earth; Allah is the creator of paradise as well as its names. As for Muhammad, he is no more than a human being and a Messenger of Allah.

In addition, Byron's poetry denies such a belief in paradise. Byron's character, Alp, expresses this disbelief in "The Siege of Corinth" (XII ll. 296-300 322). "The Giaour" still offers more disbelief in Muslim paradise by denying the existence of the seven heavens:

> Whereas, if all be true we hear of Heaven
> And hell, there must be at least six or seven.
> (Don Juan VIII cxiv 766)

The reference mocks the Muslim belief in the existence of paradise, and the seven heavens created by Allah.

The Sirat Bridge is the next point on which there is a disagreement between Byron's tradition and the Islamic

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tradition. The fisherman in "The Giaour" speaks of Al-Sirat Bridge when he swears that Lelia has a soul.

> Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,
> Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
> With paradise within my view,
> And all his Houris beckoning through.
>
> (11.483-486 256-257)

Byron himself offers a description of the Sirat in a note to the above mentioned lines. His note denies paradise by denying the Sirat Bridge. The poet description of the place is full of satirical tones.

> Al-Sirat, the bridge of breath, narrower than the thread of a famished spider, and sharper than the edge of a sword, over which the Mussulmans must skate into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskillful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a 'facilis descensus Averni,' not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards for the Jews and Christians. (Complete 892)

Byron's description carries the Muslim idea of the Sirat; however, his fantasy about the situation does not. The "bridge of breath," the spider's image, skating on the bridge, the short cut to Hell for the Jews and Christians,

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among others are elements of fantasy, contrary to Islamic beliefs.

The third point of much emphasis in Byron's works on paradise is the Houris and martyrs. As with the previous issues, there are numerous disagreements between Byron and the Muslims. Let us consider the differences.

Byron's writings express disbelief in the houris. Rejection is clear when the narrator in Don Juan states, "our better Faith derides" the houris (CXIV 766). Perhaps, the narrator says this because the houris do not exist in Christianity.

Moreover, contrary to Muslim warriors, Alp, a renegade Christian, denies martyrdom and the rewards of paradise. In "The Siege of Corinth," Alp fights with the Muslims but rejects their belief in paradise, with its houris and martyrs:

> He stood alone among the host;
> Not his the loud fantastic boast.
>
> (XII ll. 296-297 322)

He is unwilling to risk his life for paradise and its houris. Furthermore, he is not willing to

> To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
> Or risk a life with little loss,
> Secure in Paradise to be
> By houris loved immortally.
>
> (XII ll. 298-300 322)

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Alp is reluctant to accept the idea that as a martyr he will live eternally in paradise with the houris.

In addition, Don Juan calls the Muslim houris a fabrication of the imagination. Byron's Don Juan: A Variorum Edition suggests that the houris are merely "visions" (Byron, Byron's Don Juan 3: 168). The "vision-maker," says Byron, is the Prophet Muhammad. In "To Eliza," after calling the Prophet a mad person, the poet refers to the houris as "his [Muhammad's] houris." Byron also calls the houris a lie of Muhammad's, when he says they are "a flimsy pretence" of the prophet ("To Eliza" l. 7).

Already apparent is the fact that Byron's views of the houris and martyrs clash with Islamic views. Additionally, Byron holds to the stereotype that lust for sex in the Hereafter is the real motive behind Muslim wars against Christians. Let us examine several illustrations.

Don Juan suggests houris are the license of Muslim wars. The narrator states, "These black-eyed virgins make the Moslem fight" against the Russians (CXIV 766).

In another poem, houris direct Muslim fighting against Christians, since those wounded or killed in battle by Christians will go to heaven. The Giaour bitterly communicates this message to the abbot:

> . . . And wounds by Galileans given,
> The surest pass to Turkish heaven

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("The Giaour" 261 ll. 1044-45)

Furthermore, thoughts of the love of houris lures groups of Muslim fighters. Byron describes Muslim soldiers in Greece singing a battle song which expresses their desire for the houris. They sing: "--I see--I see a Dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, 'Come, kiss me, for I love thee,' &c." (Complete 892).

The houris are very choosy concerning the soldiers they lure to paradise. They desire young bachelors, so they entice young fighters to come to them as martyrs:

> But doubtless they prefer a fine young man
> To tough old heroes, and can do no less;
> And that's the cause no doubt why, if we scan
> A field of battle's ghastly wilderness,
> For one rough, weather-beaten veteran body,
> You will find ten thousand handsome coxcombs
> bloody. (Don Juan CXII 766)

The houris also draw newlywed fighters to paradise.

> Your houris also have a natural pleasure
> In lopping off your lately married men,
> Before the bridal hours have danced their measure
> And the sad, second moon grows dim again,
> Or dull Repentance hath had dreary leisure
> To wish him back a bachelor now and then.
> And thus your Houri (it may be) disputes

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Of these brief blossoms the immediate fruits.

(Don Juan CXIII 766)

Houris drive married men to neglect their wives. Not satisfied with young bachelors and newlywed fighters, they also attract Muslim polygamists. A young Tarter is an example.

Thus the young khan, with Houris in his sight,
Thought not upon the charms of four young brides,
But bravely rushed on his first heavenly night.

Don Juan CXIV 766)

The Khan thinks little about his wives and God's Cause, but more about houris, instead.

While the houris lure Muslim groups of men, they also lure individuals to their fate (martyrdom). First, they wait for the martyr Sultan Hassan at the "Prophet's gate" as a reward for his death against the Greek giaour ("The Giaour" ll. 1046-1047 261). There, they will receive him warmly. The narrator explains that the houris will

. . . welcome with a kiss the brave!
Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour.

("The Giaour" ll. 744-746 259)

Later lines in the poem offer more detail on the houris seeking out Hassan.

But him the maids of Paradise
  Impatient to their halls invite,
And the dark heaven of Houris' eyes

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On him shall glance for ever bright;
They come--their kerchiefs green they wave,
And welcome with a kiss the brave!

(ll. 739-744 259)

The houris are anxious for his arrival and greet him with kisses. Second, they lure another young individual in Don Juan: the Tartar.

That when the very lance was in his heart,
He shouted 'Allah!' and saw Paradise
With all its veil of mystery drawn apart,
And bright eternity without disguise
On his soul, like a ceaseless sunrise
dart:-- (CXII 766)

Furthermore, the houris of Byron's works are viewed as immoral women. They lure martyrs to paradise by winking their eyes.

Who only saw the black-eyed girls in green,
Who make the beds of those who won't take quarter
On earth, in Paradise; and when once seen,
Those houris like all other pretty creatures,
Do just whate'er please by dint of features.
And what they pleased to do with the young khan
In heaven I know not, nor pretend to guess;
. . . . (Don Juan CXI 766).

These lines are very offensive to Islam; the image of houris here is totally distorted.

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Additionally, Byron criticizes both the houris and Muhammad by using blasphemy. A passage from Childe Harold's Pilgrimage implies something immoral about houris and Muhammad. Let us consider these lines:

> Match me those houris, who, ye scarce allow
> To taste the gail lest Love should ride the wind,
> With Spain's dark-glancing daughters--deign to
> know,
> There your wise Prophet's paradise we find,
> His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angelically kind.
> (I lix 189)

According to Smith, Byron's idea here, and in "Beppo" too, echoes Dryden's in "An Evening of Love, or the Mock Astrologer." Dryden's "Wildblood," making love to Jacinta, asks her:

> Wildblood, Are you then a Mahometan?
> Jacinta, A Mussulman, at your service,
> Wildblood, A Mussulman, say you? (lxxvii)

The reference is intended to be derogatory.

In situations we have discussed, Byron's houris are no more than sex images, sex schemers, pleasure addicts, and immoral women who lure Muslim men to die against Christians. The houris in Byron's writings are the work of fantasy rather than a product of the Islamic tradition.

Up to this point, the poet has been highly satirical of the houris. But one sympathetic characteristic of Byron's

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portrayal of the houris is his use of the "eye image" when depicting houris: large, dark, black eyes. While Byron does so for poetic purposes, this is a sign of his appreciation of the beauty of houris eyes. Images like "black eyes," "black eyed," "large black eyes," "dark eye," "dark eyes," "large dark eyes," "dark houried eyes," "eyes so dark," "eyes--dark charms," "dark eyed maid," "dark eyed lady," "Orient eyes," "great eyes," and "large eyes" are certainly common in Byron's poetry (Young 454-459). He uses the houri-eye image as a symbol for beautiful women by comparing their eyes to those of the houris in many instances.

On one occasion, Byron utilizes the houri image for his beloved Spanish mistresses. He views Spanish women as houris and desires to be matched "With Spain's dark-glancing daughters" of "Mahomet['s] paradise" (Childe Harold's Pilgrimage I lix 189).

Secondly, the houri-image is positively applied to female characters of different countries--Greece, Italy, Arabia, Turkey, and Persia. He describes Hydee, Laura, Medora, Julia, Zuleika, Gulnare, Lelia, and Gulbeyaz as beauties equal to or surpassing the houris. Beppo applies the image to his Italian lady, Laura.

> And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
> Of rays that say a thousand things at once.
>
> ("Beppo" xlv 629)

Houri also describes the Spanish character Julia.

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> . . . about the hour
> Of half-past six-- perhaps still nearer
> seven
> When Julia sate within as pretty a bower
> As e'er held houri. (Don Juan I civ 648)

Gaiffir describes Zuleika's voice sounding "like houris' hymn" ("The Bride of Abydos" ll. 146-147 266). And to Selim, Zuleika is far better than a houri. "What Houri soothe him half so well" as Zuleika (l. 13 270)? Byron describes Gulnare's eyes with admiration in such references as "eyes so dark," "large dark eye glance," and "cast her dark and hurried eye" (" The Corsair" II 295, 297, 300).

In allusions to Lelia, the poet says her eyes as "dark charms," "large, as languishingly dark," and "Bright as the jewel of Giamschid" ("The Giaour" ll. 473, 476, 479 236).

Byron describes Gulbeyaz as somewhat like a houri.

> And into her clear cheek the blood was
> brought,
> Blood-red as sunset summer clouds which
> range
> The verge of Heaven; and in her large
> eyes wrought,
> A mixture of sensations . . . .
> (Don Juan ll. 860-864 724)

Her cheeks and eyes are similar to those of houris.

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As well, Byron's poetry utilizes the image of "Aden" where the houris reside. It is a simile for an earthly garden. In "The Bride of Abydos," Selim remarks that his and Zuleika's love "bower" looks like "Aden."

> For thee in those bright isles built a bower
> Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour. (273)

The houri imagery in Byron's poetry is substantial and reflects the poet's liking of the physical aspects of Muslim paradise. This may sound true if we consider Byron's own opinion. In a letter from Greece to his Venetian mistress dated March 3, 1819, Byron tells her that he prefers Muslim paradise over Christian paradise. "Mahomet's paradise," he remarks, is ". . . considerably more agreeable than ours." However, he would not desire such paradise if it denies admission to his darling; for if it does, he would like Aden to wither (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 37).

The numerous examples reveal the poet's reliance on the beauty images of houris to describe many of these female characters. Yet, Byron is attracted to the Islamic image, rather than to the Islamic ideology behind the image.

Byron is in full disagreement with Islam in his belief that Muslims ban women from paradise. He wrongly attributes to Muhammad and Muslims the belief in the soullessness of women and banning them from paradise because of Muslim men's supposed preference for the houris. On this false issue, Byron severely attacks Muhammad and the "Turks:"

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Eliza, what fools are the Mussulman sect,
Who to woman deny the soul's future existence!
Could they see thee, Eliza, they'd own their defect,
And this doctrine would meet with a general resistance.
Had their prophet possess'd half an atom of sense,
He ne'er would have women from paradise driven;
Instead of his houris, a flimsy pretence,
With women alone he had peopled his heaven. ("To Eliza" (ll. 1-10 116)

Byron errs, since there is no such a doctrine in Islam.

Another allusion reiterates the same idea that women will not enter paradise. In a passage from "The Bride of Abydos," Zuleika can only imagine paradise.

And oft the Koran conn'd apart;
And oft in youthful reverie
She dream'd what Paradise might be:
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her prophet had disdain'd to show.
(ll. 103-107 270)

The narrator exhibits much contempt of the prophet of Islam.

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In "The Giaour," the persona focuses on the soullessness of Muslim women (ll. 10 29), and condemns

> . . . that portion of his [Muhammad's] creed
> Which saith that woman is but dust,
> A soulless toy for tyrant's lust?"
>
> (ll. 488-490 257)

The statement appears as if it were a fact of Islamic doctrine, when it is not. Lines in "The Giaour" accuse the Prophet of Islam of saying women are "nought but breathing clay," implying they are beings without spirits or souls (257). The Muslim fisherman in "The Giaour" jests at Muhammad for allegedly denying women souls and challenges that they have souls:

> Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
> But gaze one that of the Gazelle,
> It will assist thy fancy well;
> As large, as languishingly dark,
> But Soul beam'd forth in every spark
> That darted from beneath the lid,
> Bright as a jewel of Giamschid.
> Yea, Soul, and should our prophet say
> That form was nought but breathing clay,
> By Alla! I would answer nay;
> . . . . (ll. 473-482 256-257)

Byron remarks in a note to "The Giaour" that ". . . by far the greatest number of

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> Mussulmans exclude their moieties from heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they cannot discern any fitness of things in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the houris. (Complete 892)

In another situation, Byron insists that he rejects such belief. While in Greece during the second tour he writes to his Venetian mistress expressing that paradise would wither without her being in it (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 37)

Byron challenges the allegedly Islamic belief and argues that Muslim women do have souls. His contention is applied to the characters Laura, Zuleika, and Lelia. Beppo describes Laura as a woman with a spirit.

> Heart on her lips and soul within her eyes,
> Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.
> Eve of the land which still is Paradise!"
>
> (xlv 629)

Just by looking into her eyes, Beppo sees Laura's soul. A similar description is given in reference to Zuleika. Gaiffir cherishes his daughter's beauty, and contends she has a soul. "And oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!" ("The Bride of Abydos" 1. 181 266). Lelia is another female character to be portrayed as possessing a spirit. Byron stresses the belief extensively through the Muslim

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fisherman. Like Laura and Zuleika, her soul is reflected in her eyes. The fisherman observes:

> On her might Muftis gaze and own
> That through her eye the immortal shone.
> ("The Giaour" ll. 491-492 257)

A soul may be seen within Lelia's eyes. The fisherman swears by Allah that Lelia possesses a soul. While he makes his point, Byron utilizes the fisherman in a way that suggests contempt and mockery for Muhammad and his creed.

It is clear that Byron rejects entirely the ideology of Muslim paradise, although he cherishes its sensation.

Evaluation and Understanding

Now that we have clarified Byron's unsympathetic treatment of Islamic paradise, we will evaluate the poet's views in light of the Islamic tradition, English tradition, and Byron's own belief, among other factors, to gain more understanding of Byron and his writings.

While Byron does not follow the Islamic tradition on paradise, he does follow the unsympathetic English tradition in his treatment. On non-Islamic names of paradise, Byron corresponds to Moore, who calls it "Persian heaven." The creator of paradise, Byron believes, is Muhammad. English writers--Moore, Thackeray, and Dryden--also contend Muhammad is the creator of paradise. Next, the poet doubts the existence of Sirat Bridge, just as Sale, although both offer descriptions of its fine hairlike and sword-sharp walkway.

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Byron additionally follows unsympathetic English authors on the houris and martyrs. Both he and Sheffield think the houris lure martyrs to paradise. The poet's treatment of the houris as immoral and sexual is comparable to Sheffield, Mandeville, and Moore. Sheffield's accusation is as direct as Byron's. Then, the poet follows Rycaut, Moore, Landor, and Joseph Hughes in his condemnation of martyrs. All of them believe martyrs die cheaply to enter paradise. Byron also adheres to the notions of Rycaut, Thevenot, Johnson, Kinglake, and Mauley in his contention that Islam bans women from paradise. His rationalization of this is like Thevenot's; both say Muslims believe women possess no souls. Most definitely, the poet's disagreeable treatment of paradise places him in the camp of English authors unsympathetic to Islam.

Byron's treatment of Muslim paradise represents a pattern in Byron's life and thought, applicable not only to Muslims but to non-Muslims as well. To clarify, the following considerations expose the poet's way of thinking and living. Byron's treatment of paradise is almost entirely deistic, though a bit of panhellenism is present.

Byron's rejection of immortality and paradise, contention that they are only superstition, along with his denial of reward and punishment after death, the houris, and Muslim martyrs are all deistic views.

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First, the poet denies life after death. In Childe Harold, he clearly states, ". . . I look not for Life where life may never be . . . (Works 2: 103-104). He argues that there is no reason or logic for life after death (Byronic Thoughts 29). Moreover, he mocks immortality.

> It has been said that the immortality of the soul is a grand peut-etre--but it is a grand one. Everybody clings to it--the stupidest, and dullest, and wickedest of human bipeds is still persuaded that he is immortal (29).

Furthermore, he expresses dislike for the thought of life after death in a letter to Francis Hodgson. "I will have nothing to do with your immortality; we are miserable enough in this life, without the absurdity of speculating upon another" (qtd. in Perkins 927). Once, after Byron was quite ill, he remarked: "I looked to death as a relief from pain, without a wish for an afterlife" (qtd. in Perkins 928).

In two other statements, Byron remarks that he does not know or care about afterlife. "I have lived a Deist, what I shall die I know not; however, come what may, rideus moriar" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173). In another letter he writes:

> Why I came here, I know not, where I shall go, it is useless to inquire. In the midst of myriads of the living and the dead
> worlds--stars--systems--infinity--why

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should I be anxious about an atom?

(Byronic Thoughts 29)

Fairchild aptly concludes that Byron is "without any glimpse of the future" (408), no glimpse of paradise. He does not believe in Muslim paradise or Christian paradise. The poet satirically mocks the prospect of there being a heaven when he writes in Canto I ccxii-ccxx of Don Juan,

I say--the future is a serious matter--
And so--for God's sake--hock and soda-water!

(Byron, Works 6: 2)

He consistently rejects other Christian beliefs, which indicates his denial is not just of Muslim precepts, but of Christian precepts as well. For instance, he denies the Mosaic chronology of creation, the Old Testament prophets, and Jesus as a Savior (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173). As well, he rejects the sacrament (1: 173), but not the Creator (Byronic Thoughts 15).

In addition to denying immortality and paradise flatly, the poet expresses real skepticism. Proof of this is found in several remarks. First, Byron writes,

There is no such thing as certainty, that's plain
As any of Mortality's conditions;
So little we know what we are about in
This world, I doubt itself be doubting.

(Quennell 14)

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He questions whether or not there is immortality and shows doubt. In Don Juan the poet says there are many unanswerable questions:

> What are we? and whence came we?
> what shall be
> Our ultimate existence? what's our
> present?
> Are questions answerless, and yet incessant.
>
> (I lxii 737)

Fairchild accurately points out that Byron is a skeptic concerning mysteries of religion, such as immortality. "As for the incomprehensible mysteries of religion . . . his mind floated in doubts . . ." (346). When pressured by Dallas and Murray, Byron said it would be nice if there were "A land of souls beyond that sable shore," as religious men believe (Childe Harold II 103-104).

Byron reinforces his deistic rejection of Islamic and Christian beliefs in immortality and paradise, calling them superstition. In a passage of Childe Harold', the poet suggests immortality is a myth.

> . . . if, as holiest men have deemed, there be
> A land of souls beyond the sable shore,
> To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
> and Sophist, madly vain of dubious lore
>
> (II 103-104)

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Byron further states that thoughts of afterlife are fictitious. ". . . I prefer the talents of action--of war, or the Senate, or even of science,--to all the Speculations of those mere dreams of another existence. . ." (Byronic Thoughts 32).

Let us consider the following statement alluding specifically to Christian paradise:

> Frown not upon me, churlish Priest! that I
> Look not for Life, where life may never be:
> I am no sneerer at thy phantasy,
> Thou pitiest me, alas! I envy thee,
> Thou bad Discoverer in an unknown sea
> Of happy Isles and happier Tenants there.
>
> (Childe Harold II 103-104)

To Byron, paradise is fictitious, but he envies those who believe it exists. The poet conveys this view concerning Dante's depiction of Heaven. He likes Dante's presentation, since it is full of fantasy, romance, glory and majesty (Byron, Works 5: 193-194). Again, the idea of myth is put forth. Also, let us keep in mind that Byron speaks of the story of the Creation and the Fall in the Old Testament as "mythos."

If Byron rejects immortality and paradise, then what does he think will become of man at death? He writes, "I believe . . . death an eternal sleep" (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 19). In a September 3, 1811 letter to Francis

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Hodgson, Byron contends, ". . . and if they [men] die, why disturb the sweet and sound sleep that 'knows no waking'"? (qtd. in Perkins 927).

Aside from death being sleep, he says that it is nothing on two occasions. "Out of nothing, nothing can arise, not even sorrow" (Byron, Byronic Thoughts 29). Also, in the 1811 letter to Hodgson, he writes in Latin, "'Post Mortem nihil est, ipsaque Mors nihil . . . quaeries quo jaceas post obitum loco? Quo non Nata jacent'" (qtd. in Perkins 927). The quote is taken from Seneca's Troades, II 397-402. The translation is, "After death is nothing, and death itself is nothing . . . You ask, where shall you lie after death? Where the unborn lie?" (qtd. in Perkins 927). The idea of death being nothing is stressed again by Byron in his 1821 diary. "If I had to live again, I do not know what I would change in my life, unless it were for not to have lived at all" (Fairchild 441).

The idea of death being nothing is furthered in several more observations and comments of Byron. When his mother died, ". . . her passing stirred in him no hopes for her soul or his own" (Murray 1: 44; Fairchild 405). McGann argues that Byron's seven year stay in Italy resulted in the poet's settling into an earthly paradise (255). Then, just before his death, Dr. Millingen writes that Byron did not make

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> . . . even the smallest, mention of religion. At one moment I heard him say: 'Shall I sue for mercy?' After a long pause he added: 'Come, come, no weakness! Let's be a man to the last.'
>
> (Nicolson 263)

On his deathbed, the poet still expressed no hope for eternal life. He even willed that after his death, he be buried in the same vault with Boatswain, his Newfoundland dog (Murray 1: 44; Fairchild 405).

Deists deny post-mortem rewards and punishments (Brandon 228). Byron the deist does the same. He argues:

> . . . nor on the other hand can such a Scene as a Seat of eternal punishment exist, it is incompatible with the benign attributes of a Deity to suppose so.
>
> (Works 2: 19; Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 115)

He believes "God who punishes in this existence does not punish in the next" (qtd. in Perkins 927). The poet repeatedly denies Hell (Perkin 928; Kennedy 529). His strongest commentary on the subject is as follows: ". . . all punishment, which is to revenge rather than correct, must be morally wrong" (Byronic Thoughts 51). Byron ends up judging punishment in Hell as detrimental for mankind. "I can't help thinking that the menace of Hell makes as many devils, as the severe penal codes of inhumane humanity make villains" (51).

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The influence of deism is quite significant on Byron's references to paradise. These views are strongly conveyed throughout his treatment. The poet not only utilizes deistic and Socinian beliefs in his allusions to paradise, but also applies them to his own life. Byron died apparently thinking death was just a restful sleep.

Deism has shaped Byron's disbelief in paradise, and materialism plays a role as well. There are numerous signs that lead to this belief. He admits, "I have often been inclined to Materialism in philosophy" (Byronic Thoughts 29). He confessed his early atheism and later deism to Annabella.

His statements: "death is nothing," "death is an eternal sleep," "I have no hope for afterlife", a "material resurrection is absurd" are other indicators.

Byron's views on "mind" and "soul" are crucial. Byron believes the soul is the mind; the soul or the mind is eternal (Byronic Thoughts 51). Next, the poet accepts the marriage between the soul and the body (Don Juan II 202). In another example, (Byronic Thoughts 51), he details the idea. "I should believe it (the soul) was married to the body . . . they longed for the natural state of divorce. But as it is, they seem to draw together like post-horses" (50).

In addition, Byron thinks man is matter, "formed of fiery dust." As such, the mind or soul is matter and it lives on. He compares the mind or soul to atoms or bones, referring to it as a "sad jar of atoms" (Byronic Thoughts

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31). The composition of the mind or soul may change at the time of death, but it will live on as matter. He also says that words are things and they make millions of people think. Then he goes saying: "when bones are dust, generations/nations become anything. In digging the foundation of a closet, [one] may turn a poet's name up, as a rare deposit" (33). Byron continually stresses the mind is as eternal as matter. The mind is

> . . . always changing, but reproduces, and as far as we can comprehend Eternity, Eternal; and why not Mind? Why should not the Mind act with and upon the Universe? as portions of it act upon and with the congregated dust called Mankind? See, how one man acts upon himself and others, or upon multitudes? The same Agency, in a higher and purer degree, may act upon the Stars, etc., ad infinitum. (Byronic Thoughts 30)

Consequently, this is the poet's belief of immortality. He has no belief in physicaL resurrection or paradise. To McGann, Byron's idea of soul is not Christian (252).

A number of materialistic views present themselves in Byron's treatment of paradise.

In his references to immortality, paradise, houris and martyrs, deistic concepts are at work. Traces of materialism and panhellenism, and other philosophies are also present. What stands out most in analyzing the poet's

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allusions to paradise, is the overwhelming sense of just how powerful deism, Socinianism, and other philosophies were in shaping Byron's philosophical views.

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CHAPTER VII: PRAYERS AND MOSQUES

This chapter will focus on Byron's allusions to confession of faith, Mu'athin call, ablution, prayers and mosques. The Islamic and English traditions are introduced first.

Islamic Tradition

The first pillar of Islam is the practice of Shahadatan or confession of faith. The faith formula is "I testify that there is no God but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." The believers practice it at anytime of the day, and in prayers.

Athan or the call for prayers is announced five times a day from the mosque minaret. The English translation of athan is this: Allah is most great (four times)! I testify that there is no god but Allah (twice)! I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (twice)! Come to prayer (twice)! Come to salvation (twice)! Allah is most great (twice)! There is no god but Allah (once)!

The purity of place and body must precede prayers. Ablution is a must in preparation for prayer, and is performed in the manner described here. The Muslim worshipper washes his hands three times, and rinses his mouth three times. After this, he washes his nostrils three times, followed by washing his face three times with both hands. Next, the Muslim washes his right hand and arm up to

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the elbow three times, and then his left hand and arm. After this, he moves his wet right hand over his crown. Next, he cleans his ears, inside and outside, and wipes his neck with both hands. Last, the worshipper thoroughly washes his feet, starting with the right foot (Al-Tabrizi 1: 162). The private parts of the body must also be purified before ablution and prayer when one relieves himself. Ablution is ordained by Allah. The Prophet said ablution will extract all sins from the body (Al-Tabrizi 1: 161).

Salat or prayer is the second pillar of Islam. Muslims say their prayers five times a day as stated in Sura (3:17). The five obligatory prayers include the Fajr (dawn prayer), Zuhr (noon prayer), 'Asr (afternoon prayer), Maghrib (evening prayer), and Isha (night prayer). There are also additional prayers: Salatu 'l-Jumuah or Friday Prayer (mandatory) and prayers for special occasions. Prayers may be performed privately or in company, prayers in company being more meritorious. Prayers, certainly, make up the basic portion of Islamic devotion.

Muslims may say their prescribed five prayers, privately or in groups, wherever they are as long as the place is pure. Generally, they pray at mosques. Friday Prayer, however, must be a group prayer.

All mosques have a minaret, a high turret from which the Mu'athin invites Muslims to prayer. Most mosques are easily distinguished, not only by the minaret, but also by

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the cupola. Both the minaret and the cupola are topped by a crescent, a symbol of Islam. The niche or Mihrab is a designated spot in the center of the mosque wall facing Mecca, indicating the direction of the Ka'aba at Mecca. On the right hand side of the Mihrab is the Menbar or pulpit from which the Imam of the mosque delivers his sermon.

English Tradition

English writers make some reference to confession of faith, minaret calls, ablution, prayers and mosques.

English authors generally understand Islamic confession of faith formula and other pillars of Islam. Jean de Thevenot (Smith 21), Sale, Gibbon, Hobhouse and Lane are examples. Yet, Rycaut confuses faith confession with ablution (158).

The minaret call is also accurately described by several critics. Sale writes that "the public notice is given by the Muedhdhins, or Cryers, from the steeples of their Mosques" (Preliminary 107). He explains that rather than the Christian habit of calling people to worship with bells, Muslims are called to pray by the voice of the Mu'athin. Beckford (211) and D'Herbelot (201) have similar information. Gibbon reports that the Friday after St. Sophia was seized in the conquest of Constantinople, "the muezin or crier ascended the most lofty turret, and proclaimed the ezan, or public invitation in the name of God and his prophet" 2355). Carne (Smith 136), Hughes (28) and

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Hobhouse (90, 99) also refer accurately to the Mu'athin call content.

Others English scholars treasure the melodious sounds of the call. Thevenot and John Carne praise the Mu'athin's call (Smith 22, 136). The latter describes the call in Foua, Egypt. "'This cry, in so still in a country as Egypt, and heard at the dawn or at night from a distance, has an effect the most beautiful and solemn. . . .'" (qtd. in Smith 136). A traveler to Sicily, T. S. Hughes, remarks on the sonorous tones of their Mu'athins. In a note to the Arabian Nights, Lane writes: "Most of the mooeddins of Cairo have harmonious and sonorous voices" (1:20). At the same time, John Galt describes the vibration of the high pitch of the Mu'athin's call as shaking the minaret (170).

These English authors accurately describe the confession of faith and minaret calls. But the transcription of Arabic terms is sometimes done according to dialect Arabic rather than to classical Arabic.

A number of English scholars provide some details on ablution. Sale identifies ablution as the key to prayer, (Preliminary 104-105), but he misinforms by claiming that Muhammad may have borrowed the custom from the Jews or pre-Islamic Arabs (104). Beckford's view is similar to Sale's (219), and Rycaut (158) incorrectly identifies ablution as the first pillar of Islam.

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Lastly, Sale (<u>Preliminary</u> 104) and Rycaut (158) offer vague information on the actual process of ablution. They do not explain exactly how the Muslim ritual is done.

Following ablution, Muslims face Mecca when they pray, as stated by Hidgen, Sale and Gibbon. "Higden knew that Muslims face the south (toward Mecca) in prayer, but he did not know the reason" (Smith 12). Sale explains the Muslims face toward Mecca, pointing out to the "Mihrab" (108).

Rycaut, Sale, Lane, and Hughes express knowledge of the five daily prayers. Rycaut (158) and Sale (<u>Preliminary</u> 107) present the same basic information. Muslims pray five times in a 24 hour period at certain times: before sunrise, at noon, mid-afternoon, at sunset, and after dark. Lane is more comprehensive on the five prayers than Rycaut and Sale by explaining prayers' content (1: 20). Sale, Rycaut, and Lane are knowledgeable of the five daily prayers.

However, some English authors wrongly identify Friday Prayer. Hidgen, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lydgate claim Muslims worship on Friday because it is Muhammad's birthday and his Venus worship day (Smith 13), an offensive remark to Islam and Muslims. Sale, Lane (1: 20) and Beckford (225), however, describe Friday Prayer in a way somewhat agreeable with Islam. It is the "Mohammaden sabbath," a congregational prayers day (Lane 1: 20).

A final controversial issue among English critics is Muslim sincerity in prayers. Rycaut condemns Muslims for

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hypocrisy since they pray at the designated times wherever they happen to be. "They are those who love to pray in the Marketplace, and in the Corners of the Streets to have praise of men . . ." (159).

Yet, other English writers disagree with Rycaut. Alexander Ross contends Muslims possess religious zeal (Smith 28). Moreover, he believes Christians would be inspired by the piety and devotion of Muslims, making the prior ashamed of their coldness and negligence (Chew 450). In Chardin's Travels, Muslims are characterized as open-minded in religion, as well as civil and honest in matters of religion, sincerity, virtue and piety (Smith 24). Joseph Pitts also acknowledges the Muslims' sincerity for religion, which he admires (Smith 58). Additionally, DeKay praises the sincerity and devotion of Muslims (350). Of the Turks, DeKay depicts them as "essentially devotional people" (350). In contrast to Rycaut, John Galt praises Muslims for their simplicity and sincerity in prayer.

> Some of the graver sort began their devotions in the places where they were sitting, undisturbed and unnoticed by those around them who were otherwise employed. The prayers . . . are not uttered aloud, but generally in a low voice, sometimes with only a motion of the lips; and, whether performed in the public street or in a room, attract no attention from bystanders. (81)

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He portrays Muslims as far from hypocritical in prayer.

Others confirm his view. Addison (1716) and Forster (1829) speak highly of the Muslims' extreme piety in prayer. Julia Pardoe says the same, being particularly impressed by women praying (Smith 140). The major consensus is that Muslims are quite sincere when they pray.

The treatment of mosques focuses on attitudes, physical images, and mosque community. Gibbon refers to the conquest of Constantinople. When the Turks begin advancing into Constantinople, city residents gathered at St. Sophia, seeking "protection from the sacred dome" (Rise 2351). Knolles and Rycaut state St. Sophia Cathedral (Sophia Mosque) was polluted by the turbans.

In addition to attitudes, physical imagery is stressed by Hobhouse, Galt, and Montagu. Hobhouse offers this image. The minarets of the Turkish mosques, always a beautiful object, glittering in the first rays of the sun" (18-19). He mentions Byron thought the mosques at Jannina were romantic (74).

Montagu comments on physical characteristics of mosques. She offers images of Sultan Solyman Mosque.

> Perhaps I am in the wrong, but some Turkish Mosques please me better. That of Sultan Solyman is an exact square, with four fine towers in the angels; in the midst is a noble Cupola supported with beautiful marble pillars; two lesser at the

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> ends, supported in the same manner; the pavement and gallery round the Mosque, of marble; under the great cupola is a fountain adorned with such fine coloured pillars, that I can hardly think them natural marble; on one side is the pulpit of white marble, and on the other little gallery for the Grand Signior. A fine staircase leads to it, and it is built up with gilded lattices. At the upper end is a sort of altar, where the name of God is written; and before it, stand two candlesticks, as high as a man, with wax candles as thick as three flambeaux. The pavement is spread with fine carpets, and the Mosque illuminated with a vast number of lamps. The Court leading to it is very spacious, with galleries of marble of green columns, covered with twenty-eight leaded cupolas on two sides, and a fine fountain of basins in the midst of it. (3: 15-16)

Montagu concludes that all the mosques of Constantinople are constructed like Sultan Solyman Mosque, the only differences being size and richness of materials used (3: 17).

Lady Montagu then discusses Sultana Valida Mosque:

> That of the Sultana Valida is the largest of all, built entirely of marble, the most prodigious, and I think the most beautiful structure I ever saw,

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> . . . for it was founded by the mother of Mahomet the fourth. Between friends, St. Paul's Church would make a pitiful figure near it; . . . .
>
> (3: 17)

Finally, one scholar points out the community services that mosques provide. Most mosques have public schools and colleges, and provide students with room and board, as well as clothing. DeKay explains that Soleyman Mosque contains five colleges (349-350). Hospitals are also housed within mosques, and they admit both Muslims and Christians (350).

In the minority are scholars who condemn the Islamic practices associated with prayer. Few mistakenly confuse ablution with the confession of faith as the first pillar of Islam. The harshest criticism concerns Friday Prayer and sincerity in prayer. Friday is falsely linked with star worship in pagan times. Rycaut is hard on Muslims for praying in public, unjustifiably accusing them of hypocrisy.

Fortunately, most members of English tradition dealt with are moderately informed on the pillars of Islam. The Mu'athin's melodious call to prayer is as highly admired as the sincerity of Muslims in prayer.

Byron's Tradition

A common Islamic theme in Lord Byron's poetry and prose pertains to Islamic religious practices. Byron sometimes emphasizes the Mu'athin's call to prayer, the five daily prayers and Friday prayer, less formal prayers, the mosques,

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and sometimes the crescent emblem atop the cupola and minarets. Byron writes:

> As a spectacle, the Catholic is more fascinating than the Greek or the Moslem; but the last [the Moslem] is the only believer who practices the precepts of his Prophet to the last Chapter of his creed. (Marchand, Byron's Letters 3: 405)

Yet, when comparing this treatment to his handling of other topics, one finds he expresses more appreciation for Islamic devotions.

The poet first stresses the Mu'athin's invitation to prayer. His commentary is that the Mu'athin's call is both interesting and romantic. In a letter to his mother dated November 12, 1809, Byron describes the sights and sounds at the palace in Albania when ". . . the boys [call] the hour from the minaret of the Mosque . . . ." Concerning the Athan, he concludes ". . . altogether with the singular appearance of the building [or mosque] itself, formed a new and delightful spectacle to strangers" (Byron, Works 1: 143). He praises the sounds of the call, along with other scenes.

Another allusion centers on the words of the Mu'athin's call to prayer as awe-inspiring. Childe Harold is portrayed as listening to the words of the evening call.

> Hark! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
> The Muezzin's call shake the minaret,

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'There is no god but God!--to prayer--lo!
God is great!'

(Childe Harold's Pilgrimage II lix 203)

A tone of reverence is discerned in the words.

More significant, though, is the message. The poet does not provide the total content of the call. Allah is acknowledged as one God, which is the Islamic confession of faith. Allah is also referred to as "great," an attribute of God. "There is no god but God" is all that Byron includes, when, in fact, the Athan contains "and Muhammad is God's prophet." The reason why this is omitted may be linked to Byron's disbelief of Muhammad's prophethood.

Byron's commentary on the words "Alla Hu" in a line of poetry in "The Giaour" indicates the words are part of the Islamic confession of faith. The poet explains that "Alla Hu" are the concluding words in the Mu'athin's call, which is made from the minaret (Complete 892). However, "Alla Hu Akbar" is also the opening of the minaret call.

Other allusions to minaret calls stress the solemn and beautiful strains, yet emphasize a sad tone of the Mu'athin's voice. A passage in "The Siege of Corinth" alludes to the sound of the invitation to prayer.

As rose the Muezzin's voice in the air
In midnight call to wonted prayer;
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:

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'T was musical, but sadly sweet,
Such as when winds and harp-strings
  meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrels unknown,
It seem'd to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall:
It struck even the besieger's ear
With something ominous and dear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,

(11.266-283 322)

The sound of this minaret call is associated with the harp, "musical," "sadly sweet," and "dear." It also brings a calm stillness over one's heart.

Next, Byron ironically alludes to Zuleika in "The Bride of Abydos" possessing a voice like a Mu'athin's. Gaiffer praises Zuleika's voice, comparing it to a Mu'athin's:

Blest--as the Muezzin's strain from
    Mecca's wall
To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call;

(11. 402-405 273)

Byron depicts the sound as "melodious" and "soft." He associates Zuleika's voice with the Mu'athin's at Mecca. Someone holding such a treasured position at Islam's holiest mosque is viewed highly. Why, then, speak of Zuleika in

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this manner, when she is so far from being a sincere Muslim because of her incest? Irony is certainly involved here.

When Lord Byron alludes to Muslim prayers in his poetry and prose he addresses the five daily prayers, Friday Prayer, as well as the importance of praying among specific groups and individuals.

Once a Muslim has abluted, he is ready to pray. To do so, he should face towards Mecca. Byron hints at this fact in "The Giaour." It is inscribed on Sultan Hassan's tombstone that he always faced Mecca when praying.

> There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
> As e'ver at Mecca bent the knee;
> As ever scorn'd forbidden wine,
> Or pray'd with face towards the shrine,
> In orison resumed anew at solemn sound of 'Alla Hu!' (11.729-734 259)

The allusion does not lack irony; Hassan is a murderer.

Byron is informative on prayer content. His reference, every prayer commences with "Bismillah" in a note to "The Giaour" (Complete 892) is correct. Yet, he fails to convey the complete verse: "Bismillah El-Rahman El-Rahim," "In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful."

Second, the poet criticizes Muslim prayer in notes to Childe Harold's Pilgrimage as a false devotion, though done with the sincerest of intentions. He portrays the praying of Turkish Muslims as follows:

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The Mussulmans, whose erroneous devotion (at least in the lower order) is most sincere, and therefore impressive, are accustomed to repeat their prescribed orisons and prayers, wherever they may be, at the stated hours--of course, frequently in the open air, kneeling upon a light mat (which they carry for the purpose of a bed or cushion as required); the ceremony lasts some minutes, during which they are totally absorbed and only living in their supplication: nothing can disturb them. On me the simple, and entire sincerity of these men, and the spirit which appeared to be within and among them, made a far greater impression than any general rite which was ever performed in places of worship, of which I have seen those of almost every persuasion under the sun; including most of our sectaries, and the Greek, the Catholic, the Armenian, the Lutheran, the Jews, and the Mahometan. Many of the negroes of whom there are numbers in the Turkish empire, are idolaters, and have free exercise of their belief and its rites; some of these I had a distant view of at Patras; and from what I could make out of them, they appeared to be of a truly Pagan description, and not very agreeable to a spectator. (Complete 887)

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That the prayers are made at certain times suggests Byron is aware of the Muslim practice of praying five times a day. The individuals are completely involved in praying.

Furthermore, the impression they leave on Byron is far above that of the observing Christians, Greeks, Catholics, Lutherans, or those of other faiths in the world. Despite the sympathy in this note, it cannot be overlooked that the poet calls the Muslim prayer "erroneous." So Byron's admiration for Muslim prayer is undermined by his remark. This is his harshest criticism of Islamic prayer. Byron also creates a confusion when he remarks that "Mussulmans" are more sincere in their prayers than the "Mahometans." We do not know what he means.

Another prayer the poet mentions is a midnight prayer that does not exist. The poet refers to the "midnight call" in "The Siege of Corinth."

> As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
> In midnight call to wonted prayer;
> . . . . (322 ll. 266-267)

Reference is also made to the "nightly solemn sound" of the call to prayer in Canto II of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

The Friday Prayer is in addition to the five daily prayers. Byron suggests hypocrisy on the part of the sultan in going to Friday Prayer in Don Juan. The sultan is portrayed as attending Friday Prayers meticulously.

> He went to the mosque in state, and said his

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prayers
With more than Oriental scrupulosity;
He left to his vizier all state affairs,
And show'd but little royal curiosity:
I know not if he had domestic cares--
(V cxlviii 728)

The sultan or any Muslim must go to the mosque to perform Friday Prayer since it is mandatory in the Qur'an. Byron's allusion to the sultan's visit to the mosque on Friday and his prayer is ironic. The sultan goes there in state, indicating the action is for show.

Specific people praying Byron alludes to are the Albanians and Turks. First, we will take a look at a reference to Albanians.

There some grave Moslem to devotion
stoops,
And some that smoke, and some that
play, are found;
Here the Albanian proudly tread the
ground (Childe Harold's Pilgrimage II lix 203)

The poet acknowledges that some Albanians in Ali Pasha's court at Jannina pray. But the word "some" suggests the majority are not devout Moslems.

Second, the poet disagrees with the "Mussulmans'" prayers. He has addressed "prescribed prayers" as "erroneous devotion." Then he sympathizes with their

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prayers. They are the "most sincere" and "impressive" (Byron, Complete 887). The sympathetic and unsympathetic appear in this statement. Moreover, Byron does not portray one Muslim in the Seraglio court in Constantinople as devout. Instead, Muslims there are described as playing chess, chatting, smoking, drinking, sleeping or strutting about (Don Juan V 718).

The poet is taken with the Muslims' sincerity in praying five times daily. Byron describes the "Mussulmans" as praying with genuine spirit and total absorption. He concludes he knows of no other people of other faiths to pray so sincerely. Why he differentiates the "Mahometans" from the "Mussulmans" is not clear, particularly since the Mussulmans and Mahometans are Muslims. In a letter to Francis Hodgson, dated Sept. 3, 1811, Byron explains that in their prayer to God, ten "Mussulmans" would shame Christians (Perkins 928).

However, his Muslim characters are different. Hypocrisy of Muslims in prayer is the message Lord Byron projects through several of his Muslim characters. The sultan and sultana in Don Juan, and Hassan in "The Giaour" are all linked to prayer. The sultan attends Friday Prayers, but no mention is made of his daily prayers. So it is assumed that this leader is less than sincere when praying. His wife, Gulbayez, who amuses herself trying to seduce servants, is not much better. After failing to entice Don

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Juan, the sultana becomes embarrassed. The narrator explains ironically that she had never met "In her life with aught save prayers and praise" (V 725).

The previously mentioned reference to Hassan facing towards Mecca to pray suggests devotion on his part. He is also described going to the mosque on Bairam eve ("The Giaour" l. 463 256). Additionally, Hassan prays informally to God, saying "Bismillah" after a dangerous climb from a mountaintop in "The Giaour" (l. 568 257). Like the sultan in Don Juan, such behavior from Hassan may also be pretentious. He kills his wife and then prays.

Western writers and travelers to Turkey and other regions of the East have recorded observations of mosques, and of course, Byron is among them. He speaks generally about mosques before focusing on Sophia and Soleyman Mosques.

Lord Byron's letters contain some general allusions to mosques, while others appear in his poetry. Overall, he places much emphasis on obtaining permission to view the mosques in Turkey, while little on description in his letters. To begin with, on May 5, 1810, the poet told Francis Hodgson that he would obtain permission to visit the mosques (Byron, Works 1: 274). By June 17, 1810, when he wrote to Henry Drury, Byron had still not entered a mosque. "We have seen every thing but the mosques, which we are to view with a firman on Tuesday next" (1: 278). Mr. Adair, British Ambassador, finally eased the way for Byron's request to be

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honored. Writing to his mother on June 28, 1810, the poet states, "I have been in the principal mosque by the virtue of a firman: this is a favour rarely permitted to Infidels, but the ambassador's departure obtained it for us" (1: 281).

In correspondence with his mother on July 27, 1810, he reports viewing mosques in Constantinople.

> At Constantinople I visited the Mosques, plains, and grandees of that place, which, in my opinion cannot be compared with Athens and its neighborhood; indeed I know of no Turkish scenery to equal this, which would be civilized and Celtic enough . . . . (Byron, Works 1: 280)

He reveals admiration for the mosques. Byron even judges such sights in Constantinople to be superior to those in Athens and other parts of Turkey.

In a letter written July 30, 1810, before leaving Constantinople, Byron acknowledges that he saw the interior of the mosques, something most travelers are not allowed to view (Works 1: 278). Here and in a previous statement, the poet brags that he has toured the Turkish mosques. He may be stressing his own importance rather pompously. Despite those privileges given, Byron offers few details on the mosques he saw.

Some references in Byron's poetry convey a disagreeable attitude towards mosques. The Corsair, for instance, sets

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fire to a mosque as a form of revenge against Muslims who reportedly loot and destroy churches.

> Much hath been done, but much remains to do;
> Their galleys blaze--why not their city too?
> Quick at the words they seized him each a torch,
> And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
>
> (II ll. 192-198 228)

Delighted with this suggestion, the Corsair, Byron's hero, orders his men to burn the mosque at the Seraglio, but to enter the haram and save the women there. In actuality, the poet is contrasting Christian and Moslem ethics of war, attempting to portray the former as better. However, as discussed in the section on Islamic justice, Byron is ignorant of Muslim ethics in war. The poet's goal is to encourage Christians to rise up against the followers of Islam.

An allusion to a mosque, also contained in Don Juan, suggests that Muslims view Christians as inferior and hate them. Juan rescues Lelia, a young Turkish girl in the Battle of Ismail, between Turks and Russians. Later, when he shows her the cathedral at Canterbury and informs her that it is God's house, she assumes it is a mosque taken from Muslims by the Christians.

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> . . .--and her infant brow
> Was bent with grief that Mahomet should resign
> A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine.
> (X lxxiv 787)

Byron likely writes the passage to push Christians to antagonize Muslims. Such an intention serves to further his Hellenistic cause.

Specific mosques that Byron discusses are Sophia and Soleyman. Concerning Sophia's Mosque, the poet writes the following to his mother in a June 28, 1810 letter:

> St. Sophia is, undoubtedly the most interesting from its immense antiquity, and the circumstances of all the Greek emperors, from Justinian, . . . besides the Turkish sultans who attended it regularly. But it is inferior in beauty and size to some of the mosques, particularly 'Soleyman,' etc., ... (Works 1: 281-282)

He believes the mosque is intriguing, but for historical reasons, not religious ones. Byron concludes, ". . . , I prefer the Gothic cathedral of Seville to St. Sophia's, and any religious building I have ever seen" (1: 281-282). A significant fact to note is that Byron refers to the mosque as "St. Sophia," not as "Sophia" or "Sophia Mosque." The building was once a Catholic church called St. Sophia. At the time the area was conquered by Muslims, the structure

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was turned into a mosque referred to as Sophia Mosque. Since Byron speaks of it as St. Sophia, it seems he refuses to acknowledge it as a mosque, but still views it as a Catholic cathedral. He even describes his servant Fletcher as crossing himself on entering the building and praying, according to Catholic custom.

Besides this description of the mosque, Byron writes that ". . . Lady Mary Wortley errs strangely when she says, 'St. Paul's would cut a strange figure by St. Sophia's'" (Works 1: 282). Montagu does not compare Sophia to St. Paul; she compares Sultana Valida Mosque to Paul's Church.

Other comments on Sophia's Mosque are found in his poetry. Byron speaks of the mosque as "Sophia's cupola with golden gleam" in Don Juan (V iii 712). A passage from Childe Harold's Pilgrimage may explain why Byron unsympathetically addresses the mosque as St. Sophia.

> And whose more rife with merriment
> than thine,
> Oh Stambul! once the empress of their
> reign?
> Though turbans now pollute Sophia's
> shrine,
> And Greece her very altars eyes in vain:
> (Alas! her woes will still pervade my
> strain!)
> Gay were her minstrels once, for free

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her throng,
All felt the common joy they now must
feign,
Now oft I've seen such sight, nor heard
such song,
As woo'd the eye, and thrill'd the Bos-
phorous along. (II lxxix 206)

Here, the poet harshly condemns St. Sophia's church becoming a mosque. He is disgusted that Muslims turned the building into a mosque. Byron desires that it be restored to its former status as a Catholic church. Moreover, he thinks the Greeks probably look on with regret. The implications behind these line make Byron's position concerning Islam clear. They also explain why he refers to the structure as "St. Sophia's" as well.

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again
may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former
guest; . . . .
(Childe Harold's Pilgrimage II lxxvii 206)

On a more sympathetic note, the poet emphasizes the exterior of mosques in two allusions. Byron mentions the lighting of mosques at the end of Ramadan in "The Giaour."

The crescent glimmers on the hill,

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The Mosque's high lamps are quivering
still.

. . .

To-night, set Ramazani's sun;

To-night, the Bairam feast's begun

(ll. 222-230 254)

Byron offers a similar depiction in another passage.

. . . When Ramazan's last sun was set,

And flashing from each minaret

Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast

Of Bairam through the boundless East.

(ll. 449-452 256)

He describes the illumination of the minarets and building as an announcement of the Bairam feast.

At the root of Byron's displeasure are his strong ties to panhellenism and the continuous conflict of the cross versus the crescent. As a result, a number of allusions to the crescent are present in his works that are symbolic of mosques, but more significantly of Islam. One such example is found in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. The poet laments Albania's being taken by Muslims after Iskander.

Land of Albania! Where Iskander rose,

Theme of the young, and beacon of the
wise,

And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled
foes

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Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous
  emprize:
Land of Albania! let me bend my eyes
On thee, thou ragged nurse of savage
  men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise
And the pale crescent sparkles in the
  glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each
  city's ken. (II xxxviii 200)

He offers the image of the cross descending and the crescent ascending. Also, Byron describes himself lowering his eyes on the barbarous Muslims who have gained control of Albania.

Other lines in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage further emphasize the conflict. Byron writes,

Here the red cross, for still the cross is
  here,
Though sadly scoff'd at by the circum-
  cised. (II xliv 201)

He reminds us that Christians are living under Muslim rule, even though they supposedly are ridiculed by Muslims. The poet continues the passage, making reference to the crescent as follows:

Churchman and votary alike de-
  spised.
Foul superstition! howso'er disguised,

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Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent,
cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general lose!
Who from true worship's gold can
separate thy dross? (II xliv 201)

Here again, crescent is used to signify Islam. Byron employs the term to express his dislike of Muslims promoting Islam. Yet, at the same time he condemns the Christians and idol worshippers. The poet argues that every religion is a disguise for worldly gain.

Crescent is also mentioned in "The Siege of Corinth." The Christian character Alp, a mercenary fighting for the Turks, is unwilling to place the crescent over the cross (XII ll. 296-305 322). The word again symbolizes Islam.

Other passages of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage describe the Islamic conquest itself and Byron's panhellenism.

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Ottoman's race again
may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former
guest;
Or Wahab's rebel brood, who dared
divest
The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,

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May wind their path of blood along the
West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated
soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years
of endless toil. (II lxxvii 206)

Byron heats the conflict, stirring up the feelings of Greeks and other Christians to move them to fight the Muslims. He suggests without grounds that if Muslims will steal from their prophet's tomb, they will do worse to Christians. Furthermore, Byron encourages Christians to take back Constantinople if they have any hope for freedom. He threatens that if they do not, Muslims may expand their rule into the West (II lxxvii 206).

Evaluation and Understanding

Like members of the English tradition--Rycaut, Sale, Lane, and Hughes--Byron explains that the Mu'athins' words from the mosques are daily calls to prayer. However, Byron differs with English writers on the content of the call to prayer. When compared to Hughes, Lane, Beckford, and other English writers; it is clear that Byron's translation of the Athan is not complete, as well as not in the correct order. He omits the statements of Muhammad being the Prophet of Allah and coming to salvation. Furthermore, Byron re-arranges the order of the statements. "God is Great!" is the first exclamation and also next to last. Besides, he

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does not indicate that each statement is repeated a designated number of times. He adds "To pray--lo!" That Byron does not include the testimony of Muhammad as God's prophet may be due to his belief that Muhammad is an impostor, and Prideaux may have contributed to that. The other inaccuracies prove the poet is not very knowledgeable of the Mu'athin's call.

Byron stresses the Mu'athin's voice most, describing his call to prayer as pleasantly lyrical and solemn. He agrees with English critics on the sounds of Mu'athin calls. He may have been influenced by Thevenot, Carne and Sale, all of whom describe the sounds of the Mu'athins' calls similarly. Also, Byron and other critics praise the Athan as romantic.

Hidgen, Sale and Gibbon, like Byron, confirm the fact that Muslims face Mecca when they pray.

The poet is much more general on Islamic prayers, when compared to fellow English authors. He acknowledges that Muslims must pray at designated times wherever they are, yet hardly offers the details given by Rycaut, Sale, Lane and Hughes. Comprehensive accounts of prayer postures and recitations are provided by Lane and Hughes. None but Galt and Byron speak of a midnight call to prayer. Byron refers to a "midnight call to prayer" announced with the sound of drums in "The Siege of Corinth." John Galt also alludes to hearing drums, but does not identify them with a call to

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prayer. Galt explains that Byron, himself and others in their party arrived in Jannina, Albania at the beginning of Ramadan. At night they were disturbed by drums, the Mu'athin's voice, and a carousal (81). Yet, Byron describes the drums announcing a midnight prayer when visiting Jannina, Albania at the beginning of Ramadan.

In his praise of Muslim's prayers, Byron is not alone. Other English writers have drawn similar conclusions, such as Ross, Chardin, Pitts, DeKay, Galt, Addison, and Forster. Despite the poet's praise of Moslems' sincerity in prayer, in the same breath he criticizes them of praying falsely.

Byron and other English writers identify Friday as the day of Muslim worship. Byron implies that the sultan is pretentious by going to pray at the mosque. Rycaut presents a similar view, which Byron seems to have accepted. The poet gives no explanation of why Friday is designated the Islamic holy day, while other English authors expose their ignorance by providing incorrect explanations.

Lord Byron goes on to emphasize visiting mosques in Turkey, but many of his descriptions, like Hobhouse's and Galt's, focus on marginal references to the exterior of the structures. He offers romantic images of illuminated mosques, and cupola and minarets glistening in the setting sun. Considerable similarities exist in Byron's mosque images and those of Hobhouse and Galt.

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The poet was somewhat influenced by Gibbon and Montagu concerning information on Sophia's Mosque. Byron may have gotten the idea about Sophia's being polluted by turbans from Knolles and Rycaut. As for Mary Montagu, Byron comments that she is incorrect in saying St. Paul's is a strange figure to St. Sophia's. But the poet is not accurate on this point. Montagu compares St. Paul to Valide Mosque, not Sophia Mosque, as he states. Byron's criticism is unjustified after examining what Montagu had to say.

Byron says nothing of Soleyman Mosque, the principle one in Istanbul. It is such a massive structure and so beautiful, as Montagu indicates, that it is amazing the poet would visit it and offer no detail. DeKay, on the other hand, indicates just what a huge structure Soleyman Mosque is, since it houses five colleges with emphasis on seven subjects, a public school, and a hospital. These are all positive points about mosques one English critic discusses, which Byron neglects to convey to his readers. More importantly, Byron uses mosque references for his own political purposes.

Factors contributing more to Lord Byron's depictions of Muslim prayer are deism, panhellenism, and Christianity. Deism is the most influential of all, since many deistic beliefs were ingrained in Byron's thought.

Deism plays a major role in Byron's references to prayers and mosques. The poet is a confirmed deist (Marchand,

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Byron's Letters 2: 19). Significant principles of deism apply to the poet's allusions to religious practices. To deism, "the purest form of worship is to lead a moral life" according to the "natural law." Secondly, "All other religious beliefs or practices conflicting with these tenets are to be regarded critically . . . as errors to be condemned and eradicated if it should be prudent to do so" (P. Wiener 646-652). These ideas can be considered Byron's views about religious practices, of which prayer is a part. This information helps one to better understand why the poet is frequently so critical of Islamic religious practices.

Byron omits Muhammad as Allah's apostle in the confession of faith formula on deistic grounds. He does not accept him as a prophet of God. Deists do not believe in the prophets of any revealed religions (Byron, Critical 1: 5-10). As for Byron, he speaks of prophets as "Foul superstition" (Childe Harold's Pilgrimage II xliv).

Then Byron rejects institutional or formal prayer. He contends that he seeks no shrines, priests or gothic churches in which to pray, but in God's "natural temple" (Works 3: 224-228). In a letter to Hodgson, the poet contends, "God did not ratify any peculiar mood of worship" (Collins 60). This is why he is so hard on Moslems' prayer. Byron accuses the Mussulman of "erroneous devotion." He may do so because he thinks there is no need for Muslims to pray five times a day. At the same time, this remark may be traced to Byron's

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accusation that Muhammad is an imposter and Islam a false religion, as already discussed in previous chapters.

There is a pattern in Byron's religious thought--he is also critical of Christian worship.

> I don't see very much the need of a Saviour, nor the utility of prayer. Prayer does not consist of the act of kneeling, nor repeating certain words in solemn manner. (Kennedy 79)

He dislikes formal prayer with its kneeling, bowing, and recitation.

His attack on Muslim prayer is also made against Christian prayer. Through Cain, Byron shows irritation for Abel's submissiveness to worship God with an offering.

> . . . burnt offerings, which he daily brings
> With a meek brow, whose bade humility
> Shows more of fear than worship--as a bribe
> To the Creator. (Cain III i ll.100-103 539)

His distaste for such prayer is also expressed concerning priests' "mystic rites" in "The Prayer of Nature."

> Let priests to spread their sable reign
> With tales of mystic rites beguile
> (Works 3: 224-228)

Because Byron condemns the utility of prayer, it is not strange that he mocks Catholic prayer. Don Juan made fun of Mary's and saints' statues when he prayed (Don Juan II

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cxliv). And as for mass said for Catholics who die in shipwrecks, Catholics are unwilling to pay the three franc charge until they know if the soul of the person will enter heaven or hell (Don Juan II lv).

The poet's rejection of the practice of formal prayer is also consistent with his rejection of the Protestant and Catholic practice of taking the sacrament (Marchand, Byron's Letters 1: 173). Byron actually mocks Catholics concerning the sacrament. ". . . for those who swallow their Deity, really and truly, in transubstantiation, can hardly find any thing else otherwise than ease of digestion" (Byronic Thoughts 29). His rejection of these practices is further consistent with his rejection of beliefs like the Mosaic Chronology of Creation (Byronic Thoughts 15), revealed religions, the divinity of Jesus, prophets, and more. Furthermore, Byron simply wants to worship his God without belief in sectaries heresies, mysteries, or Thirty-nine articles (Critical 1: 86).

Up to this point, it has been established that Byron is critical of Muslim prayer, as well as Christian prayer and other Christian practices. Why such condemnation of Islamic and Christian prayer? As a deist, the poet rejects organized religions (Fairchild 402). He calls the crescent and the cross, Islam and Christianity, "Foul superstition" (Childe Harold II xliv 201). He also stresses revealed religions as superstition in "The Prayer of Nature" (Works 3: 224-228).

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Byron argues in his poetry that Muslims are hypocritical in their prayers. He implies this is true of the sultan, sultana, and Hassan, the Muslims of the Seraglio, and the Muslims of Albania (very few pray). The fact that the poet accuses Christians of hypocrisy supports the accusation of Muslim hypocrisy. According to Trueblood, Byron held distaste for the hypocrisy of anything Christian (77). He shows that the clergy are hypocritical for their avarice in Don Juan (VII lxiv). Like Churchill, who was against the "pietistic cant" of the Methodist saints of his day, Byron was also opposed to hypocritical talk (Fairchild 400). The poet believes Christians are hypocrites when they "haggled, wrangled, swore . . . ." at the slave market, "As though they were in a mere Christian fair . . ." (Don Juan V xxviii). Accordingly, he satirizes Christian hypocrisy in prayer through Don Juan. The character explains,

> . . . as I suffer from the shocks
> of illness, I grow more orthodox
>
> (Don Juan XI v-vi)

He indicates that Christians may only pray to God when ill. Another case of Christian hypocrisy involves Julia, who in deciding on her love for Juan and fidelity to her husband prays to Mary.

> Prayed the virgin Mary for her grace,
> As being the best judge of a lady's case
>
> (Don Juan I lxxv-lxxvi)

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The reference is loaded with irony.

As well, Byron refers to parsons' hypocrisy in prayer (Trueblood 78).

> Oh for a forty-parson power to chant
> Thy praise, Hypocrisy! Oh for a hymn
> Loud as the virtues than dost loudly vaunt,
> Not practice! (<u>Don Juan</u> X xxxiv 782)

He contends that the parsons' chanting and singing of virtues is hypocritical, since they do not put those virtues into practice. Byron is opposed to those who do not practice what they believe; he does not think that praying will not do them any good. He argues that "pious deeds performed on Earth" will be no use in the afterlife (Marchand, <u>Byron's Letters</u> 2: 19).

Byron is also hard on Catholic insincerity of worship.

> Soon as the Matin bell proclaimeth nine,
> Thy Saint-adorers count the Rosary:
> Much is the Virgin teased to shrive them free
> (Well do I ween the only virgin there)
> From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
> Then to the crowded circus forth they fair,
> And honor the Sabbath by enjoying the bullfight
> (<u>Works</u> 3: 3)

This passage is very satirical of clergymen on Sunday. Moreover, Byron writes, "I have known a person engaged in sin, and when the vesper-bell has rung, stop and repeat the

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Ave Maria, and then proceed in the sin: absolution cured all" (Kennedy 86).

Byron also makes a general comment on hypocrisy in any religion, whether Islam or Christianity. "All religions are good, when properly attended, without making it a mask to cover villainy, which I am fully persuaded is too often the case" (Galt 361). This quote may very well explain why he praises and criticizes Muslim devotions.

The poet's deistic views also apply to his references to mosques. In "The Prayer of Nature," he writes, "No shrine I seek, to sects unknown" (Works 3: 224). Byron sometimes offers images of the crescent atop the cupola of mosques. He may view it as simply a decoration with no real religious significance. Apparently, this is what the poet thinks of the cross.

> In his room at Albany there hung a crucifix which he had brought from Greece; but it could have been no more that a decorative souvenir.
>
> (Fairchild 404)

Since he believes in natural religion, the symbols, or emblems of organized religions are merely decorative. Byron may feel the same about religious structures. In a passage of "The Prayer of Nature," Byron poses the question,

> Shall man confine his Maker's sway
> to Gothic Domes of mouldering stone?
>
> (Works 3: 224-228)

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Man's worship to God should not simply be within the walls of mosques or churches. Byron's allusion to domes is suggestive of mosques and Roman Catholic churches. In sharp contrast, he argues,

> Thy temple is the face of the day;
> Earth, Ocean, Heaven, thy boundless throne.
>
> (Works 3: 224-228)

For Byron, nature is the place to worship God. James Kennedy emphasizes this fact when he reports that Byron sees no utility in prayers. He quotes Byron, who says: "When I see the wonder of creation, I bow to the majesty of heaven not through rituals but in heart" (qtd. in Kennedy 79). Nature as the appropriate place to show devotion to God is stressed further by the poet.

> Devotion is the affection of the heart, and this I feel; for when I view the wonders of creation, I bow to the Majesty of Heaven; and when I feel the enjoyments of life, health, and happiness, I feel grateful to God for having bestowed these upon me.
>
> (qtd. in Kennedy 79)

That Byron prefers natural to organized religion is evident in these remarks.

Just how very influential deism is on Byron concerning his negative and positive attitudes toward Muslim devotions is obvious, based on this discussion.

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The influence of old religions and philosophies of the world has also shaped Byron's mind on revealed religions. Manicheanism, Paulicianism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Confucism, Hinduism, Spinozism, Pyrrhonianism, and Greek and Latin philosophies--all of these do not stress formal prayers, but encourage speculations and spiritualism, which may attract Byron. The poet shows more than once his sympathies with these primitive religious movements.

The next factor to mold Byron's treatment of Islamic prayer is panhellenism or politics. Political reasons related to Muslim destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire in the name of Islam contribute to Byron's excluding reference to Muhammad in his version of the confession. Maybe his animosity for Ottoman rule over Greece contributes to not placing much stress on basic Islamic principles.

The poet's allusions to mosques further his panhellenistic cause as well. The attitude conveyed through the description of the giaour's viewing the mosque during the Ramadan feast is one of gloom and regret, on the surface suggesting Christian intolerance for Islam. It may represent Greeks distaste for the dominating presence of Muslims in their land. The corsair's order to burn a mosque also symbolizes Greek hatred for Muslim political presence. Besides, Byron is encouraging the West and the Greeks to take up arms against the Muslim domination. Then, the poet expresses his allegiance to panhellenism when he remarks

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that the "turbans pollute Sophia," and refers to Sophia's Mosque as St. Sophia, since it was previously a Catholic church. Byron is speaking out against Turkish domination in a possible attempt to get Greeks to fight to regain their freedom and lands. His primary objective in his references to the mosques is to make a political statement against Turkey.

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CHAPTER VIII: CHARITY AND HOSPITALITY

Another religious duty Muslims take quite seriously is charity or Zakat. The devotional practice is addressed by members of the English tradition, including Byron. First, the Islamic tradition of charity is briefly outlined.

Islamic Tradition

Charity or alms-giving, the third pillar of Islam, is an institution of Islam founded upon a command in the Qur'an. It very often follows God's command for prayer. Muslims are instructed,

> And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity: and whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, ye shall find it with God: for God sees well all that ye do. (2:110)

The Qur'an also specifies those who should receive charity. Sura 9:60 identifies eight groups of individuals.

> Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer (funds); for those whose hearts have been recently reconciled to Truth; for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of God; and for the wayfarer: thus is it ordained by God, and God is full of knowledge and wisdom.

One also should be charitable to parents, relatives, orphans, among others (2:215). The quality of charity is very important; Zakat should be of the best things that have

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been honestly earned (2:267). The reward for charity is emphasized in the Qur'an. Those who are charitable will receive credit in this life and the next (57:18). Zakat, as its name suggests, is a benefit for the soul (2:27). But those who refrain to pay Zakat will suffer the consequences (63:10).

Zakat is the religious tax of any adult Muslim who is free and sane, provided that he possesses the Nisab, a fixed amount of property in one's possession for one complete year. Zakat is 2.5% on money, gold or silver. Zakat is also paid on other properties and possessions as detailed by the law. Ramadan charity is also part of the Zakat and will be discussed in Chapter Nine.

The second form of charity is voluntary charity which is not governed by time, place, or amount. The building of schools, hospitals, hotels, fountains, and mosques, as well as giving to the poor are some examples of voluntary charity.

Hospitality is a significant religious custom enjoined in the Qur'an. It is also enjoined in the tradition of Prophet Muhammad. Hospitality is shown to neighbors and strangers who may be guests or travelers. It is the Muslim's duty to assist travelers (2:172, 211; 4:40). In the traditions, Muhammad spoke about hospitable treatment of guests. He said, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Resurrection must respect his guest." In another remark,

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the prophet said, "It is according to my practice that the host shall come out with his guest to the door" (Al-Tabrizi 19: 11). Traditionally, hospitality extends for three days, and the host should supply his guest with provisions for the road, enough for a day and a night.

In addition, charity is extended to animals. Animals under the subjection of man must be properly housed, fed, and looked after. Charity to animals is referenced in a note to Sura 51:19 (Ali 1422).

It is significant to keep this brief account of charity in mind when scrutinizing the English tradition and evaluating Byron's treatment.

English Tradition

A number of English authors discuss Islamic charity in their writings and praise the practice. Rycaut and Gibbon stress that Islamic charity is a major practice and a law. Rycaut states that charity is one of five central points of "Muhammadanism" (98). Gibbon points out that "Islam is the only lawgiver to define benevolence (performance of charitable acts) in the foundation of justice" (Birth 41).

Gibbon states that Muslims have precise measures of charity, which is a religious duty (Birth 39-40). Rycaut confirms that the faithful performance of Zakat or the giving of alms is specified concerning proportion (98). Gibbon continues that one-eighth of alms revenues for

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travelers, and one-fifth of battle spoils go to charity (<u>Birth</u> 39-40, 55).

A number of English scholars applaud Islamic charity. Ross believes Muslim charity is a good role model for others. He contends, "Christians will find edification in the piety, devotion, and charity of Mohammedans which should make us blush for our own coldness and negligence" (Chew 450). Ross's intention, obviously, is to encourage his fellow Christians to return to the practice of good works. Sale speaks highly of "Muhammad's law" of charity. He admits that "He [Muhammad] was a man of at least tolerable morals, and not such a monster of wickedness as he is usually represented" (<u>Preliminary</u> 29).

Herbert, Hidgen and George Sandy admire the Islamic charity for Muslims and Christians (Smith 13; Hitti, <u>Islam</u> 57). Besides, Lane calls charity a Muslim virtue. "They pity the distress of men and give alms to adhere to the will of God" (1: 720-721).

Buildings and other structures are also constructed as a form of charity. Lane stresses that the hotels for travelers "bear testimony to the charity of this people" (1: 720-721). Inns are built to lodge travelers at night. They are considered the most durable and magnificent buildings and edifices to the persons who built them. Furthermore, these structures, situated all over the Ottoman empire, contain mosques, baths, and shops. Apartments for guests are

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also made available (Rycaut 166-167). Emma Robert also portrays a Muslim planting a grove of trees and constructing a pool and fountain for the benefit of Muslims and non-Muslims (Smith 193).

Islamic hospitality is extended to the needy, travelers, guests, and slaves, as well. Willingness to be hospitable, simplicity and civility, greetings, the bread and salt tradition, satisfying other needs, and gift-giving are all types of hospitality among Muslims which English scholars describe favorably.

Lane offers a realistic description of how readily Moslems show their hospitality.

> Strangers who have not any friend or acquaintance in the camp, alight at the first tent that presents itself: whether the owner be home or not, the wife or daughter immediately spreads a carpet, and prepares breakfast or dinner. If the stranger's business requires a protracted stay, as, for instance, if he wishes to cross the Desert under the protection of the tribe, the host, after a lapse of three days and four hours from the time of his arrival, asks whether he means to honour him any longer with his company. If the stranger declares his intention of prolonging his visit, it is expected that he should assist his host in

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> domestic matters, fetching water, milking the camel, feeding the horse, &c. (1: 36)

This discussion suggests how readily strangers are welcomed.

Galt and Hobhouse stress the simplicity and humility of Muslim hosts. They sit on mats on the floor wearing ordinary clothes (Galt 73; Hobhouse 40-42). Galt points out the civility of the Albanians to Byron (71, 73, 77, 79). He even emphasizes the humility shown for guests. Galt encountered a captain of their guard not distinguishing himself from his soldiers (40).

Hospitality is first shown when greeting guests. Hobhouse speaks of the embrace common among Muslims when greeting an intimate guest (60). Details on a typical farewell are also mentioned by Lane. The guest commonly says, "With your permission, I rise" (1: 316). Such action will be accompanied by the salutation "Salam Alakeum," "Peace be upon you!" The guest reciprocates, saying "Alakeum Assalam," "On you be peace, and the mercy of God, and his blessings!" (1: 36-37).

Lane also alludes to the bread and salt tradition, another integral part of Muslim hospitality. He points out the tradition of bread and salt or the obligation involved is well-known. He reports a tale of Yaakoob, in which the main character made a tunnel to the Dirhem Palace of the Governor of Seestan. Yaakoob entered the palace and took a quantity of gold and jewels. As he was leaving, he hit his

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foot on something. Thinking it was a jewel, he picked it up and touched it to his mouth. Rock salt was mistaken for a jewel. As a result of tasting the owner's salt, he abandoned his evil ways to show respect for the laws of hospitality (1: 90). This is one fictional case of the bread and salt tradition Byron was perhaps familiar with.

Providing food and drink to travelers and guests is part of the bread and salt tradition, according to English critics. Food is provided to travelers and the needy at no cost. Rycaut specifically stresses that it is an offense to deny bread to a needy Christian (166-167). He acknowledges that charity among Muslims is not just shown to other Muslims, but to poor Christians as well.

Food and drink for guests is detailed by Hobhouse and Montagu. Hobhouse describes a "never-failing" supply of coffee, pipes, and grapes offered by hosts (40, 44, 61, 65, 104). Mary Montagu portrays her host, Ahmet-Beg, bending over backwards to offer her special foods. One day she requested pigeon to eat. The guards could not get pigeons, and said they were prepared to kill to fulfill her request (147). Montagu may exaggerate this account.

Other needs of travelers and guests are also met. Tradesmen and artisans supply travelers with necessities in the shops of inns (Rycaut 166-167). Herbert confirms that goods are given to travelers (Smith 13). Guards or escorts are yet an additional form of hospitality. Guards assisted

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Mary Montagu while she resided in Turkey. She was supplied with guards who would bring anything she needed or desired. When traveling, she said she was provided with a guard of 500 (152).

Finally, guests and hosts exhibit hospitality by offering gifts and money. A guest coming from another country generally brings some articles as presents for his friends. Guests commonly give money to the servants of their host, according to Lane. The host is expected to follow the action later by offering a gift of equal value to his guest on a similar occasion. Lane stresses that horses and slaves are seldom given, except by kings or great men (1: 34).

Good treatment to animals is an additional form of charity several English writers mention. Herbert describes this (Smith 13), as do other English authors who expound on the care for animals. Dryden alludes to Muslim charity to animals in the "Conquest of Granada," Act 1, Scene 1.

> Our holy prophet wills that charity
> Should even to birds and beasts extended be.

He specifically mentions good treatment to birds, as does Rycaut, who states that some Muslims buy caged birds simply to give them their freedom (166). According to Rycaut (166) and Galt (148), kind treatment of "beasts" is also extended to stray dogs. Galt adds, "the Turks are pitiful-hearted Titans to dumb animals and slaves" (148).

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Moreover, Rycaut portrays humane treatment to camels. The camel he claims is viewed by the Turks in high esteem. Not only do they possess a love for the creature, but a religious reverence as well. He says they believe it is a grave sin to overburden or tire camels (166-167).

English critics unanimously praise Islamic charity, which is given in numerous forms. The construction of hotels, fountains and pools, and the planting of trees is acknowledged by English scholars. Rycaut, Lane, Gibbon, Galt, and Montagu stress assistance to travelers. They describe affectionate greeting, bread and salt, meeting of other needs, and gifts exchanged between hosts and guests. Kind treatment to animals is alluded to by Dryden, Rycaut and Galt.

After having examined what some critics have to say about Islamic charity, it is possible to conceive of how their information may have influenced Byron's representation of this virtue. The English authors speak highly of Muslim charity. This sympathy with Muslim charity and hospitality must be remembered when turning to Lord Byron's treatment.

Byron's Tradition

> I need hardly observe, that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mahomet; and to say truth, very generally practiced by his disciples. The first praise that

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> can be bestowed on a chief is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valour. (Complete 891)

These are the words of Byron addressing the Islamic virtue of charity. The notes refer to the quote, "Since his turban cleft by the infidel's sabre!" The situation surrounding this statement demonstrates the virtue of Muslim charity. Charity is one subject Byron praises.

From Byron's letter to Francis Hodgson, dated September 3, 1811, one learns of the poet's sincere admiration for Islamic charity. This is true when he contrasts the prevalence of the virtue in Islam and Christianity.

> Talk of Galileeism? Show me the effect--are you better, wiser, kinder by your precepts [teachings, principles]? I will bring you ten Mussulmans shall shame you in all GOODWILL towards men, prayer to God, and DUTY to their neighbours.
>
> (qtd. in Perkins 927-928)

References to goodwill to men, and duty to neighbors by the Muslims certainly stress the outstanding charity of Muslims.

To back up his positive rhetoric on Muslim charity, Lord Byron refers to those who receive charity and some forms in which it is offered.

The dervise (needy scholar) and fakir (poor) usually receive charity. The poet presents this allusion:

> But gloom is gather'd o'er the gate

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> Nor there the Fakir's self will wait;
> Nor there will the wandering Dervise stay,
> For bounty cheers not his delay;
> Nor there will weary stranger halt
> To bless the sacred bread and salt.
> Alike must Wealth and Poverty,
> Pass heedless and unheeded by,
> For Courtesy and Pity died
> With Hassan on the mountain side.
>
> ("The Giaour" 255)

In normal circumstances, the poor and needy scholars might receive charity from Sultan Hassan, but since his death their needs will not be satisfied.

Byron also refers to the forms in which Muslim charity is given. Educating the poor is one kind of charity addressed in Byron's notes to Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. He speaks of the mosque schools in Turkey, which he highly applauds. "In all the mosques there are schools established, which are very regularly attended and the poor are taught without of Turkey being in peril" (Complete 885). In addition to this, Byron notes:

> The Greeks also--a kind of Eastern Irish papists--have a college of their own at Maynooth,--no, at Haivali; where the heterodox receive much of the same kind of countenance from the Ottoman as the Catholic college from the

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> English legislature. Who shall then affirm that the Turks are ignorant bigots, when they thus evince the exact proportion of Christian charity which is tolerated in the most prosperous and orthodox of all possible kingdoms? (Complete 885)

The poet indicates that providing the needy with education is a charitable Muslim act. He even refers to a Greek college that the Turks finance, just as they finance their own mosque schools. This reveals concern for the education of Muslims and non-Muslims.

Aside from free education, the poet describes the hospitality of Muslims. The poet's commentary on Muslim hospitality is agreeable with the spirit of Islamic tradition. In a letter to Francis Hodgson, Byron concludes, "I have been very well treated by the Pashas and Governors, and have no complaint to make of any kind" (Works 1: 271). Regarding Ali Pasha, he told his mother: "To me he was, indeed, a father, giving me letters, guards, and every possible accommodation" (1: 252). Furthermore, Byron believes Ali Pasha was kind and dignified, traits he finds "universal amongst Turks" (1: 252). The poet also comments that the treatment of the Turks is better than that of the Greeks or Spanish. Of the "Mussulmans," "I find the people inoffensive and kind" (1: 281). As this last remark suggests, Byron's favorable outlook on Muslim hospitality sometimes contains criticism which is skillfully inserted.

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Byron's discussion of hospitality includes the courteous reception of guests, bread and salt tradition, wide variety of other kinds of assistance, and giving of gifts. Byron personally experienced these forms of hospitality during his own visit to the Muslim Orient.

In reference to reception of guests, Byron discusses his own experiences with the Turks; as well as when meeting Ali Pasha, Veli Pasha, Mahmout Pasha, and Captain Pasha. Of the Turks he said, "They are extremely polite to strangers of any rank, . . ." (Works 1: 266). When Byron was introduced to Ali Pasha at his palace in Jannina, Albania the sultan met him "in a large room paved with marble; a fountain was playing in the centre; the apartment was surrounded by scarlet ottomans" (Works 1: 251). Ali greeted Byron standing and seated the poet on his right. "He received me standing, a wonderful compliment from a Musselman . . ." (1: 250). The sultan remarked that Byron "was a man of birth, because I had small ears, curling hair, and little white hands, and expressed himself pleased with my appearance and garb" (1: 251). He also desired to send compliments to Byron's mother. Ali Pasha even encouraged the poet to view him as a father while in Turkey. The sultan's greeting was quite hospitable.

The poet was also greeted by Ali's grandsons, Hussein Bey and Mahmout, while at the Albanian palace. Byron's description indicates that Mahmout was hospitable, for he

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asked inquisitive questions. "His grandson Mahmout, a little fellow ten years old, with large black eyes as big as pigeon eggs, and all the gravity of sixty, asked me what I did travelling so young without a Lala (tutor)?" (Works 1: 287). Mahmout even expressed a desire to see Byron again (1: 257). The poet is offered a warm and respectful reception in Jannina by Ali Pasha and Mahmout.

After leaving Constantinople and touring Morea, Byron made the acquaintance of Veli Pasha, Mahmout's father. According to Byron, Veli paid him "great honours" (Works 1: 298).

> On my late visit he received me with great pomp, standing, conducting me to the door with his arm round my waist, and a variety of civilities, invited me to meet him at Larissa and see his army, ... (Works 1: 303)

In a letter to John Hobhouse dated October 4, 1810, the poet reports that Veli greeted him formally and affectionately. Again, the introduction was made standing, which shows the highest regard for a guest. Veli Pasha ushered Byron to the door on his departure with genuine warmth and respect.

Concerning Sultan Mahmoud II, he received Byron's party formally at his palace in a reserved manner. Seated on his throne,

> He, for the most part, kept a hand on each knee, and neither moved his body nor head, but rolled

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> his eyes from side to side, without fixing them for an instant upon the ambassador [Thomas Adair] or any other person present . . . his whole physiognomy was mild and benevolent, but expressive and full of dignity.
>
> (Byron, Works 1: 288)

Mahmoud appeared kind and charitable to Byron and the others, yet with an air of authority.

In contrast to meetings with these Muslim officials is the poet's least cordial introduction to the "Captain Pasha." He reportedly received Byron, Hobhouse, Captain Bathurst, and officers of the Salsette sitting (Byron Works 1: 274). At this meeting, the Lord High Admiral was "'in his kiosk of audience at Divan-Hane, a splendid chamber, surrounded by his attendants, and contrary to custom, received us sitting'" (1: 274). Muslims usually greet their guests standing. Perhaps because of the captain's unfriendliness, Hobhouse called him "'a ferocious character, and certainly had the appearance of being so'" (1: 274).

In practically all meetings with Moslem political figures, Byron was received standing, except for the naval captain. Ali Pasha had the poet sit on his right. He also had complimentary words for Byron and his mother. Even little Mahmout cannot be excluded for receiving the poet well. Veli Pasha hugged the poet and walked him to the door on leaving to show his hospitality. Such behaviors in

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receiving a guest are expected of most Muslims. Captain Pasha is the only individual who did not receive Byron in a kind manner.

Some of the Albanian officials who received Byron also provided him with letters of introduction. Ali Pasha and his grandson both did this service for the poet. Ali gave Byron letters to his son Veli (Byron, Works 1: 248). Even ten year old Mahmout provided the poet with a letter. "He has given me a letter to his father in the Morea, to whom I have also letters from Ali Pacha" (1: 257).

The bread and salt tradition is one kind of hospitality Lord Byron alludes to in his letters and notes, in addition to his poetry. He explains the custom briefly in a note to "The Giaour": "To partake of food, to break bread and salt with your host, insure the safety of the guest: even though an enemy, his person from that moment is sacred" (Complete 891). The poet addresses the subject further in reference to his own experience when traveling over Parnasus. Dervish Tahiri, one of the Albanians in Byron's service, was treated badly by an English servant. The Muslim, having followed the bread and salt tradition with the poet and his party, acted according to the custom.

> . . . an Englishman in my service gave him a push in some dispute about the baggage, which he unluckily mistook for a blow; he spoke not, but sat down leaning his head upon his hands. . . . I

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> have been a robber: I am a soldier: no captain ever struck me: you are my master, I have eaten your bread, but by that bread! (an usual oath) had it been otherwise, I would have stabbed the dog, your servant, and gone to the mountains. So the affair ended, but from that day forward he never thoroughly forgave the thoughtless fellow who insulted him. (Byron, Complete 877)

The reaction of Dervish illustrates the Muslim's commitment to the bread and salt tradition.

The faithfulness of Dervish to Byron, a result of following this custom, continued until the poet left the region. When the poet called him to pay him for his services, the Muslim dropped to the ground ". . . clasping his hands, which he raised to forehead, rushed out of the room weeping bitterly" (Complete 877). Until the hour of Byron's departure, Dervish did not stop lamenting. The poet argues that "this almost feudal fidelity is frequent among them." As for this particular Muslim, Byron writes, ". . . his present feeling, contrasted with his native ferocity, improved my opinion of the human heart" (Complete 877). Again, such behavior by Dervish reflects his sincerity in sticking to the bread and salt tradition.

Byron experienced the bread and salt tradition with Ali Pasha, an Albanian chief, and Albanian soldiers, as well. During his frequent visits with Ali, Byron was also offered

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coffee and tobacco (Works 1: 251). An Albanian chief, Primate, also fed Byron's party, including Fletcher, a Greek, two Albanians, a Greek priest, and Hobhouse. Albanian soldiers gladly offered their food provisions to Byron (Works 1: 255).

Additional allusions to bread and salt appear in Lord Byron's poetry. The corsair (in a Dervise garb) is unwilling to break bread with Sultan Seyd. The sultan speaks to him initially saying,

> I do command thee--sit--dost hear?--obey!
> More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring;
> Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting
>
> ("The Corsair" ll. 100-102 287)

The dervise's reaction is to glare hatefully at his host and every guest present.

> The feast was usher'd in, but sumptuous fare
> He shunn'd as if some poison mingled there.
>
> (ll. 113-114 287)

Seyd questions such inappropriate behavior by the dervise in the following lines:

> What ails the, Dervise? eat--dost thou
> suppose
> This feast a Christian's? or my friends thy
> foes?
> Why dost thou shun the salt? that sacred
> pledge,

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Which, once partaken, blunts the sabre's
edge,
Make even contending tribes in peace
unite,
And hated hosts seem brethren to the
sight!
. . .
And my stern vow and order's laws
oppose
To break or mingle bread with friends or
foes. (ll. 117-126 287)

The sultan becomes suspicious of the Dervise, assuming he must be an enemy since he refuses to take part in the bread and salt tradition. The Dervise lies; he contends that piety and modesty are the reasons for not eating. Within minutes of this conversation, the Dervise makes himself known as the corsair, and the fighting begins within the palace (287). Byron makes the point that if a guest is unwilling to eat and drink with his Muslim host, it is because he has some hostile intent. This is true of Seyd's guest.

In "The Giaour," the Christian character leaves no person living at Hassan's palace. As a result, no travelers will be able to stop there to eat and drink.

But gloom is gather'd o'er the gate,
. . . Nor there will weary stranger halt

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To bless the sacred 'bread and salt.

(ll. 337, 342-342 255)

Selim discusses the subject of bread and salt with Zuleika in "The Bride of Abydos." He warns her that enemies lurk in Giaffir's house.

Within thy father's house are foes;
Not all who break his bread are true:
To these should I my birth disclose,
His days, his very hours were few:
They only want a heart to lead,
A hand to point them to the deed,
. . . . (ll. 270-275 272)

Selim stresses that some of those who partake of the tradition are not sincere. So Byron suggests that some who partake of bread and salt are dishonest and actually enemies. He may even imply that breaking the bread and salt custom is acceptable if struggling for freedom or fighting tyrants and oppressors. Giaffir could, in fact, represent Ali Pasha who Byron broke bread with but later fought against alongside the Greeks, assisting them in gaining independence from Turkey.

A final point concerns how the poet identifies the bread and salt tradition. In many of the allusions presented, Byron speaks of the custom as "sacred." He may be confusing Muslim bread and salt with the Catholic custom of sacred bread and wine. The term "sacred" does not apply to

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the Muslim tradition. The Islamic intention and practice is quite different from the Catholic.

As the references to bread and salt indicate, Byron admires the faithfulness of those who sincerely practice the custom. Yet, he injects traces of criticism into his allusions to bread and salt. The poet implies that some guests will break bread with a host, but not truly adhere to the bread and salt tradition. They may continue to view the host as an enemy and later act against him. Byron may even go so far as to legitimize breaking the tradition in times of oppression. In such light, the poet may not view bread and salt as highly as he first appears.

Under the category of hospitality, Muslims also provided their English guest with accommodations. Followers of Islam, obeying religious beliefs, provide guests room and board. Byron describes hospitality as necessary, "for inns are not." When Ali Pasha learned "that an Englishman of rank was in his dominion, . . . [he] left orders in Jannina with the commandant to provide a house. . . (Works 1: 249). The poet describes the apartment Ali provided as "handsome" (1: 250). A second illustration is of an Albanian chief who housed Byron's party. On one occasion, the poet was provided room and board in military barracks with Albanian soldiers. Byron writes,

> I lived on my route, two days at once, and three days again, in a barrack at Salora, and never

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> found soldiers so tolerable, though I have been in the garrisons of Gibralter, and Malta, and seen Spanish, French, Sicilian, and British troops in abundance. I have had nothing stolen, and was always welcome to their provision and milk.
>
> (Works 1: 255)

Additionally, he tells of living in the homes of Turks and Albanians, "today in a palace, tomorrow in a cow-house; this day with a Pacha, the next with a shepherd" (Byron, Works 1: 295).

Muslims offer accommodations, expecting no money in return. Ali Pasha would not allow Byron to pay for anything while he was in Jannina. As a result of such hospitality, the poet explains that "the expense has not been as much as staying only three weeks in Malta" (Byron, Works 1: 255). Even an Albanian host, Primate, refused to take sequins from Byron for the assistance he provided. "'No,' he replied; 'I wish you to love me, not to pay me'" (1: 255). Primate only desires a written statement from Byron that indicated he was received well. Because of this Muslim generosity, the poet concludes, ". . . the fertility of the plains is wonderful, and specie is scarce, which makes this remarkable cheapness" (1: 256).

The fact that Muslims attempt to satisfy all needs of travelers and guests is further emphasized by Lord Byron. Ali Pasha also supplied Byron "with every kind of necessary

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gratis (Byron, Works 1:249)." The poet comments that he was not allowed to pay for "a single article of household consumption" (Works 1: 249). The sultan sent Byron all kinds of confections: "almonds and sugared sherbet, fruit, and sweetmeats, twenty times a day" (1: 251).

The health of guests is an additional concern of Muslim hosts, as Byron learned. After getting situated in the house designated for him by Ali Pasha, he was asked about his health. ". . . my health inquired after by the vizier's secretary, a-la-mode-Turque!" (Byron, Works 1: 250). Moreover, Dervish, Byron's Turkish servant, as well as an infidel named Basilius, cared for Byron when he was seriously ill in the Morea in 1810. Byron acknowledges that the two saved his life ". . . by frightening away my physician, whose throat they threatened to cut if I was not cured within a given time." He continues that these two Albanians "nursed me with an attention which would have done honour to civilization" (Complete 877).

Byron details being provided for even more extensively by servants, interpreters, guides, and body guards. Byron once describes being provided with "two servants and two soldiers" who he gets along with well (Works 1: 266). The poet writes, "I have a tolerable suite, a Tartar, two Albanians, an interpreter, besides Fletcher; but in this country these are easily maintained" (1: 295). In a second reference, Byron comments on having "generally six or seven

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men" to aid him (1: 255). He compares this number of servants in Albania to just one provided him when visiting Malta. Body guards and soldiers are also presented to Lord Byron. The poet recounts a conversation Ali Pasha had with one of the Albanians assigned to Byron.

> He called my Albanian soldier, who attends me, and told him to protect me at all hazard. The soldier, Viscillie, like all Albanians, he is brave, rigidly honest, and faithful; . . . .
>
> (1: 252)

Here, the poet praises the loyalty and noble intentions of the Albanian serving as a body guard.

Even large numbers of soldiers were ordered to assist Byron in his travels by Ali Pasha. The sultan had 40 soldiers guard the poet as he traveled through the Arcanania forests (Byron, Works 1: 279). On another occasion, Byron was provided with 50 soldiers, one of the pasha's own galliots. In a letter to his mother dated November 12, 1809, Byron tells her, "I'm going tomorrow, with a guard of fifty men, to Patras in the Morea, and thence to Athens, where I shall winter" (1: 253). In a 1810 letter to Henry Drury, the poet mentions crossing the Gulf of Actium "with a guard of fifty Albanians" (1: 262-263).

Free transportation is another form of hospitality the poet was offered. On arriving in Albania, Byron was immediately provided with horses for transportation. He

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stated that much of the time he had sixteen horses at his disposal.

Moreover, Islamic followers, as Byron discovered, give their guests gifts and tokens. Veli Pasha, for instance, presented the poet with a fine stallion in Morea (Byron, Works 1: 296, 299, 303). Byron also mentions being in the possession of magnificent Albania dresses. "They cost fifty guineas each, and have so much gold, they would cost in England two hundred" (1: 256). These pieces of clothing were probably given to him. As well, Byron describes his servant, Fletcher, accepting a gift from the vizier.

> Fletcher, like all Englishmen, is very much dissatisfied, though a little reconciled to the Turks by a present of eighty piasters from the vizier, which if you consider everything, and the value of specie here, is nearly ten guineas English. (1: 256)

So gifts are another form of hospitality Byron and his servant experienced.

Finally, under the label of charity also falls good treatment to animals. According to John Galt, Byron cherished the Muslims' kind treatment of dogs in Constantinople. As well, Byron also admired Muslims buying caged birds to set them free (Galt 148-149).

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Evaluation and Understanding

There is no question that the poet perceives charity and hospitality as outstanding features of Islamic life. Practically, most of his allusions to charity and hospitality are praiseworthy. However, Byron does not refer to the Qur'anic references to charity. By calling charity and hospitality a duty of the Muslims, Byron projects the spirit of charity and hospitality in the Qur'an and the traditions of Muhammad. His emphasis is on being charitable to travelers and guests, providing them with food and lodging, as is stated in Sura 2:273. To show guests and travelers respect through greetings at receptions and departures is admired by Byron, and Islamically required of Muslims. The poet also praises Muslims' kind treatment to animals, which is reiterated in the Qur'an and the traditions. Concerning these points, Byron adheres to the spirit of the Islamic belief in and practice of charity.

Although he almost completely follows the English tradition on charity, Byron does not provide extensive information about it. He makes a few references to general charity to the poor, the needy, and travelers. Yet he does not offer significant detail.

The poet's reference to Muslim education is not discussed by other English scholars. Byron's description of the educational aspect of Islamic charity is substantiated by DeKay. However, DeKay offers a more specific account of

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charity in Muslim countries. The critic reports that mosques contain public schools. For poor students free housing, food, clothing, and money are provided.

In most ways Byron is extremely informative about hospitality. But how does his depiction match the English tradition? It is likely that the Arabian Nights influenced Byron. In his version of the tales, Lane alludes to the greetings of Muslims. Byron details his being embraced and kissed by Veli Pasha. In several instances he was also greeted by hosts who placed their right hand on their breasts. Many times Byron refers to the host meeting him standing. Ali Pasha also offers him kind words. Symon, a modern critic of Byron, describes the methods of reception Byron stresses in meeting Turks and Albanians. Henry Trumball reports that a Muslim host tells his guests, "My house is your house" (125).

Concerning the bread and salt tradition, the poet may suggest Muslims are naive to believe by following the custom that they can trust all of their guests. Lane offers a note on this custom. Byron may have become knowledgeable of the bread and salt tradition through Galland's earlier edition of the Arabian Nights. As for lodging and bathing, DeKay, an American who lived in Turkey during Byron's time, mentions hotels for travelers and the poor, and public baths free for all (350). His information substantiates what Byron and other English writers describe about charity in

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the form of room and board, etc. Dervish exhibited loyalty to Byron up to the time he left Albania as a result of adhering to the bread and salt tradition. Modern scholar William Borst reiterates the behavior of Byron's servants on his departure, saying the poet was touched by their loyalty (114).

As for some forms of hospitality, Byron conforms further to the English tradition. Montagu's description of being escorted in her travels by a guard of 500 men is similar to the number of guards assisting Byron in his journey. Lane mentions the giving of money to servants of one's host and the host reciprocating with a gift to his guest. Byron is presented with a stallion by Veli Pasha, while Fletcher is given a sum of money. In return for gifts, Byron gives guns to Albanians and Turks, upholding the custom. On the issue of gifts, Symon focuses on Byron giving guns to Turks and Albanian hosts (129).

Furthermore, Byron and other English writers make no very significant references to Islamic health care; yet DeKay and Stewart emphasize the medical treatment provided at mosques. DeKay writes that Turkish mosques also contain 100 to 350 bed hospitals, where Muslims and Christians are treated without discrimination (349). Stewart states that Turkish hospitals offered free treatment in the 1200's (350). Even today, free treatment at clinics and hospitals in the Middle East is common, since these institutions are

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financed by the government. In Constantinople alone, DeKay explains, there were 500 mosques with the facilities he mentions. In some districts entire land revenues are appropriated for the support of particular mosques (350). So not only do the mosques Byron describes provide education for the poor, but also health care.

Grabanier and Marchand explore the motives behind the charity shown to Byron. Marchand feels that Ali Pasha had political reasons for being so generous to the poet. He believes Ali desired English cooperation against the French in the Ionian Islands (Byron: A Biography 204). On the other hand, Grabanier claims Ali Pasha's hospitality was due to homosexual desires (75). Both discredit the fact that Muslims are charitable to all guests, since charity is an Islamic devotional practice. It is more plausible that this is the reason why Byron was treated so well by Ali Pasha.

On his treatment of Muslim charity and hospitality, one may conclude that Byron follows the English tradition, since he addresses some of the same points on the topic as other English authors. Galt and Hobhouse were also moved by their hospitality. They substantiate Byron's references, as does Mary Montagu. Beckford also seems to have had some influence on Byron's portrayal. Some of the poet's details are likely to have been taken from the Arabian Nights and Montagu's account. Byron's own account of receiving free transportation, food, and lodging in Turkey is reinforced by

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Lane, Rycaut, Galt, and DeKay. Byron depicts Islamic charity to animals, a subject also focused on by Dryden, Rycaut and Galt. Parallels definitely exist in the works of other English writers and Byron's concerning charity. The most significant is that all of these authors praise Muslim charity, even though they do not accept many aspects of Islam. In reference to some issues, Byron reiterates information provided by those he read. Concerning other points, such as education and treatment of animals, the critics Byron consulted provide more comprehensive information than he.

Aside from the issues of whether or not Lord Byron follows the Islamic and English traditions, what are other major influences on his commentary of Muslim charity and hospitality? Certainly, deism has significantly shaped the poet's presentation.

Let us examine Byron's general attitude towards charity. As a deist, he holds to the principle of charity. According to McGann, Byron was against those who ". . . have sworn a bond against that charity which thinketh no evil" (249). This is a deistic idea put forth by Socinians. The poet favors charity because it is a good work. But, for Byron the concept of good or evil is ethical rather than theological, which is a deistic doctrine (McGann 249). Secondly, the poet believes people's ability to be charitable is instinctive. Like other deists, he thinks the source of ethics is an innate thing within us. Therefore,

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there is no need for revealed books or prophets, or organized devotions (Willey 7) to force us to be charitable. Individuals know they should live ethically. Finally, Byron values Islam and Christianity for their moral benefits to mankind, not religious benefits. The poet admires charity and hospitality enjoined by Muhammad (Complete 891) due to their favorable ethical quality. His deep respect for the fundamental teachings of Christ also lay in its ethical value (Fairchild 436).

From an ethical standpoint, being charitable is good because it results in living a moral life. And for deists to lead a purposeful life is a major goal (Willey 8). Deists accept and believe that "The natural law requires the leading of a moral life, rendering to God, one's neighbor, and one's self what is due to each" (P. Wiener 452). Willey confirms that duty toward neighbors is a deistic belief. Of course being charitable to others is part of that life.

At a personal level, Byron is himself described as charitable by Fletcher, his valet, in a 1824 letter to Dr. Kennedy.

> And his charity was always without bounds; for his kind and generous heart could not see nor hear of misery, without a deep sigh, and striving in which way he could serve and soften misery, by his liberal hand, in the most effectual manner. Were

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> I to mention one hundredth part of the most generous acts of charity, it would fill a volume.
> (Galt 359)

He once bought a Bible for a woman who did not have enough money, which is an example of his charity.

Doing good deeds or charitable acts contributes to the deistic objective of living a moral life but does not accomplish religious goals. Byron remarks,

> This much I will venture to affirm that all the virtuous good deeds won't lead to eternal life and pious Deeds performed on Earth can never entitle a man to Everlasting happiness in a future state.
> (Marchand, Byron's Letters 2: 19)

So, for the poet, performing good deeds will lead to a moral life, but not an everlasting life.

Charity and hospitality are duties that Muslims adhere to completely, and they are certainly admired by the poet. The poet conforms to the spirit of Islamic practices on charity, as well as presents much the same image of Muslim charity as other English authors. At the same time, deistic beliefs, as well as panhellenism play a significant role in Byron's treatment of Islamic charity.

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CHAPTER IX: FASTING AND PILGRIMAGE

Islamic Tradition

Along with prayer, other Pillars of Islam are Ramadan or fasting, and Hajj or pilgrimage. To fully understand Ramadan, one must consider when Ramadan takes place, what the occasion is, who is expected to observe it, and what special acts are completed.

Ramadan, which occurs in the ninth month of the Islamic year, is observed as a strict fast from dawn to sunset each day in the month. Observance of the fasting month is the fourth pillar of Islam. In the month of Ramadan, the Qur'an was sent down for man's guidance (2:185). The reason for the fast and those not required to participate are addressed in this Qur'anic passage:

> O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint,--(Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (with hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will,--it is better for him. And it is better for you that ye fast if ye only knew.
>
> (2:183-184)

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The traveler, infirm, pregnant women or women who are nursing children are permitted to fast on other days, as soon as they are able.

What must Muslims abstain from during daylight hours of each day of the month? After daybreak, Muslims fast strictly till night, refraining from any eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual intercourse. The fast is rigorous; it is prohibited to even drink a drop of water, making it particularly difficult on long, hot summer days.

From sunset until dawn, the Muslim is permitted to indulge in any lawful pleasures and feast with his friends. Large evening dinner parties (iftar) are common during the nights of Ramadan (Waddy 9). Also, husbands are allowed to have intercourse with their wives during the nights of the fast. Allah says, "You are allowed on the night of the fast to approach your wives: they are your garments and ye are their garments" (2:187).

During Ramadan Muslims may have a light meal before dawn called Sahur. People are awakened for this meal by the sounds of drums (Waddy 9). Believers must stop eating and drinking during Ramadan just before day-break, the point when they can distinguish a white thread from a black thread, as enjoined in Sura 2:187.

Muslims exercise benevolent acts during this month, and perform an additional prayer each night. Some frequently seclude themselves in mosques and withdraw from worldly

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conversation to read the Qur'an. An additional prayer called Tarawih is said after the night prayer during Ramadan.

There are many benefits of fasting, according to the tradition of Muhammad. Previous sins will be erased.

> The person who fasts the month of Ramazan on account of belief in God and in obedience to His command shall be pardoned of all his past sins, and the person who says the night prayers of the Ramazan shall be pardoned of all his past sins, and the person who says the prayers on the Lailatu 'l-Qadr [the Night of Power] with faith and the hope of reward shall be pardoned of all his past sins. (Al-Nawawi 8: 29-33; Hughes 535)

Additionally, those who keep the fast will enter a special door in paradise. The Prophet says, "There is a door in Paradise called Raiyan, by which only the keepers of the fast shall enter" (Al-Nawawi 8: 32).

However, insincere fasters may obtain little for their efforts. The Messenger of Allah says:

> There are many keepers of fast who gain nothing by fasting but thirst, and there are many risers up at night and performers of prayers who gain nothing by their rising, but wakefulness. (Hughes 535)

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Muhammad adds that if a Muslim lies when fasting, his abstinence of food and drink is useless (Hughes 535).

The three-day festival of the breaking of the fast, Idul-Fitr in Arabic or Bairam in Turkish, commences as soon as the month's fast is over (Waddy 10). It is a special feast of alms-giving. Before breaking of the fast, charity or Zakatul-Fitr must be paid by every person, free or bond, man or woman, young or old. This charity purifies the fast, and is required by law (Waddy 10). People also perform festival prayer. Idul-Fitr is a happy occasion when people pay visits, give gifts and offer candies. Women go to cemeteries at dawn to give food and money to the poor. Men visit the cemeteries after leaving the mosques and read some texts from the Qur'an there.

Ramadan, the fourth pillar of Islam, is a major event, as well as the feast which follows. It is the month of additional devotions to the Almighty God.

The fifth pillar of Islam is pilgrimage to Mecca, referred to as Hajj. The subject is discussed by a number of English critics, Byron being among them. The information presented in this section explains the duty of pilgrimage, the Islamic significance of Mecca, and activities pilgrims participate in during pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in one's lifetime is a duty of all adult and able Muslims. Hajj occurs in the twelfth month of every Islamic year. The devout Muslim is

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simply obeying the command of God when making the pilgrimage. Of Hajj, Allah says:

> Behold! We gave the site, to Abraham, of the Sacred House, saying ("Associate not anything") in worship with Me; and sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer). And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men: they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways; that they may witness the benefits (provided) for them, and celebrate the name of God, through the Days appointed, over the cattle which He has provided for them (for sacrifice): then eat ye thereof and feed the distressed ones in want. Then let them complete the rites prescribed for them, perform their vows, and (again) circumambulate the Ancient House.
>
> (22:26-29)

Both male and female Muslims are required to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The only stipulations are that they must be able, sane, and in good health. They must have sufficient money for the expenses of the journey, and the support of their families during their absence. If a woman performs the pilgrimage, she must do so with her husband or a close relative who is not legal for her to marry.

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There are certain activities pilgrims take part in at Mecca. Pilgrimage first involves the lawful duty of men wearing only the Ihram (two sheets of unsewn white cloth), and women wearing their own clothing. Then, pilgrims stand in Arafat, and make the Tawaf or circle around the Ka'bah. Part of the duty of the pilgrim is also to sacrifice a sheep on the Day of Sacrifice, following the tradition of Prophet Abraham. The sacrifice is made to commemorate Abraham's willingness to offer up his son Ismail as a sacrifice on Mount Mina near Mecca. Description of some of the duties during the Hajj is given in the following passage.

> . . . circumambulating the Ka'ba--a square building in the centre of the haram or sanctuary at Mecca--kissing the Black Stone (set in a corner of the Ka'ba), running between two points, flinging pebbles at large blocks of stone, and sacrificing an animal. (Watt 186).

Mecca is the holiest of sites to all Muslims, followed by Medina and Jerusalem. By examining the history of the Ka'aba at Mecca, one understands why it is such a cherished place. In the traditions, the Ka'aba was first constructed in heaven (where a model of it still remains, called the Baitu'l-Ma'mur) two thousand years before the creation of the world. Adam erected the Ka'bah on earth exactly below the spot its perfect model occupies in heaven and selected the stones from the five sacred mountains, Sinai, al-Judi,

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Hira, Olive, and Lebanon. Ten thousand angels were appointed to guard the structure.

At the Deluge, the sacred house was destroyed, but Allah instructed Abraham to rebuild it. The site was granted to Abraham and his son Ismail as a place of worship that was to be pure, without idols, for the worship of the One, True and universal God. Abraham journeyed from Syria in order to obey Allah's commandment. Ismail assisted Abraham in reconstructing the Ka'aba. At the time, Ismail and his mother, Hagar, were residents of Mecca. The angel Gabriel gave Abraham the famous Black Stone to mark the corner of the building.

Later, when idolatry spread in Arabia, this sacred House was used as a place for idols. Idolatry was introduced from Mesopotamia. It remained so until Muhammad's mission began, and he removed idolatry from the sacred house. At that time, it became the Qiblah, the place Muslims face when they pray. Allah says, "Turn then thy face towards the Sacred mosque, and wherever ye be, turn your face towards that part" (3:138-145). Caliph Umar later built a mosque around the Ka'aba.

Another feast at the end of pilgrimage is Idul-Adha or the Feast of Sacrifice. At this time, the 10th of Zu-l-Hejjeh, a cow, ram, buffalo, she camel or he goat in good health is sacrificed by able Muslims. One-third of the meat is given to the poor, one-third to friends, and

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one-third kept for the family. Other activities at this time are like those of Idul-fitr or Lesser Bairam.

English Tradition

Ramadan and pilgrimage are also addressed by English authors. All describe accurately the yearly month-long Muslim fast, while a few English critics offer brief but correct information about pilgrimage to Mecca. English scholars' information about the fast itself corresponds to Islamic tradition, with some exceptions. From sunrise to sunset individuals abstain from food, drink, and women (Sale, Preliminary 112; Lane 1: 20). Gibbon confirms this fact (Rise 1743). Galt and Hobhouse also refer to the fasting period (81; 164). Sale says that travelers, sick persons, pregnant and nursing women, and young children are excused from fasting (Preliminary 113). Godfrey Higgins sympathetically acknowledges the hardships of Ramadan, concluding that Muslims cannot be charged with base passions (Smith 154).

A few English writers describe activities at the conclusion of Ramadan. Lane explains that Bairam is one of two grand festivals involving three days of feasting (1: 100). Galt and Lane offer images of illuminated mosques, the firing of weapons, and banquets and celebrations on Bairam eve (81; 1: 99-100). Gifts are given to relatives, servants, slaves and friends (Lane 1: 100). Friends visit and congratulate one another; people also wear holiday clothes,

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and prepare and buy sweet cakes and drinks (1: 99). Women visit cemeteries to remember the dead and recite the Fatiha and other chapters of the Qur'an. They also provide themselves with bread, dates and other kinds of food to give the poor (1: 100). Sale explains that at the conclusion of Ramadan, "every Moslem is obliged to give in alms for himself and for every one of his family, if he has any, a measure of wheat, barley, dates, raisins, rice and other provisions commonly eaten" (1: 111).

Now, let us examine what they write about pilgrimage. Gibbon identifies Mecca as the Qebla of prayer. Lane correctly reports that every Muslim is required to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in life, since this religious practice is one of the five pillars of Islam. He explains that pilgrimage takes place every year, the day before Greater Bairam (1: 21).

Sale and Hughes mention female participation in Hajj. Women are not excluded from performing the pilgrimage. They are also permitted to enter the mosque at Mecca (Sale, _Preliminary_ 118). However, as for admittance to other mosques, Sale says women are not permitted to pray with men. They perform their devotions at home or visit the mosques when men are not present. Muslim men believe the presence of women would inspire a type of devotion not acceptable in a mosque (Sale, _Preliminary_ 109). Hughes refers to the words of Muhammad on this subject also. "'Do not prevent

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your women from coming to the Masjids, but their homes are better for them'" (qtd. in Hughes 330).

The huge numbers of pilgrims, their worship, and the difficulties they encounter are praised by Thomas Shaw, Leblich, and Godfrey Higgins. Shaw describes being moved by the huge number of pilgrims at Mecca from all over the world. Leblich also praises the pilgrims' worship at Mecca (Smith 59, 142). Higgins mentions the hardship of pilgrimage and the devotion involved (Smith 154).

English authors are not comprehensive on the tasks pilgrims to Mecca complete. They only discuss some of the duties. The pilgrims who are able sacrifice a sheep for Greater Bairam (Lane 1: 21). Rycaut explains the sacrifice is in "remembrance that upon the same Mount Abraham designed to sacrifice his Son Isaac" (161). According to Islam, Ismail rather than Isaac was the subject of sacrifice. Ross and Pitts also offer accurate information on pilgrimage (Smith 22, 28).

Sale and Beckford describe the Ka'aba at Mecca. The "temple" stands in the middle of the city. The Ka'aba is a square stone building, surpassing all other buildings in Mecca (Sale, Preliminary 114). It is the part of the mosque most highly revered (Beckford 213).

> The Ka'aba has a double roof, supported internally by three octangular pillars of aloes-wood, between which on a bar of iron hangs a row of silver

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> lamps, the outside . . . covered with an
> embroidered band of gold . . . . (Beckford 213)

Though the information these English writers present on pilgrimage is limited, the spirit of it agrees with the Islamic tradition.

Byron's Tradition

Like other English scholars, Ramadan and pilgrimage are referred to by Byron in his letters and poetry. The poet alludes to the days and times of fasting, habits of Muslims during Ramadan, and the celebration which concludes the annual event. As for Hajj, Byron alludes to Mecca, mostly in a critical fashion.

Some information Byron offers about Ramadan disagrees with orthodox Islam. First, he says the length of Ramadan is forty days. Then he refers to the period of fasting as "this Lent of the Mussulman" (Medwin 87). Of course Christian lent is 40 days, but Ramadan is only 30 days.

Besides the length of fasting, the method of fasting is addressed in Canto II of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Byron's remark is unsuitable to Muslims. He implies that they are perhaps hypocritical to fast all day and feast at night. Childe Harold is in Albania receiving information about Ramadan.

> Just as this season Ramazani's fast
> Through the long day its penance did maintain:
> when the lingering twilight hour was past,

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Revel and feast resumed the rule again,
Now all was bustle, and the menial train
Prepared and spread the plenteous
board within;
. . .
But from the chambers came the
mingling den,
As page and slave anon were passing out
and in. (LX 203)

These lines are suggestive of Ramadan fasting taking place from dawn to dusk. Byron correctly refers to Iftar, or breakfast time which takes place after sunset. During the days of Ramadan, Muslims can only eat between the hours of sunset and dawn. Hints of irony are conveyed throughout this passage. Byron provides the contrast of a long day of penance to a night of reveling and exaggerated feasting. He implies that it is hypocritical to fast during daylight hours, while indulging in food and drink after sunset.

The poet then incorrectly reports restrictions placed on Muslims incorrectly at this time. Accordingly, he states that women are confined to the harem, unable to leave their apartments (Medwin 87).

In addition, Byron explains that sexual intercourse during Ramadan is illegal. "For forty days, which is rather a long fast for lovers, all intercourse between the sexes

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is forbidden by law, as well as by religion" (Medwin 87). Under Islam, there are no restrictions such as these placed on Muslims during Ramadan.

Byron is more accurate on the topic of the Bairam feast, the culmination of the fasting month. First, announcement of Bairam is referenced in notes to Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. "The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset: the illumination of the mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with ball, proclaiming it during the night" (Complete 891). The proclamation of the feast concluding Ramadan is portrayed similarly in "The Giaour."

> When Rhamazan's last sun was set,
> And flashing from each minaret
> Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast
> Of Bairam through the boundless East.
>
> (ll. 449-452 254)

Another passage in "The Giaour" expands on Bairam eve:

> The crescent glimmers on the hill,
> The Mosque's high lamps are quivering
> still.
> Though too remote for sound to wake
> In echoes of the far tophaike,
> The flashes of each joyous peal
> Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal.
> To-night, set Ramazani's sun;

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To-night, the Bairam feast's begun

(ll. 222-229 254)

As all of these allusions to the Bairam feast suggest, the event begins with the firing of cannons and lighting of the mosques. The night continues with the firing of small arms.

Although Byron provides accurate knowledge of the announcement of Bairam, he uses Ramadan ironically as the backdrop for some of his Muslim and Christian characters' evil deeds. The Islamic laws of Ramadan and the seriousness with which Muslims celebrate the occasion highlight some of his characters' evil intention.

"The Giaour" illustrates Byron's intention. The poet creates the Giaour to challenge and violate the Ramadan laws and Muslim power. The Giaour (a Christian) elopes with Lelia (a Muslim), Hassan's wife, on Bairam eve.

Upon that eve she fled away
When Ramazan's last sun was set,
. . .
'T was then she went as to the bath,
. . .
For she was flown her master's rage
In likeness of a Georgian page,
And far beyond the Moslem's power
Had wrong'd him [Hassan] with the faithless
Giaour. (ll. 448-458 256)

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That Lelia, a wife of the caliph, runs away with the Christian Giaour at the conclusion of Ramadan is ironic. During this occasion, Muslim families spend time together and behave most piously.

Moreover, Hassan finds Lelia and drowns her by sack and sea, for her infidelity on the night of the Bairam feast, and goes to the mosque for the official Bairam prayer. Of course, the Giaour seeks revenge for this action. Byron introduces the Giaour as follows when he goes after Hassan:

> To-night--but who and what are you
> Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
> And what are these to thine or thee,
> That thou shouldst either pause or flee?
>
> (ll. 230-233 254)

Then the ruin of Hassan's palace is described. Everyone there is killed by the Giaour, as revenge. The Giaour leaves nothing but death behind on Bairam eve.

> He came, he went, like a simoon,
> at harbinger of fate and gloom,
> Beneath whose widely-washing breath
> the very cypress droops to death--
> Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is
> fled,
> The only constant mourner o'er the dead!
>
> (ll. 282-287 254)

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The Giaour turns Hassan's palace into a tomb. The last sound to be heard there

> Was woman's wildest funeral wail:
> That quench'd in silence, all is still,
> But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill
> . . . . (ll. 323-325 255)

Ramadan should be a time of thanksgiving and devout worship to God, not a time of infidelity, death and destruction.

In Byron's own narrative account of his journey to Turkey Ramadan is an occasion for wrongdoing. In one of his letters, he mentions a liaison with a Turkish girl. The two are seen together during Ramadan, when (according to Byron) the woman is supposed to remain in her apartment and not engage in any sexual activity. The Turkish girl is taken and sentenced to death, but the poet forces the guards to take the woman to the governor's home. There, Byron says, he bribes the official with wine, resulting in the girl's release (Medwin 86-87; Moore, Life 178). The Muslim woman going against supposed Islamic laws and the governor being bribed and encouraged to drink at this time both suggest that some Muslims do not view Ramadan as a time of religious penance.

Byron also refers to pilgrimage to Mecca, the center of Islam. However, he is in disagreement with Islam, when compared to his counterparts.

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The poet stresses that Muslims face Mecca when praying in "The Giaour," which is correct. It is etched on Hassan's tombstone that he always faced Mecca in his daily prayers, a custom of all Muslims. Pasha Hassan "pray'd with his face towards the shrine" (l. 732 259). Byron chooses to use the terms "shrine" and "temple" at times, which are disagreeable terms to Islamic tradition, to represent the first sacred Mosque of Islam in Mecca. Such terms disagree with Islamic tradition because they may suggest a reference to the pre-Islamic era, where idolaters used to worship their idols in Mecca. Byron often mixes Islam with idolatry.

A second mention of Mecca appears on Hassan's tomb-stone.

> There sleeps as true an Osanlie
> As e'er at Mecca bent his knee. (ll. 729-730 259)

Hassan is depicted as sincere a Muslim as the most devout pilgrim who ever prayed at the mosque in Mecca. This view of Hassan is ironic. If he were as pious a Muslim as his epitaph suggests, he probably would have not sacked Lelia and drowned her, but would have applied the Islamic law concerning infidelity. Instead, the sultan murders her out of revenge. Yet more important, Byron informs readers that Muslims journey to Mecca to pray at the holiest of mosques.

One passage in the works of Byron alludes to swearing by Mecca, which is highly derogatory. Zuleika is one Muslim character to swear by Mecca. As previously mentioned, she

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swears by Azrael concerning her and Selim's hearts being inseparable, though in incest. In this instance, however, Zuleika vows she will not marry Oglu Bey.

> This kinsman Bey of Carasman
> Perhaps may prove some foe of thine,
> If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,
> shrines that ne'er approach allow
> To woman's step admit her vow,--
> Without thy free consent, command,
> The Sultan should not have my hand!
>
> ("The Bride of Abydos" ll. 310-316 267)

She makes this oath by Mecca's shrine, alluding to the first mosque as a shrine. It is unusual that Byron has her swear in such a manner. Most typically, Muslims swear by God, not by a shrine. Portraying such a character as Zuleika's swearing in this fashion may undercut the importance of Mecca and the mosque there to Muslims and the Islamic tradition.

In a similar manner, Selim swears by the "Prophet's shrine," Islam's second holy mosque at Medina, north of Mecca, where pilgrims may visit immediately after they are through with pilgrimage. He says:

> But, gentle love, this transport calm,
> Thy lot shall yet be link'd with mine;
> I swear it by our Prophet's shrine.
>
> ("The Bride of Abydos" ll. 185-187 271)

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He makes an oath to Zuleika that he will not part with her, swearing on Muhammad's shrine. Apparently he is referring to Muhammad's tomb at Medina. Swearing by Medina and Mecca is not acceptable in Islam. Orthodox Muslims may only swear by God.

Disregard for Mecca is also expressed. The corsair travelling incognito as a Dervise, a devout Muslim, also refers to Mecca when he refuses to dine with Sultan Seyd. In this allusion, Byron, in full disagreement with Islam, implies that Muhammad and Mecca are insignificant. Byron's Muslim dervise swears falsely by Muhammad and Mecca against doing good action--following the bread and salt tradition.

> But for thy sway--nay more, they sultan's
> throne--
> I taste nor bread nor banquet--save alone;
> Infringed our order's rule, the Prophet's
> rage
> To Mecca's dome might bar my pilgrim-
> age. ("The Corsair" ll. 129-132 288)

The corsair breaks the Muslim bread and salt tradition by refusing to eat from the sultan's banquet, choosing to sup alone. The corsair does not care if he disobeys Muhammad's tradition or if he is prohibited from journeying to Mecca for the pilgrimage. In other words, the dervise, or corsair prefers to enrage the prophet and never visit Mecca to do pilgrimage, than sit down at the table of Sultan Seyd.

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Byron focuses on Muhammad's rage rather than the Almighty's rage; he takes us back to the pre-Islamic era, to the worship of idols, rather than to the Islamic era, when the Almighty God is the focus, and when Muhammad is just a human being, and a prophet of God.

In the final four lines of Zuleika's remark to Selim just quoted, Lord Byron indicates that women are forbidden entrance into Mecca's mosque, and perhaps all mosques. Maybe the poet includes this statement to support his contention that Muslims believe women have no souls, as explained in the chapter on paradise. He may think that if women will have no place in heaven, there is no need for them to step into the mosque at Mecca or anywhere else. However, Muslim women (like men) are allowed to participate in pilgrimage to Mecca's Mosque, as well as to pray in all mosques (See Chapter Eight).

Two references in "The Bride of Abydos" allude to Zuleika and Mecca. In the first, Giaffir says:

> Such to my longing sight art thou;
> Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine
> More thanks for life, than I for thine,
> Who blest thy birth and bless thee
> now. (ll. 154-157 266)

Giaffir gives thanks for Zuleika's birth and life in these lines, more than a Muslim can give at Mecca's shrine.

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The second reference involves the Mu'athin of Mecca. Zuleika's voice is depicted as melodious and blessed as the Mu'athin's at Mecca's mosque. As for Zuleika, Byron implies her voice is holy by comparing it to the Mu'athin's.

> . . . blest--as the muezzin's strains from
> Mecca's wall
> To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his
> call (ll. 402-403 273).

Aside from the stress on the Athan's voice is an explanation of the pilgrims' actions on hearing his call. The Muslims prostrate themselves in prayer. They kneel in this fashion when saying the five daily prayers or additional voluntary ones. But there is great dramatic irony in Byron's references. Zuleika, a Byronic heroine, has an incestuous relationship with her brother, Selim. At the same time, she is depicted as holy as Mecca, and her voice is compared to that of the minaret caller of Mecca. As well, she is also described as a reader of the Qur'an. No orthodox Muslim reader would buy such a comparison.

Evaluation and Understanding

By considering Byron's allusions to Muslim devotions, one finds him to be general in his information. Other writers provide more details about mosques, prayers, Ramadan, Bairam, Mecca and pilgrimage. The poet was knowledgeable of Muslim religious practices since he read Rycaut's history, Sale's Preliminary Discourse, D'Herbelot's

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works, Beckford's Vathek, and the Arabian Nights, among others. All contain detailed explanations of devotions. Obviously Byron intended to allude to such devotions, not to inform readers about such religious practices, but, rather, to employ them for his own purposes. Concerning prayers Byron commends Muslims, placing their custom of worship far above the Christians, Jews, and others. He clearly appreciates their sincere praying. Yet, even in this praise, the poet calls the Turkish prayers "erroneous devotion." So Byron both praises and condemns Muslims in the same breath. In other allusions, the poet sometimes gives misinformation. While he admits the sincere devotional practices of Muslims, Byron projects a disagreeable image of Islamic devotions to enhance the Christian/Muslim conflict to emphasize the idea that Muslims are not tolerant, and to encourage Christians to rise up against the Ottomans.

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CHAPTER X: MARRIAGE

Islamic Tradition

In the pre-Islamic era polygamy was not restricted at all in Arabia. Since the Islamic era, however, polygamy has been restricted. The maximum number of wives at one time is four if man treats them justly; otherwise, he may have only one wife. The wife may be a free woman or a slave woman. In addition, the husband must pay her a dowry. These are the laws of Allah stated clearly in Sura 4:3-4. God has also ordained that both parties of the marriage must be chaste (5:5). The law lists women that are illegal for man to marry as well (4:22-24), which includes the wives of Muhammad, because they are "the Mothers of the Believers" in rank, dignity and duty (33:1-8).

The Islamic laws of marriage also apply to Muhammad, except for the number of wives. Allah exempted him from being limited to four wives, and he married more than four (33:50). There are moral motives behind his marriages. According to the testimony of God, they were for "chastity, not for lewdness, nor secret intrigue (5:5). Muhammad's marriage to Zainab was due to the revelation that Muslim men may marry the divorcees of their adopted children (33:37). His marriage to Mary was due to a revelation that believers are allowed to marry of what their right hand possesses of slaves or prisoners-of-war (33:52). The Prophet's marriage

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to Khadijah lasted 25 years. During her life, Muhammad had no other wife, unusual for a man of his standing among his people. He was 50 when she died (Ali 381). His wife Ayesha, an authority on the traditions of the Prophet later, was the daughter of Abu Bakr, the first companion to Muhammad.

Prophet Muhammad and his family are considered the best examples of purity and morality. In Sura 33:21, Allah testifies that His Prophet "has a beautiful pattern of conduct," and "Muhammad's wives are chaste and devoted to Allah and the Prophet (33:28-29). Allah wishes "to remove all abomination from you, ye members of the family, and to make you pure and spotless" (33:28-34). As such, Allah's revelation in (24: 11) proves Ayesha's innocence against the hypocrites' false charge (24:11), and sets forth the law of infidelity (For the detail of the charges, see Ali's Note 898 on page 309.).

Before the coming of Islam, the Arab idolaters showed hatred and contempt for women. Some idolaters even buried their female infants alive as Sura 16:58-59 indicates. Yet, with the coming of Islam, things changed for the better. Equality has became a significant part of Islamic treatment of women. Men are the "protectors and maintainers" of women because of their greater strength and means of support (4:34). Muhammad advocates good treatment to women and wives. In the Sahih Muslim, he says, "the best of you is he

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who behaves best to his wives," and "Ye men, ye have rights over your wives, and your wives have rights over you" (Al-Nawawi 9: 51-54). Muhammad also says, "He is not of my way who teaches a woman to go astray and entices a slave from his master." Further, he asks husbands to "admonish (their) wives with kindness." Muhammad himself is noted for treating his wives equally, dividing time equally amongst them. He would always say, "Oh God, I divide impartially that which Thou hast put in my power." For the first time in Arabia, the principle of equality between the sexes was recognized and practiced (Hughes 671).

English Tradition

Many English authors address Islamic marriage. On the subject of the marriage law, they fall into two camps: those who incorrectly present the law, and those who correctly present the law.

First, marriage age for Muslim women is controversial among English authors. Prideaux believes they are married extremely young, at the age of six, and bear children the next year (52). Rycaut accuses Muslims of "deflowering" girls in infancy. He says the daughter of a sultan is sometimes wed to a pasha when four or five (106). Gibbon reports marriage age to be nine (Birth 75), while Lane says a girl married at 12 is young by Arab standards (1: 85).

Muslim polygamy is also controversial among English critics. Rycaut believes polygamy is "freely indulged" to

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Muslims "by their religion." (152). Prideaux claims, "Besides their Wives," this "Sect" "keeps as many Women slaves for their Lust as they shall think it fit to buy" (147). Norman Daniel explains the inaccuracy. He states that Western misinterpretation of the Islamic marriage law has led to placing no limit on Muslim polygamy (355). Hotham substantiates this view when he argues that some individuals believe Turkish men "sit crosslegged on divans with innumerable wives and concubines in the background" (4).

Further, English writers show quite disagreeable attitudes toward Moslem polygamy. The author of Life of Mahomet (1799) calls polygamy a sin against the whole human race (Smith 149). Rycaut attacks polygamous marriage as leading to "rivalry among many wives." He also argues, "The family is not so well regulated, and orderly as under the conduct and good housewifery of one woman, but contrarily, filled with noise, brawls, and dissensions . . ." (153).

Those who are critical of Islamic marriage carry their criticism to Prophet Muhammad. Rycaut reports Muhammad founded polygamy for the "satisfaction of his own carnal and effeminate inclination" (153). Gibbon states that the Prophet "espoused no more than 17 or 15 wives" (Rise 1766). Prideaux contends Muhammad had 32 wives and several concubines (139). Prideaux and Gibbon think Muhammad was lustful for women. According to Prideaux, the Prophet made his

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"Imposture to serve his lust." Further, "Whatever laws he gave to restrain the Lust of other Men, he took care always to except himself, . . . without Let or Controul . . ." (149). He also contends Muhammad gave " . . . some liberty for the use of Women here, or some promise for the enjoyment of them here after . . . (Prideaux 139). Gibbon's choice of words and phrases like "amorous," "libidinous," "incontinence," and "the apostle might rival the thirteenth labour of the Grecian Hercules" suggest that Muhammad was lustful. He states, "Perfumes and women were the two sensual enjoyments which his nature required and his religion did not forbid" (Gibbon, Rise 1766). Gibbon continues his claims that "the female sex, without reserve, was abandoned to his desires." But he also says that Muhammad "indulged the appetites of a man, and abused the claim of a prophet," contending "a special revelation dispensed him from the laws which he had imposed on his nation . . ." (Birth 75).

Gibbon and Prideaux also accuse the prophet of lust in connection with his wives and concubines. Gibbon calls Muhammad "the amorous prophet [who] forgot the interest of his reputation" with Zainab, wife of Zeid, and Mary, his Egyptian "captive." His intrigue with Zainab caused a scandal, and Gabriel descended to ratify the deed. He married Zainab after her divorce from his freed man and adopted son Zeid to annul the adoption (Rise 1767).

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Muhammad fell in love with Zainab and caused Zeyd to divorce her. The Prophet then married her (Prideaux 144).

Mary was a Christian from Egypt given to Muhammad by a governor who learned of the Prophet's "'brutish Passion'" (Prideaux 145-150). The Prophet's other wives became jealous of Mary. Gibbon reports Muhammad's wife Hafsa found him embracing Mary, wanting her to keep it secret, but Gabriel absolved Muhammad from the oath, wanting him to ". . . freely enjoy his captives and concubines without listening to the clamours of his wives." He spent a month with Mary to fulfill the commands of the angel. After that, Muhammad threatened his wives to shape up or be divorced, and they obeyed (Rise 1767). Similarly, Prideaux writes that Muhammad's wives were outraged when they caught him with Mary, but

> . . . he hath recourse to his Old Art in a new revelation to justify him in the act, the 66th Chapter of the Alcoran, . . . , wherein he brings in God allowing Mahomet, and all his Musselmans to lye with their Maids when they will, not withstanding their Wives. (147)

Gibbon concludes that the Prophet's devotion was increased by such innocent pleasures (Rise 1766). Even though Gibbon appears to be somewhat informative, he misrepresents the Islamic law by attributing it to Muhammad, not to Allah.

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The overall attack on polygamy is common among the majority of writers of the English tradition.

Contrary to these incorrect interpretations of the law are those who, to some extent, correctly interpret the Islamic marriage law. Lane explains the number of wives should not exceed four. Of these four, they may be free women and concubines (Lane 1: 444). Gibbon argues that Muhammad reduced the number of wives to four, and specified equitable rights of bed and dowry (Birth 74), as does DeKay (353). Others admit that although Muslims may have four wives, most have only one (Hobhouse 129-130). But in any case, a Muslim woman's consent to a marriage is necessary, as Hughes correctly argues (671).

Several English critics, in addition, justify why polygamy is moral and defend Muhammad. Sale reminds his readers that polygamy "was in Mohammed's time frequently practiced in Arabia and other parts of the East and was not counted an immorality, nor was a man worse esteemed on that account." The ancient Hebrews practiced polygamy, Sale argues (Preliminary 28). According to Gibbon, the climate of Arabia is a factor; ". . . the heat of the climate inflames the blood of the Arabs; and their libidinous complexion has been noticed by the writers of antiquity" (Rise 1766). This critic says Muhammad's incontinence may be caused by his natural or preternatural gifts: "he united the manly virtue of thirty of the children of Adam" (1767).

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Gibbon praises Muhammad for having a far smaller number of wives (15-17) than Solomon (700) (Rise 1766).

Even though Gibbon calls Muhammad amorous, he still gives him credit for reducing the number of wives a man could marry. While Gibbon is somewhat critical, he does report the Qur'anic revelations that came from situations involving Zainab and Mary. Sale declares that the possession of a number of wives does not necessarily prove that Muhammad was "a wicked man, and consequently an imposter" (Preliminary 28, 55-56).

Hotham defends polygamy as natural, pointing out that most Jews took part in the practice. But he exemplifies polygamy as natural when he argues that a European may have a wife, mistress, and a girlfriend simultaneously. A European "may be polygamous by nature, but in Europe there is not polygamy as a system" (2). Sir Arthur de Capell Brook, viewing polygamy agreeably, thought the system would be excellent in England (Smith 144).

Some of these same writers speak out in defense of Muhammad's polygamy. Lane calls Christians unjust in condemning Muhammad's polygamy when God did not denounce Moses and the patriarchs' practice of polygamy (2: 449). The Prophet was faithfully married to Khadijah for 15 years, stresses Gibbon and Godfrey Higgins (Rise 1766; Smith 154), exemplifying his faithfulness. Gibbon emphasizes that, except for Ayesha, Muhammad's later wives were all widows.

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Ayesha, whom he loved and trusted, reported Muhammad swore by Allah that there never could be a better wife in her place; ". . . she believed in me, when men despised me; she relieved my wants, when I was poor and persecuted by the world" (Rise 1768). He recounts her being left behind once and returning to camp with a man. Muhammad was inclined to be jealous, but a divine revelation assured him of her innocence (1766). Gibbon adds that Muhammad chastised her accusers, and published the law of adultery that no woman should be condemned unless four male witnesses had seen her in the act of infidelity (1767). This critic also reminds readers that the Prophet disdained luxurious living.

> The good sense of Mahomet despised the pomp of royalty; the apostle of God submitted to the menial offices of the family; he kindled the fire, swept the floor, milked the ewes, and mended with his own hands his shoes and his woolen garments. Disdaining the penance and merit of a hermit, he observed, without effort or vanity, the abstemious diet of an Arab and a soldier. On solemn occasions, he feasted his companions with rustic and hospitable plenty; but in his domestic life many weeks would elapse without a fire being kindled on the hearth of the prophet. The interdiction of wine was confirmed by his example; his hunger was appeased with a sparing allowance of barley,

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bread; he delighted in the taste of milk and honey; but his ordinary food consisted of dates and water. (Gibbon, Rise 1765-1766)

Lane, Rycaut, and Gibbon identify having many children as an advantage of polygamy. Lane contends that Muhammad had more than four wives, not because of lust, but desire for children (1: 450). Rycaut suggests that Muhammad encouraged polygamy to increase the number of his followers, "knowing that the greatness of empires and princes consists more of the numbers and multitudes of their people, than the large extent of their dominions" (153). As well, large numbers of children can be beneficial in battle (153). Gibbon also states that "the founder of a religion and an empire might aspire to multiply the chances of a numerous posterity and a lineal succession. The hopes of Mahomet were fatally disappointed" (Rise 1768). Objective critics, however, err when they attribute the laws of polygamy to Muhammad, rather than to Allah.

Beyond the Islamic marriage law and Muhammad's polygamy, a number of critics describe sultans unsympathetically because they practice polygamy and have concubines. Elkanna Settle (1671) portrays her sultan character as lustful also (Smith 47), like Muhammad. Rycaut argues that sultans have many slave women since "a greater part of their pomp [is] in the multitude of women" (155). Rycaut explains that an "assembly of fair women, are commonly

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prizes of the sword, taken at sea and at land, and they must be virgins" (69). The sultan has "as many women as serves his use, though never so libidinous, or are requisite for the ostentation and greater magnificence of his court" (Rycaut 35). Richard Knolles writes that Sultan Mahomet, the conqueror of Constantinople, had a Greek mistress named Irene. She was so lovely, he spent all the day in discourse with her, and the night in dalliance. The sultan spent his time in pleasures, neglecting his empire and his armies (Knolles 1: 238).

Sultans are viewed as moral by others. In Everyday Life in Ottoman Turkey, the sultan is reported to have only four wives and servants, the servants not being concubines (Lewis 27). The sultan is bound by the word of the Qur'an as the supreme law. Lane confirms the sultan as head of religion and politics (1: 315).

Now, let us turn to the perceptions of Muslim wives and women, and their treatment under Islam. Again, positions taken by English writers are unsympathetic and sympathetic with Islamic tradition.

On the incorrect side, promiscuity as a result of polygamy is even applied to Muslim women. Prideaux claims Ayesha was

> . . . a very wanton woman and given to hold amorous intrigues with other men, and on that account Mahomet was moved to put her away: Yet

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> his love to her was such, that he could not part with her. (138-139)

This critic states that the Prophet defended Ayesha, arguing that the charge against her was a lie. Muhammad threatened the accusers with a severe curse in this life and the next for accusing "Chaste, Innocent, and Faithful" women of immodesty (138-139).

Rycaut portrays Muslim women as "the most lascivious and immodest of all women" (49). They are

> . . . so ingenious to contrive to supply their wants; . . ., and with no principles of virtue of moral honesty or religion, as to the future state relating to their rewards or punishments of their good or bad actions . . . . (152-153)

He depicts them as going to any measures to satisfy their pleasures. Settle portrays Empress Laula as immoral (Smith 47). Persian women, writes Beckford, expose any part of the body but the face (Beckford 215). Leblich, who Byron read, reportedly said he saw women of Mecca exposing themselves at their windows (Smith 142). Lady Montagu also reports seeing naked women at Turkish baths (1: 56). Montagu, however, contends that the veiled Muslim women of Turkey are, in fact, virtuous and moral (149).

Others argue that wives do not receive kind treatment from their husbands. Hobhouse, a friend and companion of Byron to the Muslim East, argues that Muslim wives are

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considered by their husbands as "cattle," "domestic slaves," "obliged to labour, and often punished with blows." Such treatment, he concludes, is due to Muslim men's "contempt and aversion for their females" (Hobhouse 129-130).

Some English critics reject Hobhouse's unsympathetic position on treatment of women. Montagu describes Muslims being humane to their female maids and slaves (1: 149). Furthermore, argues Edmund Waller, Muslim women are treated better than English women (Smith 40). According to Philippe Paranti, Muslim women are held sacred by Muslim men (Smith 143). Rycaut also contends that husbands maintain their wives by providing food, wood, and flax for clothing (156). Montagu stresses that Muslim husbands honor marriage and do spend on their wives (1: 149). Rycaut explains that Muslim wives have the right to divorce if their husbands are impotent or frigid (156). This information is incorrect. The right of divorce is up to the Muslim husband. However, women may seek divorce, in certain cases, as regulated by Islamic law.

Restrictions placed on women under Islam is another issue English authors take opposing views on. Lane stresses that women do not meet men privately. He recalls servants' wives coming to his house in Cairo and never entering it (2: 234). Hobhouse states that Albanians conceal their women in harems (129-130), which may be viewed as confinement. In sharp contrast, Julia Pardoe argues that Muslim women are

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freer than English, and should be envied (Smith 139). Montagu writes that Ahmet-beg "assures me, there is nothing at all in it [confinement]." Women have the freedom to shop and go to the public bath (149).

Muslim women veiling themselves is discussed by Hobhouse and Montagu. Hobhouse states that Albanian Muslims veil women (129-130). Montagu liked the veil, and wore it while living in Turkey. Ahmet-beg, alluding to the veil, told Montagu ". . . we have the advantage, that when our wives cheat on us, nobody knows it" (149).

Muslim women being educated is controversial for Hobhouse and Prideaux. Hobhouse contends that they are without such learning (129-130). However, Prideaux reports that Muhammad's wife Ayesha received education. The Prophet

> . . . took care to have her bred up in all the Learning then going in Arabia, especially in the legacy of their Language, and the Knowledge of their Antiquities, and she became one of the most accomplished Ladies of her time in that Country. (Prideaux 139-140)

She was also well-versed in the Islamic traditions of Muhammad, so as to be considered an authority (140).

Byron's Tradition

The first significant group of Islamic social laws Byron addresses in his works pertains to marriage. He

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speaks out on the issues of polygamy, concubines, and the treatment of wives and women.

Byron addresses polygamy, which distinguishes Islamic marriage law from Christian. He informs readers that Islamic law allows Muslim men to marry four women, and keep any number of concubines.

> Four wives by law, and concubines 'ad
> libitum' ("Beppo" LXXI 631)

Reference to four wives appears in other passages of "Beppo," as well as in Don Juan and "To Eliza."

Furthermore, he explains that wives and concubines may be obtained from slave markets.

> The females stood, as one by one they pick'd 'em,
> To make a mistress or fourth wife, or victim.
> (Don Juan IV cxvi 712)

Additionally, these lines illustrate that Byron views concubines to be the same as mistresses. This perception is also indicated in Don Juan, for he writes,

> Keep your good name; though Eve once herself fell
> Nay, quoth the maid, the Sultan's self shan't
> carry me
> Unless his Highness promises to marry me.
> (V lxxxiii 721)

Byron states that women under Islam are wed young. Muslim women were married

> Sometimes at six years old--though this seems odd,

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'T is true; the reason is, that the Bashaw
Must make a present to his sire-in-law.
(Don Juan V 195)

The poet points out that marriages are arranged. Therefore, daughters must accept their fathers' wishes concerning the choice of a husband.

And now you know'st thy father's will;
All thy sex hath need to know:
'T was mine to teach obedience still--
The way to love, thy lord may show,
In silence she bow'd the virgin's head;
. . . . ("The Bride of Abydos" 326)

After Zuleika's engagement and marriage is arranged, she is led from her tower.

Her fate is fix'd this very hour:
Yet not to her repeat my thought.
By me alone duty taught! (324)

Ideally, fathers prefer to choose older men of worth, wealth, and power for their daughters. Giaffir, the father of Zuleika, explains:

Enough that he who comes to woo
Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:
His years need scarce a thought employ;
I would not have thee wed a boy.
And you shalt have a noble dower:

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And his and my united power.

("The Bride of Abydos" 326)

He arranges his daughter's marriage to an older man.

Aside from the law, the age of marriage, and the arrangement of marriages, Byron strongly attacks polygamy and concubinage. First, he believes Muslim men and women are promiscuous. One reference substantiates Byron's claim of promiscuity among men, which he believes is the primary reason for polygamy among Muslims.

They have a number, though they ne'er exhibit 'em
Four wives by law, and concubines 'ad libitum.'

("Beppo" LXXI 631)

The final phrase, "ad libitum," alludes to men's following the marriage law for sexual reasons. Byron believes that Muslim men buy female slaves to take them as mistresses or concubines (Don Juan IV 928) enhances the view that Muslim men are immoral.

The immorality of men practicing polygamy is also stressed in a conversation between Don Juan and his companion slave on marriage.

'my third--' --'Your third' quoth Juan, turn round
'You scarcely can be thirty: have you three?'
'No--only two at present above ground:
Surely 't is nothing wonderful to see
One person thrice in holy wedlock bound!'

(Don Juan V xx 714)

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Beppo is one character portrayed as promiscuous when he "pleases to stare" at Laura. Mocking polygamy, Laura says to him,

> And are you really, truly, now a Turk?
> With any other women did you wive? ("Beppo" 451)

Byron also contends that polygamy encourages infidelity. The following passage from Don Juan illustrates that both husband and wife may be promiscuous:

> His majesty saluted his fourth spouse
> With all the ceremonies of his rank,
> Who cleared her sparkling eyes and smoothed her
> brows,
> As suited a matron who has played a prank;
> These must seem doubly mindful of their vows,
> To save the credit of their breaking bank:
> To no men are such cordial greeting given
> As those whose wives have made them fit to heaven.
> (V 195)

The sultan's fourth wife may be cheating on him, and both are "doubly mindful" of their vows. He has to remember too that Gulbeyaz encourages Don Juan to have an affair with her. This is her primary motive in having Baba purchase Juan at the slave market and dress him as a member of the harem. So Gulbeyaz represents promiscuity among Muslim women.

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Besides polygamy leading to immorality and infidelity, Byron argues that jealousy and unfairness are direct outcomes. He criticizes Muhammad's polygamy when he writes that Muhammad increased women's calamities.

> Not content with depriving your bodies of spirit,
> He allots one poor husband to share amongst four!
> With souls you'd dispense, but the last
> who could bear it? ("To Eliza" ll. 9-14 29)

Jealousy will definitely occur, and most noticeably when a wife claims her marriage rights.

> And for their rights connubial make a stand
> When their liege husbands treat them with
> ingratitude
> And as four wives must have quadruple claims,
> The Tigris hath its jealousies like Thames.
> (Don Juan VI 87)

Byron obviously believes that polygamy complicates wives' obtaining such rights, setting one wife against the others.

Unfairness is expressed concerning the sultan's fourth wive, Gulbeyaz, in Don Juan.

> Her reason being weak, her passions strong,
> She thought that her lord's heart (even could she
> claim it)
> Was scarce enough; for he had fifty-nine
> Years, and fifteen-hundredth concubine.
> For, were the Sultan just to all his dears,

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> She could but claim the fifteen-hundredth part
> Of what should be monopoly--the heart. (V 853)

Surely Gulbeyaz feels the sultan would find it difficult to be fair with all four wives and concubines. Byron comments that ladies are litigious upon legal objects of possession, which doubles the transgression.

The contention of Muslim men treating their wives unequally is stressed more.

> His majesty was always so polite
> As to announce his visits a long while
> Before he came, especially at night;
> For being the last wife of the Emperor,
> She was of course the favorite of the four.
> (Don Juan V 196)

The poet also portrays polygamous marriage as dreadful and boring. Byron sums this up aptly when he argues,

> Polygamy may well be held in dread,
> Not only as a sin but as a bore. (Don Juan V 90)

While Byron refers to polygamy and concubines, he condemns these two institutions of Islamic marriage on grounds that they encourage promiscuity, infidelity, jealousy, and unfairness. They are also sinful and boring.

Moreover, Byron is critical of large numbers of children from polygamous Muslim marriages. He says Muslims favor polygamy for children. Byron refers to a sultan as having "fifty daughters and four dozen sons" (Don Juan V

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195). Yet, the poet is unfavorable about the number of children. In the Battle of Ismail, the Khan is described as "flank'd by five brave sons" since "polygamy... spawns warriors by the score "(Don Juan VIII 833). In the same passage, he contends that large numbers of children among Muslims will increase the "warriors" of the religion. Byron alludes to spreading Islam through a growing population of Muslims, as well as through means of war.

Byron links Muhammad to his criticism of polygamy, as well. Byron is quite harsh and satirical when he falsely accuses the Prophet of being one of the most lustful of Muslim men. He depicts the Prophet as a womanizer and more in the margin of his verse letter to John Murray, dated January 8, 1818.

> Now I'll put out my taper
> (I've finished my paper
> For these stanzas you see on the brink stand)
> There's a whore on my right
> For I rhyme best at Night
> When a C_t is tied close to my inkstand.
> It was Mahomet's notion
> That comical motion
> Increased his devotion in prayer--
> If that tenet holds good
> In a Prophet, it should

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In a poet be equally fair, --

(Marchand, Byron's Letters 5: 6-5)

Byron suggests that Muhammad was inspired to pray by having his wives close by him. Byron implies that a whore by his side is like Muhammad's wives by his side, indicating that the Prophet's wives were immoral. The ideas in these lines reinforce Byron's view that polygamy is immoral.

The poet also charges Muhammad of being a "cuckold":

> Caesar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,
> Have much employed the Muse of History's pen:
> Their lives and fortunes were extremely various,
> Such worthies Time will never see again;
> Yet to these four in three things the same luck
> holds,
> They all were heroes, conquerors, and cuckolds

(Don Juan II)

Byron accuses the Prophet, along with others, of allowing immorality to occur within his family.

Next to Muhammad comes the sultan (or pasha), who Byron also depicts as fond of women. He indicates that the Islamic marriage law gives the sultan the right to have four wives and countless numbers of concubines.

> Four wives and twice five hundred maids unseen
> Were ruled as calmly as a Christian queen.

(Don Juan V 728)

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In an earlier passage of Don Juan, Byron describes the sultan as having "fifty-nine years, and fifteen hundred concubines" (V 853). He adds, the "train" of concubines might stretch "a quarter of a mile" (V 193).

Rather than focusing on government business, Byron also hints that the sultan prefers to overindulge in the harem:

> He went to the mosque in state, and said his
> prayers
> With more than Oriental scrupulosity;
> He left to his vizier all state affairs,
> And showed but little royal curiosity:
> I know not if he had domestic cares --
> No process proved connubial animosity;
> Four wives and twice five hundred maids unseen,
> Were ruled as calmly as a Christian queen.
>
> (Don Juan V 728)

The sultan neglects his major responsibilities, in favor of spending time with wives and concubines.

Now I will explore how wives and women fare under the Islamic marriage system in terms of treatment. Byron contends that Muslim women are perceived as inferior, neglected, and restricted. Despite these criticisms, he agrees that Muslim women appear to be content.

Moslem men, Byron thinks, treat their wives as inferior creatures. The poet describes Muslim women treated like

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slaves and beasts (Works 1: 253). He emphasizes bad treatment by the Turks when he writes,

> . . . their usage of their wives is sad,
> 'T is said they use no better than a dog any
> Poor woman whom they purchase like a pad
> . . . . ("Beppo" lxx 631)

He portrays women as little better than dogs. Byron further contends that Turkish wives are like merchandise bought and paid for to their husbands.

Secondly, Muslim men neglect their wives to concentrate on the houris of paradise in Byron's perception. The following lines exemplify this idea:

> Thus the young khan, with houris in his sight,
> thought not upon the charms of four young brides,
> But rushed on his first heavenly night.
> (Don Juan VIII 906)

The poet argues that because Muslim men spend so much time dreaming of the heavenly houris, they are careless about their earthly wives.

Moreover, Byron observes that Muslim women live under tight security. The Turks do not allow women to be scrutinized (Works 1: 242). "They lock them up, . . ., and guard [them] daily" ("Beppo" lxxi 631). He further describes the security of women when he states,

> Here woman's voice is never heard:
> apart,

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And scarce permitted, guarded, veil'd
to move. (Childe Harold II lxi 203)

Byron concludes that such confinement "must make them look quite palely" ("Beppo" lxxi 632). As a result of their confinement, Muslim women are not seen in public often. Byron remembers swimming the Hellespont between Sestos and Abbydos. He lamented that no woman was waiting on the other shore to cheer him (Byron, Works 1: 275, 280, 305).

Besides being restricted to the home, women are veiled, as Byron mentions in Childe Harold (II 202-203), "Beppo" and "The Bride of Abydos." Confinement and wearing of the veil serve to restrict Muslim women from contact with men. Such security hardly allows them to "behold their male relations" ("Beppo" lxxi 631). So women have very limited and guarded contact with men, even those within their own families. In one passage in "The Bride of Abydos" describing a daughter awaiting marriage, Byron writes,

. . . that none can pierce that secret bower
But those who watch the women's tower. (324)

Zuleika's father even threatens any man who sees her face (324).

Wives and women of the Islamic faith, furthermore, have no sexual freedom, as the following lines suggest:

Thus in the East they are extremely strict,
And wedlock and a padlock mean the same.
(Don Juan V clviii 739)

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The image of the padlock may indicate the fidelity of the couple. Byron may use padlock symbolically to represent a chastity belt to stress the limits of sex among Muslim women. He may imply Islamic marriage is like imprisonment.

However, in Don Juan Byron suggests that Turks confining their women encourages wives to have secret affairs.

> The Turks do well to shut--at least sometimes--
> The women up--because in sad reality,
> Their chastity in these unhappy climes
> Is not a thing of that astringent quality
> Which in the North prevents precocious crimes,
>
> (Don Juan V 196)

He certainly depicts Gulbayez as seeking illicit affairs with men in Don Juan. Yet, a statement in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage implies that a woman of Islamic faith has no desire to "rove" (202-203). So Byron is certainly contradictory on the point of sexual freedom. He generalizes that most Muslim females do not possess such freedom, but at the same time implies that they are more promiscuous or warm-blooded than women from other parts of the world.

Additionally, the poet addresses engagement and marriage restrictions placed on Muslim women. Typically, girls are confined like nuns until they reach marriage age:

> Of whom all such as came of age were stowed,
> The former in a palace, where like nuns
> They live till some Bashaw was sent abroad,

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When she, whose turn it was, was wed at once,

. . . . (<u>Don Juan</u> V 195)

Concerning education, Byron mentions that Muslim women do not read or write. Turkish women, he contends

. . . cannot read, and so don't lisp in criticism;

They don't write, have no romances, plays,

reviews;

they only know harem's learning.

("Beppo" lxxii 632)

Rather, these women fill their days with sewing, bathing, nursing, making love, or doing nothing (632). Byron views limited education as a restriction for Muslim women. Although critical of how little Turkish women learn, Byron describes Zuleika, the daughter of a pasha, as reading the Qur'an, and Arabic and Persian poetry. She also plays music ("The Bride of Abydos" II 270). The portrayal suggests that she receives some education.

Despite all of the restrictions placed on Muslim women, Byron acknowledges the Middle Eastern wife is content.

She yields to one her person and her

heart,

Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to

rove. (<u>Childe Harold</u> II 203)

In these lines Byron indicates that wives are quite happy in motherhood and relationships with their husbands under

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Islam. He contends that if one gives a woman a mirror and an almond, she will be satisfied.

The poet's overall image of Muslim women disagrees with the Islamic tradition, since he suggests men treat them as inferior, neglect them, and place restrictions on them.

Evaluation and Understanding

After having studied Lord Byron's allusions to marriage and treatment of women, let us develop a better sense of his knowledge of the subject.

It should already be clear that Byron does not fully understand the Islamic view of marriage. Comparing his views on Islamic marriage with the Islamic tradition, one finds that he misrepresents the Islamic law of polygamy, harem, treatment of women, Muhammad's marriages and morals, among other marital issues.

Misunderstanding of the Qur'an led to various interpretations of Muslim marriage (Daniel 355). Byron's views on Islamic polygamy place him in this group. Marriage age is a controversial subject for the English critics Byron relied on. The poet and others confuse early engagement with marriage. The poet's idea that Muslim girls marry at 6 is similar to Prideaux's idea. Muslim girls may be promised in marriage at this age, but no marriage takes place until they mature, according to the law.

Byron's notion that polygamy is a sin is taken from the English Christian tradition. According to Daniel, polygamy,

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in Christianity, is adultery; whereas, indissoluble monogamy is marriage. Muslim polygamy is viewed as legalized adultery (135, 137). Byron may have taken the idea of jealousy among wives from Rycaut, Galland, and Beckford. As for polygamy for the purpose of spreading Islam in the world, Byron relies on Rycaut, Knolles, Prideaux, and Moore who hold the same position.

Next, Byron's view that polygamy leads to immorality among Muslim women may come from Montagu, Prideaux, Rycaut, Beckford, Leblich, and Settle, who charge Muslim women with promiscuity. Byron's Gulbayez, who uses any means to fulfill her desires in Don Juan, is the type of woman Rycaut describes. Settle's empress, Laula, is as promiscuous as Gulbeyaz (Smith 47). Montagu's comments that veiled Muslim women find it easy to cheat on their husbands may help Byron's portrayal of Sultan Hassan's wife.

The poet is also influenced by English authors on the issues of inferiority and neglect of women. Byron's depiction of Muslim women as inferior is similar to Hobhouse's, yet it is in opposition to Montagu's and Pardoe's. His charge of neglect of Muslim wives and women may come from Rycaut and Prideaux.

The poet's references to strict restrictions on women are exaggerated. He is like Hobhouse and not like Montagu and Pardoe, who contend there is little truth to the talk of lack of freedom among Muslim women. And Byron's criticism

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of Muslim women's lack of education is incorrect. Halil speaks of women who compose the harem to have a long period of education. They learn the principles of Islam, and are trained in sewing, embroidery, among other things (85).

The English tradition molds Byron's presentation of the Prophet and his followers' lust for women. The poet's charge of Muhammad's promiscuity comes from Gibbon who describes the prophet as amorous (Marchand, Byron's Letters 5: 6-5) and from Prideaux, Rycaut, Montagu, Moore, among others.

The sultan's lust for women may be derived from Rycaut, Knolles, Prideaux, Beckford. Byron takes the term "libidinous" from Rycaut (155) and applies it more strongly to the sultan's promiscuity in Don Juan.

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CHAPTER XI: INFIDELITY

Through clarification of the Islamic law for infidelity and information of English scholars, one will better be able to pass judgments on Byron's treatment of Muslim law on infidelity, which will later be discussed.

Islamic Tradition

Zina or adultery, is a felony punishable by the law, and the application of the law itself is an act of devotion in Islam. Let us briefly introduce proof of adultery, type of adulterers, and methods of punishment.

Before one is sentenced for punishment, there should be proof of his/her adultery. The proof can be one of three types. Four witnesses must testify that they see the actual act of intercourse (Sura 4:15; Al-Nawawi 11: 192). Pregnancy of a woman from adultery is another sign. Confession by a guilty party is accepted as full evidence (Al-Nawawi 11: 192). Yet, if the confession is withdrawn, punishment may not be inflicted. Charges of a husband against his wife can be settled through an official oath, as mentioned in the Qur'an.

If a husband accuses his wife of adultery and does not have witnesses, his solitary witness can be received if he swears by Allah four times that he is telling the truth. A fifth oath must be made that the curse of Allah should be invoked upon him if he tells a lie. The wife will not

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receive the punishment if she bears witness four times with an oath by Allah that her husband is telling a lie. Her fifth oath is that she invokes the wrath of Allah upon her if her accuser is telling the truth (24:6-9). Those who charge chaste women with adultery and do not produce four witnesses should be flogged with 80 stripes and their evidence rejected in the future (24:4).

There are two types of punishment: lashing and stoning to death. The first penalty is 100 lashes and one year's banishment for fornication for free unmarried men and women. According to the Qur'an,

> The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication,--flog each of them with a hundred stripes: let not compassion move you in their case, in a manner prescribed by God, if ye believe in God and the Last Day: and let a party of the Believers witness their punishment.
>
> (24:2; see also Al-Nawawi 11: 190)

Stoning to death, a capital punishment, is a second law from Allah for infidelity mentioned in the Qur'an and the tradition of Muhammad. It is inflicted only on free, married individuals: men or women, believers or unbelievers, widowers or widows, who commit the crime of adultery (Al-Nawawi 11: 188-214).

The Sahih Muslim states that Muhammad applied the stoning law in his life, and so did his followers after him

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(Al-Nawawi 11: 191-214). A few stoning incidents that took place during the prophet's life are mentioned in the Sahih Muslim.

One account involves a man who voluntarily came to Muhammad, confessed the felony, and insisted on being stoned. Muhammad ignored the man. The man continued to make his request, and Muhammad kept ignoring the man's desire, until he confessed the fourth time. Muhammad then asked the man if he was insane, and the man negated that. The prophet asked him if he was drunk, but the man negated that, too. Then, he asked the man if he was married, and the man's answer was "yes." Based upon this confession, Muhammad ordered his followers to stone the man, which they did (Al-Nawawi 11: 192-194).

Another well-known stoning incident in the history of Islamic law is that of a woman known as Al-Gamidiyah. This woman committed adultery, came to Muhammad, and asked him to purify her sin by stoning her. The Prophet asked her to leave and ask Allah for forgiveness. But she said she was pregnant from adultery, so he asked Al-Gamidiyah to wait till she delivered. When she delivered, she came back to the Prophet and demanded the application of the law. Muhammad asked her to wait till the infant became two years old or so, when the child would not have to be breast fed any longer. The Prophet gave Al-Gamidiyah's baby to a man from al-Ansar in Medina to raise.

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The woman was then stoned. A hole was dug up to her chest. Al-Gamidiyah was placed in it and stoned till she died. One of the rock-throwers was Khalid ibn al-Walid, later known as a famous Muslim military leader. He hit her with a rock, letting blood gush from her head. When drops of blood popped up on his face, he cursed the woman. When the Prophet heard Khalid's remark, he told Khalid that the woman's repentance was so sincere that she was pardoned. He prayed for her and asked his followers to bury her (Al-Nawawi 11: 201-205). Let us keep this story in mind when we discuss Byron's allusion to infidelity. He seems to have known the story.

A third incident deals with Muhammad's ordering a Jew and a Jewess to be stoned for adultery. Before stoning them, he asked Jews about the punishment of adultery, but they did not tell the truth. So he called upon one of their scholars and asked him in Allah's name to tell the truth. The man told the prophet that stoning was the punishment in the "Taurat," which Allah revealed to Moses, but people changed the law and only applied lashing and reprimanding against the poor (Al-Nawawi 11: 208-210).

As for slaves, the master was given the right to inflict the punishment on his slaves, males or females, if they committed adultery and it was proved according to the law. The single male or female is to be lashed. The married slave (male or female) is to be lashed and blamed.

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There is no stoning punishment inflicted on slaves, married or single, only lashing. The lashing punishment is half as much as that inflicted on the free male or female. This is Allah's law as mentioned in the Qur'an in Sura 24:2 and supported in the tradition of Muhammad.

Let us consider this example on slave punishment for adultery, from the traditions of Muhammad in the Sahih Muslim. Muhammad said, if any of your female slaves committed adultery, time after time, she should be lashed and blamed. But, the fourth time, she should be sold, even for a rope (Al-Nawawi 11: 212).

English Tradition

Gibbon says adultery was a capital offense requiring four witnesses, and fornication punished with 100 stripes (Birth 73, 75).

Lane and Hughes provide explanations of the laws of infidelity, which are, for the most part, almost parallel to the Qur'an concerning proof and witnesses, confession, and punishment for unmarried and married individuals (Lane 1: 22; Hughes 11).

As for executing punishment for infidelity, this is the responsibility of the Islamic judicial system. Two English authors emphasize this. Lane stresses that it is "contrary to the law" for a husband or wife to kill the other for infidelity (Lane 1: 60-61), and this is correct. He relates an incident suggestive of a husband's drowning his wife,

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which took place during the reign of Caliph El-Moatdid. Some limbs of a murdered woman in leather bags were brought up from the bed of the Tigris in a fisherman's net. Lane quickly points out that such barbarity is contrary to the law (Lane 1: 425). Mary Montagu writes, "Rather than a religious law," a husband's revenge for his honor is a Muslim custom (3: 32-34). Gibbon also acknowledges that Arabs revenge for honor (Birth 17). Montagu contends that such tragedies "are extremely rare; which is enough to prove the people not naturally cruel." She speaks of only one incident in which a man kills his adulterous wife for revenge.

> About two months ago, there was found at day-break, not very far from my house, the bleeding body of a young woman, . . . with two wounds of a knife, one in her side, and another in her breast . . . . (Montagu 3: 32-34)

Yet, Hughes incorrectly reports that a husband or wife who observes the other in the act with a lover has the right to kill them both (11). This is not according to Islamic law.

Some authors of the English tradition, however, misrepresent the law for infidelity and attack the means by which it is carried out. To begin with, rather than stoning or lashing, some depict the punishment for infidelity as drowning by sack and sea.

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Death by sack and sea is alluded to by Rycaut and Hobhouse. Rycaut claims the following about capital crimes in Turkey: ". . . if their crime be great, they are ordered to be strangled, or sowed in a sack and thrown into the sea; but always their punishment is inflicted privately . . ." (195-196). Hobhouse claims death by sack and sea is an Islamic punishment for Christian slaves guilty of infidelity. He recounts the "melancholy tale of a slave, Zofreni, having an affair with one of Ali Pasha's sons in Albania, and being sewn into a sack and drowned at Ali's order (Hobhouse 111). While Rycaut and Hobhouse both refer to this type of punishment, and Lane alludes to it, Mary Montagu never mentions it.

Concerning the sack and sea punishment, quite a number of stories have been circulated by English writers. Some of the stories involve sack and sea sentences for individuals and for members of the harem.

Hobhouse mentions two folklore tales, "melancholy tales people talked about secretly in Jannina" (111). The first story, already briefly mentioned, involves Muchtar Pasha's wife, who went to Ali Pasha complaining about her husband's lack of attention. She accused him of having relationships with other women. She gave Ali a list of 15 beautiful Janninan women, whom he sacked and drowned that very night. A Christian attendant to Byron, Vasilly, reported this incident to Hobhouse, saying he personally assisted Ali

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Pasha in carrying out the punishment (Hobhouse 111). Marchand also contends that Vasilly was one of the 30 soldiers to oversee the drowning operation (Byron: A Biography 211).

The second situation involves Zofreni, the loveliest Greek woman in Jannina. She supposedly had affairs with both Ali and one of his sons at the same time. Ali Pasha discovered her wearing a ring he had given his son's wife and learned of Zofreni's attachment to his son. Angry over the discovery, he ordered the 17 year old drowned (Hobhouse 112).

The tale of Phrosini, a 17 year old Greek girl from Jannina, is reported by Davenport, who wrote The Life of Ali Pasha. He describes her as Mouctar's mistress, who was sacked and drowned under Ali's orders. In this version, Phrosini died with her faithful maid. The death of the other 15 women suspected of incontinence took place at night. One of these women was released because her husband said he did not mind her being a prostitute. In Davenport's account, Ali Pasha took vengeance on Phrosini because she refused his advances and tried to bribe him with her jewels. He took them but refused to pardon her (154-156).

Galt refers to the fate of Phrosyne, whose elegy is "one of the most popular and pathetic breathings of the modern Grecian muse (210)." The character was the Christian wife of a Neapolitan whom Muctar Pasha had a love affair

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with. Phrosyne was observed one day at the bath by Muctar's wife, wearing his diamond ring. Jealous, his wife told her father-in-law, Ali Pasha, about this. Along with twelve other young women, Phrosyne was soon tied in a sack and thrown into the lake. Her Neapolitan husband was banished from the city (Galt 210).

Hobhouse offers another account of mass drowning of a sultan's harem. He writes that Bairactar, grand vizier, disposed of many of Sultan Mustapha's harem by sack and sea death to lower the expenses of the Seraglio, or punish them for supposed court intrigues (Hobhouse 112).

Somewhat like these reports is the plot of Maurus Jokai's The Lion of Jannina, A Turkish Novel (1898). In this fiction, Ali Pasha travels to the palace of Muchtar Bey on the Feast of Bairam, where Muchtar is hosting a banquet in honor of his brothers, Veli Bey and Suleyman Bey. From a hiding place he observes all three with their harems present, celebrating with music and wine. Ali's sons are kissing the women, and mocking Muhammad and paradise. Slaves and guards are lying in drunken heaps. Shocked at the scene, Ali prays all morning and dreams that he should send their damsels to paradise. Fearing the excessive influence of the women, he orders his sons' harems drowned in Lake Acheruz, promising them new harems (Jokai 41-61).

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Noticeable in most of the accounts of sack and sea for infidelity are similar plots and characters. While the stories vary to some degree, they possess numerous similarities. This fact leads one to conclude that the accounts may be rooted in folklore.

While the English writers referred to incorrectly allude to sack and sea as the Islamic penalty for infidelity, others criticize Islamic justice. Edmund Burke depicts Muslim law as violent and rigidly enforced (Smith 113). At the same time, Dryden (in Don Sebastian) and Butler (in Hubrias) condemn those who enforce Islamic justice. These authors satirically attack Muftis, the first judges or interpreters of the law, offering absurd allusions to them in their works (Butler 36).

Gibbon, Lane and Hughes are rather accurate about the Islamic law of infidelity. Those guilty of the crime may only be punished through the Muslim legal system, so a Muslim man does not have the right to kill his wife and her lover, according to Lane and Montagu. Others commend swift and equal Islamic justice generally.

Rycaut and Hobhouse inaccurately report sack and sea as the sentence for the crime. As well, Hobhouse, Davenport, and Galt refer to stories of Zofreni, Phrosoni, and Phrosyne; all are probably folklore and may be variations of the same story. Drowning of entire harems are described by Hobhouse and Jokai. All of these critics are in

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disagreement with Islamic tradition in their depictions of Islamic law and punishment for infidelity. Keeping these scholars' references to Muslim infidelity in mind, I will discuss those in Byron's poetry and prose.

Byron's Tradition

Byron's writings contain several accounts and criticisms of punishments which he views as part of the Islamic law of infidelity. Punishments Byron refers to are the sack and sea, as well as stoning.

Let's first explore the sack and sea sentence. Byron believes this method is relied on primarily for the crime of infidelity, while employed less significantly as a punishment for other crimes.

The sack and sea mode of punishment is presented in "The Giaour," several letters, and Don Juan. Byron's advertisement for "The Giaour" describes the lengthy poem as containing the adventure of a female slave, who, according to "Muhammadan law," is thrown into the sea for adultery, and whose death is avenged by her young, Venetian lover (Byron, Works 3: 310).

Within the pages of "The Giaour," the character Lelia is killed for infidelity in the manner described. She is an infidel to Hassan Pasha.

> And far beyond the Moslem's power
> Had wrong'd him with the faithless Giaour.
>
> . . .

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Too well he trusted to the slave [Lelia]
whose treachery deserved a grave . . . .

(ll. 456-460 256)

Several underwater images appear in this poem that reinforce the belief that Lelia is drowned for her infidelity to Hassan. The Giaour, her lover, tells the Abbot:

They told me wild wave roll'd above
The face I view, the form I love

(ll. 1306-1307 263)

Other images further suggest the sack and sea penalty was the method of death for Lelia.

I grieve, but not, my holy guide!
For him who dies, but for her who died:
She sleeps beneath the wandering wave --
Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
This breaking heart and throbbing head
Should seek and share her narrow bed.

(ll. 1121-1126 262)

The Giaour is addressing the Abbot when he speaks of the cruel and fatal punishment Lelia suffered. Later on, her lover constantly thinks of her death.

Much in his visions mutters he
Of maiden whelm'd beneath the sea

(ll. 822-823 259)

The Giaour is not able to rid himself of the awful memory.

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Beyond simply presenting the situation, Byron also condemns the sentence. This is clear when the Giaour is portrayed as seeking revenge for his lover's death.

> The curse for Hassan's sin was sent
> To turn the palace to a tomb;
> He came, he went, like the simoom [wind],
> . . . .
> And here no more shall human voice
> Be heard to rage, regret, rejoice
> The last sad note that swell'd the gale
> Was woman's wildest funeral wail:
>
> (ll. 280-3 255)

Interestingly enough, Byron implies that Hassan has sinned by having his wife put to death. Other lines also substantiate the view that the sack and sea punishment is wrong. Byron suggests that the relationship between Lelia and the Giaour is based on true love; therefore, any penalty is unwarranted. He writes that there was "a spark of immortal fire," "with angels shared, by Alla given." He describes the love of the Giaour and Lelia as the "light of heaven." Furthermore, "she was a form of life and light" and "hers was not guilt" (321). These passages in "The Giaour" indicate Byron's personal sentiments against the sack and sea.

In a letter to Thomas Moore, Byron says that he saves a Turkish woman in the Orient from this awful fate. The poet

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explains that the sentence of a woman's being sewn into a sack and tossed into the sea is in accordance with the "Mohammedan law" (Byron, Works 3: 309).

Detailed accounts of this incident are provided in both Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron and Life of Byron. The punishment for infidelity is first described, and then the situation in which Byron himself was involved. The penalty for adulterous love affairs with Christians is death, a horrible death without reprieve. The "unfortunate girl" is sewn into a sack and thrown into the sea. This was a Turkish edict in force at Athens (Medwin 87).

According to Medwin, Byron discloses that he was secretly involved with a Turkish girl during the "Lent of the Mussulmans," a "forty-day" Islamic fasting. The poet explains,

> I was very fond at that time of a Turkish Girl, . . . All went very well till the Ramazan . . .I was in despair, and could hardly contrive to get a cinder, or a token--flower sent to express it.
>
> (Medwin 87)

As a result, Byron and the girl do not meet for several days, and within this time their love intrigue is discovered. An order is issued to sack the woman and throw her immediately into the sea. By sheer accident, Byron observes the sentence procession, the soldiers being followed by a throng of people to see the punishment carried

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out. On hearing a "faint stifled shriek, [I] dispatched one of my followers to inquire the cause of the procession." With the support of his Albanian guards, Byron threatens the officer in charge. Because the officer does not like the order he is to carry out, the unyielding look of the guards and Byron's bribing the chief magistrate, he does not carry out the sentence. Thus, Byron saves the Turkish woman. The conditions of the agreement are that Byron cease relations with the girl, and that she leave Athens and go to friends in Thebes. These steps are taken, but a few days after the woman's arrival in Thebes, she dies of a fever, "perhaps of love" (Medwin 87-88).

Another account indicates that the Marquis of Sligo informed Byron of the reaction of English friends to this incident after it occurred (Medwin 86). Accordingly, the new governor of Athens, unaccustomed to "intercourse with Christians," followed the "barbarous, Turkish ideas in regard to women." The account claims the governor ordered Byron's woman to be sewn up in a sack and tossed into the sea, according to the strict "Mohammadan law." According to Byron's claim, this kind of punishment is "indeed, quite customary at Constantinople" (Moore, Life 178). Byron interferes with the execution of the sentence, threatens to use force after drawing a pistol on the officer in charge, and persuades him to return to the Aga house or be shot dead. So by means of threats, bribery and entreaty, Byron

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procures a pardon for the girl. She leaves Athens that night, escorted by Byron to a Theban convent. This is the story that Sligo recollects (Moore, Life 178).

Still another source describes Byron as saving this Turkish girl by forcing a guard to accompany him to Athens, where he threatens the governor. He supposedly drinks rum with the governor, who later forgives the girl for her misdeeds (Raphael 55).

On the subject of the sack and sea, Byron discusses it as a punishment for other crimes, besides infidelity. This is so in Don Juan. Several lines imply that the sack and sea may be viewed as an all-purpose punishment for possibly any wrongdoing and viewed acceptable by society.

> If now and then there happened a slight slip,
> Little was heard of criminal or crime;
> The story scarcely passed a single lip --
> The sack and sea had settled all in time
> From which the secret nobody could rip:
> The public knew no more than does this rhyme;
> No scandals made the daily press a curse --
> Morals were better, and the fish no worse.
>
> (V 194)

Byron satirically indicates this punishment serves as an immediate solution to a crime by not allowing for gossip, and enhancing moral well-being.

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Through Baba, the poet speaks out against sack and sea punishment for revenge. Byron's character Gulbeyaz selects the sack and sea punishment for Don Juan and a Georgian slave. The sultan's wife has the chief eunuch disguise Juan as a female slave in order to bring him into her chamber and seduce him. However, Don Juan refuses Gulbeyaz. Angry at being denied and jealous because Juan is sleeping in the same chamber with a young female slave since masquerading as a woman, the sultan's wife desires revenge. "Bring the two slaves, she said in a low tone" to Baba, the eunuch chief. He asks which two with a shudder.

> . . . the Georgian and her paramour, replied
> The imperial bride--and added, 'Let
>   the boat
> Be ready by the secret portal's side:
> You know the rest.' The words stuck in
>   her throat,
> Despite her injured love and fiery pride;
> And of this Baba willingly took note,
> And begg'd by every hair of Mahomet's
>   beard
> She would revoke the order he had heard.
>
> (Don Juan VI cxiii 743)

The eunuch attempts to seek forgiveness and not follow through with the Gulbeyaz' request.

> Be hidden by the rolling waves, which hide

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> Already many a once love-beaten breast
> Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide--
> You love this boyish, new, Seraglio guest,
> And if this violent remedy be tried--
> Excuse my freedom, when I here assure,
> That killing him is not the way to cure
> you. (Don Juan VII 666)

However, the sultana stresses her orders for Baba to carry out her wish. This passage indicates that sack and sea punishment might be considered as an illegal method of achieving revenge, which Byron opposes.

According to Byron, the sack and sea punishment also extended to other actions. Early on, Baba warns Don Juan of the sack and sea if he is exposed masquerading as a woman at the palace.

> 'T would be convenient; for these mute have eyes
> Like needles, which may pierce those petticoats;
> And if they should discover your disguise,
> You know how near us the deep Bosphorus floats;
> And you and I may chance, ere morning rise,
> To find our way to Marmora without boats,
> Stitched up in sacks--a mode of navigation
> A good deal practised here upon occasion.
>
> (Don Juan V 181)

The eunuch suggests that the sack and sea is quite a common punishment, and could be Juan's fate for impersonating a

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female slave and entering women's chambers. Even if the sultan himself suspected Don Juan's true identity, it could mean death by drowning. Let us consider the reaction of the sultan and others when they see the new maid [Juan].

> Her comrades, also, thought themselves undone:
> Oh! Mahomet! That his majesty should take
> Such notice of a giaour, while scarce to one
> Of them his lips imperial ever spake!
> There was a general whisper, toss, and wriggle,
> But etiquette forbade them all to giggle.
>
> (Don Juan V 196)

These lines indicate members of the harem question the sultan's interest in a Christian slave. Moreover, they suggest that disguised as a female, Juan must be quite ugly, and that some members of the harem are aware that he is a man.

From Byron's perspective, the sack and sea punishment is most often relied on as the penalty for infidelity and affairs of intrigue. In some passages he indicates sack and sea may be used as an illegal means of punishment, when there is a desire among some characters to take the law into their own hands out of revenge.

In addition to the sack and sea punishment, stoning is another method of maintaining justice Byron acknowledges as Islamic. According to Medwin, Byron provides information in his correspondence about the stoning death of a woman. Byron

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informs us that "an order was issued at Jannina by its sanguinary Rajah, that any Turkish woman convicted of incontinence with a Christian should be stoned to death" (Medwin 84)! Among the victims who died under this law, the poet mentions a girl of 16 from Jannina, who carried on a secret intrigue with a Neapolitan of some rank. She was suspected with reason and her crime fully proven. Authorities refused to apostate him to her religion or her to his, so the girl was stoned to death by Ali Pasha's "demons," even though she was four months pregnant. The Neapolitan was ordered to go to a community in which the plague was raging, and he died there (Medwin 84).

Byron criticizes this sentence, describing Ali Pasha, the lawmaker, as a "sanguinary Rajah" and savage barbarian. He also notes that Ali Pasha was never known to pardon anyone (Medwin 84). Moreover, he argues that the girl's intrigue is not a crime because it is a love affair. Obviously, Byron expresses sympathy for the woman and her lover:

> They were torn from each others arms, never to meet again. Love defies tyrants and their edicts, there were many victims, they defied the law. The law is vicious. The subject is harrowing for any nerves,--too terrible for any pen! (Medwin 84)

This passage voices Byron's perception that stoning is an inhumane punishment for infidelity.

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Overall, Byron criticizes sack and sea and stoning among Muslims. Some of the previous discussion has already been addressed by his critics. Both sentences are presented as harsh, cruel, and savage in Byron's works.

Evaluation and Understanding

Several possible reasons may explain Byron's unique depiction of the Islamic criminal justice system's method of dealing with infidelity. Besides, numerous sources provide additional information about the incidents in Byron's works in which sack and sea and stoning occur. Before turning to these aspects of his representation, consider how the poet's attitudes on Muslim law in general and infidelity laws conflict with the Islamic tradition.

Byron condemns Islamic justice, and does not inform his readers of the actual Islamic sentences for infidelity. One discovers that he perceives sack and sea and stoning as savage punishments. Byron also thinks legal sentences are made too quickly, and judicial officials are corrupt. He obviously believes the two sentences are inhumane and barbaric methods of dealing with infidelity. Byron calls death by sack and sea a vicious, "horrible death, at which one cannot think without shuddering!" (Medwin 87).

Severe punishments, to Byron, reinforce the Western belief of Turkish ferocity and violence. Some of Byron's comments imply this view. He describes Ali Pasha as a

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"barbarous" lawmaker when he allows the pregnant Turkish girl to be stoned for her incontinence.

The poet also criticizes how swiftly legal decisions are made. If found guilty of a crime, the individual is quickly sentenced and the punishment soon carried out.

Byron even believes magistrates, governors, and other government officials allow threats and bribes to interfere with the course of justice. Such behaviors among government officials are satirized by Dryden and Butler. In Byron's case, the governor rescinds a decision when encouraged to do so by means of liquor and money.

Furthermore, Byron mixes custom with law when he presents sack and sea as a legal sentence for infidelity. The punishment was likely a husband's revenge and absolutely illegal under the law. McDonough states that often a father or brother will punish a woman for adultery, since the family is disgraced more by her crime (98). This is a social tradition, rather than an Islamic judicial sentence, as Montagu substantiates.

Much controversy presents itself among critics when it comes to both the account of Lelia and infidelity, and Byron's saving a Turkish girl from the sack and sea. Significant evidence suggests that Byron heard two well-known myths in the Levant on which he bases his accounts. His companion, Hobhouse, refers to the stories of 15 women of Jannina ordered drowned by Ali Pasha, and of a

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seventeen year old girl named Zofreni drowned. Other accounts of these incidents are given by Davenport and Galt. The advertisement to "The Giaour" describes sack and sea for a woman, and this act being avenged by her Venetian lover. The punishment is identical to these accounts, and revenge by a lover is also a common thread.

Modern critics offer more insight concerning the stories. John Murray argues that Ali put 600 to death who were hostile to him, and Byron heard about the event, sending a letter to England about it (1: 178). Maurois accepts the original tale of 15 women drowned in the lake for annoying Ali's daughter-in-law (129). Also accepting this version is Borst, who believes Vasilly, Byron's servant, was involved. Definitely critics' opinions differ on this account.

Sack and sea stories involving countless harem intrigues were not exaggerated, according to Penzer. He refers to mass drowning when plots to dispose of the sultan were discovered.

> As many as 300 women have been drowned on such an occasion. The most terrible case was during the reign of Ibrahim, who after one of his debauches suddenly decided to drown his complete harem just for the fun of getting a new one later on. Accordingly, several hundred women were seized, tied up in sacks, and thrown into the Bosphorous.

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> Only one escaped. She was picked up by a passing vessel and ultimately reached Paris. (185-186)

Despite the fact that Penzer reports such occurrences, he does not document them. Hobhouse does not refer to his source in his account of mass drowning of Mustapha's harem either.

What about Byron's story of saving the Turkish girl he had an affair with? Some elements of Byron's account are found in the Arabian Nights. Byron mentions not receiving any cinders, flowers, or tokens from the woman for a few days. The giving of such items was meant to convey secret messages to lovers, as Lane and Montagu explain. Lane discusses secret correspondence in love intrigues by means of signs, emblems and metaphors. The signs are only understood by the two parties involved. One method is to substitute certain letters for others in written messages. Women who cannot deliver letters or do not write may communicate with flowers, fruits, etc. to declare their love (Lane 2: 115-118). Mary Montagu mentions Turkish love messages of this kind. In fact, she recounts a lover sending a fan, bunch of flowers, silk tassel, sugar candy, and piece of music cord to indicate his wish to meet her. She sent him a gift with three black cumin seeds, conveying that he should wait three days (Montagu 2: 49). Lane continues that as a result of such messages, lovers would

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meet at the Turkish baths (2: 115-118). Byron's Lelia meets the giaour at the bath and elopes with him.

It appears, then, that Lane's and Montagu's mention of such correspondence may have inspired some of Byron's description. This further suggests that Byron's story of saving the woman from death is not a personal account.

John Galt calls the incident of Byron's having an affair with a Turkish woman during Ramadan "one continued bundle of errors" (210). He concludes that the account in which Byron plays a major role occurred "long before Lord Byron's first voyage to Greece, although as it is reported in the notes of his conversations, it might be thought his Lordship was in that country at the time" (Galt 210).

Galt contends that a Muslim girl would have been drowned for her transgression and a Christian decapitated. It is not likely that Ali Pasha would have resorted to simply exposing the woman's husband to the plague, as Byron reports. Galt admits that Byron refers to some other story, since even the one Captain Medwin repeats is not likely to have had the outcome he describes (210). The only similarities in Galt's and Byron's versions are the sack and sea punishment and speedy justice.

Yet Byron's own servant, Fletcher, argues that the poet had no such affair. The incident actually happened to Dervish, one of Byron's guards and Ali Pasha's attendant (Medwin 89).

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E. C. Mayne questions Byron's affair with a Turkish girl. He believes there may be truth to Hobhouse's view that the lover was one of Byron's servants. The real incident was remote enough from the poetical one (Mayne 121). Noel Roden and John Nichol also contend that there is no evidence Byron was the girl's Frank lover, but they accept sack and sea as the law for infidelity (76; 66).

The supposed letter from Sligo informing Byron of what people were saying about Byron's saving the Turkish girl from death is considered a fabrication by some scholars. Mayne explains that Byron requested Sligo to tell him what he heard in Athens about the affair, a letter which Coleridge considered inclusive (121). Medwin argues that Byron's account of the letter is Byron's own invention. The meeting with Sligo in England in which he reminds Byron of the letter simply adds to the fabrication (88). Besides, Asfour agrees with Medwin on this point (164).

Alongside the accusations of Galt, Fletcher, Mayne, Medwin and Asfour, other details indicate Byron's inaccuracy in his account of saving a Turkish woman. He confuses Lent with Ramadan when describing the fasting period as 40 days instead of 30. On top of this, Byron reports that women are confined and have no sexual intercourse during Ramadan. These minor details are incorrect, leading one to question the entire account even more.

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However, some critics blindly accept the story as Byron's own experience. Raphael accepts Byron's account of saving the Turkish woman from being drowned in the Aegean Sea. He believes the condemned woman did have an affair with Byron. He also mentions Byron's remark "that if every faithless woman in England were thrown into the sea, they would pave a causeway from Dover to Calais" (Raphael 55). As for any link to the Kyra Frossyni story, Raphael thinks Frossyni was a local folk heroine whom Ali Pasha supposedly raped and drowned in Lake Pambotis (40).

Modern scholars also take Raphael's general position. Jump argues that the poet knew the girl (31). Also, Grabeniar thinks Byron was the Turkish woman's lover, and that he saved her through bribery. That Byron actually saved a woman from the sack and sea is even accepted by West and Parker (38-39; 32). However, West indicates the poet saved a concubine in Constantinople (38-39), rather than in Jannina.

Only in reference to one incident in Byron's work does he mention the actual punishment of adultery: stoning. Yet, Byron's account of such an incident is not reliable. To begin with, Charles Napier excludes Byron from the scene of the stoning of the girl in Jannina, Albania. Ali Pasha was present instead. According to Napier, Joseph Caretto, an engineer, was in love with a married Turkish woman. Ali Pasha wanted Caretto's services, so he sent a Jewish woman

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to persuade his married lover to come and stay with the engineer. The pasha kept Caretto in his service as a result of this plan, but later the Jew told the Turkish woman's husband about her affair (Medwin 85).

In Napier's version no proof is offered that the Turkish woman committed adultery. The judge told the woman she could deny the fact and save herself. Yet, rather than deny the fact, the woman asserted that she had intercourse with Caretto, so she was condemned to death by stoning.

> A hole was dug as deep as her waist; she was placed in it. The troops took small stones the size of walnuts and pelted her head. She never uttered a groan and only turned her head when struck. (Medwin 86)

Medwin claims Napier's account of the incident is true.

Compare this to Byron's portrayal, and contradictions become apparent. He describes the young wife as pregnant, but Napier makes no such mention. As well, Byron states nothing about three or four witnesses required to prove the crime. While Napier stresses that infidelity was not proven, Byron says the action was "fully" proven. The poet also implies that Ali Pasha was severe, that he was never known to pardon anyone. Yet, Napier suggests the judge attempts to save the woman with his advice. Several points of difference are disclosed, all of which indicate Byron's lack of reliability.

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Beyond a political explanation for Byron's condemnation of Islamic justice is the issue of free love and sex being forbidden under Muslim law. Opposed to this religious principle, Byron attempts to find fault with it. This fact may assist one in understanding why he is so critical of the punishments for infidelity. Louis Crompton points out that Byron only objects to a wife's infidelity if she practices it openly (253).

Another factor contributes to Byron's severe presentation of sentences of the sack and sea, and his account of having an affair with a Turkish woman. Other sources indicate that he had no relationships with women while touring Turkey. Marchand reiterates this fact in his story of Byron's stay with a family in Constantinople. Why, then, does the poet suggests that he had a sexual encounter with a woman there? First, he is known to be a womanizer. As Alan Bold reports, Byron believed in having mistresses (110). As a result, the poet may want to persuade his friends in England that he is maintaining this image. He may desire to be viewed as a hero for saving a woman from violent death. A third possibility is that Byron is attempting to suggest that Muslim women are promiscuous, so Westerners will continue to view Islam unsympathetically.

Now, let us consider Byron's presentation of sack and sea and stoning sentences. The poet first alludes to the sack and sea punishment for adultery. Byron's emphasis on

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this sentence is linked to Rycaut, who explains sack and sea as a method of death for "great" or "capital" crimes (185-186). He never specifies sack and sea for the crime of infidelity. However, Byron picks up on the sack and sea penalty, and takes the liberty of applying it to infidelity.

After examining Byron's treatment of justice, numerous examples of incorrect information and exaggerations become apparent. Most significant of all, the sack and sea is not an Islamic punishment for infidelity. Certainly Byron was strongly influenced by Rycaut's discussion, as well as the Arabian Nights. Rycaut's history and the Arabian tales allude to such a type of revengeful murder. Yet, stoning is the only capital punishment for infidelity under Islam. Byron also seems to have relied on two folk stories popular in the East for his accounts of sack and sea. Additionally, the poet indicated his own personal observation and involvement of this punishment, but those close to him--Hobhouse, Medwin, Galt, and Fletcher--discredit his accounts. Later critics also question the truth of Byron's having actually saved a Turkish woman from sack and sea. Such measures that he supposedly went to save the girl are also unbelievable. What is most surprising is that some critics actually accept sack and sea as the Islamic penalty for infidelity. They take Byron's depictions as truth.

The poet's general attitudes on Islamic justice are critical. He believes punishments are initiated too

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hastily, are too severe for infidelity, and are barbaric. Close study and analysis expose the many weaknesses in Lord Byron's allusions to Islamic justice for infidelity.

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CHAPTER XII: CONCLUSION

In a very comprehensive manner, we have discussed Byron's attitude toward Islam and Muslims--faith-related practices: Allah, angels, the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad, and Paradise; devotion-related practices: prayers and mosques, charity and hospitality, fasting and pilgrimage; and civil and criminal laws: marriage and infidelity.

In the study, from the onset, our intention has been to clarify the poet's attitude toward Islam and Muslims, and to correct any misconceptions about Islam and Muslims Byron has raised. We have also aimed to understand the likely factors behind his attitude, in order to gain a deeper understanding of Byron or his poetry.

To achieve these goals, we have used a fourfold structural plan. We have first outlined the Islamic tradition, according to the Qur'an and/or the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad on the issues addressed by Byron. We have then outlined the English tradition from authors before and in Byron's time on issues raised by the poet. Thirdly, we have dealt thoroughly with Byron's tradition on Islam and Muslims in three major areas in the preceding ten chapters. Finally, we have presented a final comparative analysis in the final section of each chapter to compare Byron's views with both Islamic and English views. We have done that by raising several crucial questions: Does Byron follow the

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Islamic tradition in his views on Islam and Muslims? Does Byron follow the English tradition's views on Islam and Muslims? Does Byron follow other traditions in handling Islamic material--deism, panhellenism, Christianity, or his own personal views and experience, among other factors? Is there a certain pattern in Byron's religious thought? All of the questions posed have aimed at a deeper understanding of Byron or his poetry.

Specific Findings

From our comprehensive discussion of Byron's tradition on Islam and Muslims, we have found Byron's attitude, for the most part, unsympathetic to the spirit of the orthodox Muslim tradition, and for the least part, sympathetic with only a few aspects of the spirit of the Muslim tradition.

We find Byron primarily unsympathetic with Muslim Allah-related practices in Chapter Two, with the exception of the unity of God. The poet mocks Muslim calls upon Allah in time of war, jareed, ship distress and when they make vows by Allah. In addition, Byron mistranscribes certain Islamic expressions pertaining to God-related practices.

We have, however, discovered that Byron essentially agrees with Islamic creed on several important points. They include the belief in God, His unity, and some of His attributes. There is also complete agreement between Byron and Islam on Jesus and original sin.

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As for Chapter Three, the Angels and Jinn, Byron misrepresents this Islamic creed by referring to Muslim angels as fallen and mutilated. He, consequently, pokes fun at Munkir and Nakir, and employs Azrael as a Byronic hero. As for the jinn, Byron misrepresents Solomon's role with the jinns by calling him a "necromancer." The poet also violates the Islamic tradition by using the jinns for his ends--presenting Afrits, genii, and Shaitan as mythical characters like those of Greek and Roman mythology. He draws them as Byronic heroes warring against Muslim sultans and Muslim power in Greece, as well. Therefore, Byron informs readers little about angels and jinn, and alters the tradition to suit his own purpose, violating the Muslim tradition.

Byron disagrees, in Chapter Four, with Islam in his perception of the Qur'an as poetry and the poetry of Muhammad, rather than a word-for-word revelation from God to the Prophet through the angel Gabriel.

Yet, Byron still appreciates the Qur'an in his own way as sublime poetry. He strongly admires the sublimity of the Kursee text of the Qur'an, which focuses on attributes of God. Byron likes the Qur'an as a work of literature, but disbelieves it as a revelation from God. And, although the poet expresses some familiarity with Qur'anic traditions, his knowledge of the Qur'an, on the whole, remains quite limited.

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In Chapter Five on the Prophet Muhammad, we have found the poet's disagreements comprehensive, derogatory, and offensive. In the manner of medieval polemic writers, Byron presents the Prophet as a pagan god. He calls the Prophet of Islam who rid Arabia of idolatry "Macon," "false god," and "False One." Furthermore, Byron and his characters swear by "Mahomet" and his beard, the Prophet's Moroccan followers in Spain worship stars in the manner of Arabian idolaters, and among his followers are the Saracens and the Mahometans. In addition, Byron never uses the word "Islam" in his writings, but alludes to the religion as "Muhammadanism" (a stereotype of his time). "Mohammadanism is thus a misnomer because it suggests that Muslims worship Muhammad rather than God. Allah is the Arabic name for God, which is used by Muslims and Christians alike" ("A Brief Introduction" 2). Byron also charges Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, of imposture and false miracles, and believes false legends about him. He accuses the Prophet of promiscuity, immorality, lust for power, and offensively attacks the Prophet's descendants. Byron excludes the Prophet from the formula of faith declaration in the minaret call. He misrepresents Islam when he says that Muslims view Moses as inferior to Muhammad and Jesus. As well, the poet makes Muslim characters jest at the Prophet's alleged doctrines--the prohibition of wine, the soullessness of women, and the fiction of paradise.

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In Chapter Six, Paradise, Byron's information is quite offensive and disagreeable with the Islamic tradition. The poet ridicules the Muslim belief in the Sirat Bridge, views Muslims as naive for their belief in the houris and the physical pleasures of paradise, and considers martyrdom as a cheap death for such mythical rewards of paradise. Byron charges Muhammad of making up the sensual houris and carnal paradise to gain proselytes to Islam. He also views the houris as voluptuous, immodest, loose women in stark contrast to the Qur'an's description of them as modest virgins and wives of the righteous. Still, Byron charges Muslims with believing that paradise is inaccessible to Muslim women because of their soullessness. However, he likes the sensual image of paradise and the houris, but not the ideology behind them. Byron's portrayal of the subject reveals a strong disbelief in Muslim paradise.

Byron uses prayers and mosques in Chapter Seven for his political purpose--to free Constantinople and Greece from the Muslim domination. He utilizes the mosque, dome, minaret, and crescent as a challenge to Christianity. He hopes to play on Christian sentiments and make Christians rise in a crusade against the threatening Muslim power in Greece and Europe. So he deliberately insists that Sophia Mosque is still "St. Sophia" Church. Even Byron's characters are utilized for the poet's purpose, since the Corsair and the Giaour are envious of and enemies of mosques.

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Byron also misinforms us about prayers. He calls dawn prayer midnight prayer. His minaret call is not in the correct order, and it excludes the reference to Muhammad. Worst of all, he refers to Muslim prayers as "erroneous." Also, Muslim characters are careless about prayers. Most of them, in Byron's poetry, do not say their prescribed prayers. Just a few Muslims pray in the court of Ali Pasha, and none in the Sultan court at the Seraglio, which till today has four gigantic mosques. Additionally, Byron's Muslim characters in the verse tales are hypocritical in their prayers.

However, Byron's notes sympathize with Muslim prayers and rituals. He supplies correct but brief information on mosques, minaret calls, prescribed prayers, ablution, places of prayers, direction of prayers, and Friday Prayer. The poet is highly moved by Muslim prayers, the sincerity of the worshippers and values Muslim worship above all the world's religious practices, including Christian rituals, although he admires Catholic rituals. Byron also admires the mosque architecture, and enjoys the romantic and melodious minaret calls over the sounds of church bells.

Concerning charity in Chapter Eight, Byron is quite sympathetic with the Islamic traditions, since both charity and hospitality are offered abundantly and genuinely by Muslims, and he plainly contrast them to Christians of his

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time. The humility, loyalty, and assistance of Muslims are also well valued by the poet.

However, Byron turns around, as his habit is, and uses the occasion for his end. His giaours destroy the sultan and his palace in Constantinople and charity stops, as if no other Muslim pays charity but the sultan. There is no doubt, however, that Muslim hospitality has deeply touched Byron's heart. Yet, he utilizes the subject for his Greek cause when his corsair shuns the bread and salt tradition, and attacks the Muslim sultan and destroys his power.

In Chapter Nine, Fasting and Pilgrimage, the poet misrepresents facts about fasting and fasters. He errs when he calls Ramadan "Lent," a Christian term, does not know the duration of Ramadan, and provides incorrect information on Islamic restrictions governing the conduct of Muslim men and women during the fasting month. Again, Byron uses the fasting occasion to compliment his political and Christian sentiments. The Giaour wars against the sultan and Muslim power at the end of Ramadan, turning the Bairam Feast of Ramadan into a tragedy. Byron also errs on pilgrimage by charging Muhammad with denying women pilgrimage to and prayers at the sacred mosque of Mecca, and by calling that first mosque of Islam a temple of Mecca.

The poet significantly misinforms readers on Muslim marriage in Chapter Ten. He misrepresents the law of polygamy and concubinage, treatment of women, and marriage

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and engagement age among females. He also accuses Prophet Muhammad and Muslim men and women of immorality because of polygamy.

In addition, in Chapter Eleven, the poet misrepresents the law of infidelity, since he calls it barbaric and charges Muslim judges with corruption and ignorance.

Not only does Byron disagree with Islam and Muslims and, at times, express sympathy them, but he also disagrees with Christianity and Judaism, at times, showing sympathy for them. We have investigated this topic to be objective and to gain understanding of Byron and his poetry, and as a result, we have determined that there is a pattern in Byron's approach toward all revealed religions. Interestingly enough, the poet almost expresses views on Christianity and Judaism similar to those on Islam and Muslims. Let us outline the findings to observe this common pattern.

Certainly Byron rejects all Christian doctrines--the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, and the Virgin Birth. But, he strongly believes in the Almighty God, the Creator of the universe and mankind. The poet bases such belief of the Supreme Being on natural revelation rather than Biblical revelation. He is very assertive in his belief in the unity of God. And, in this case, he parallels Islamic belief in God.

Yet, the belief in God is one thing, and the belief in revealed religion is another. The poet rejects revealed

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religion directly, firmly and assertively. All revealed religion, to Byron, is "mythos," "superstition," and "nonentity." Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, traditionally the revealed religions, are all denied by the poet.

On the topic of the Bible, Byron has views similar to those on the Qur'an. He denies the revelation of the Bible. He disbelieves in Genesis and the story of Adam and Eve. He views the Bible as literature and ethics. As such, the Bible is as sublime as any other good literature and ethics, whether pagan or religious. The literature of Homer, Aeschylus, and Dante is as sublime as the book of Job. In this sense, Jesus is an excellent philosopher and moralist, more or less, as other philosophers and moralists. Byron places Jesus at the level of Socrates. He also views Moses at the level of Confucius or even less. As well, the poet places the Ten Commandments of Moses at the level of the sayings of Confucius. So the revealed books to Byron are only acceptable as ethical and good literary works, nothing more.

Based on his denial of revealed religions, Byron also rejects Christian angels and demons. He certainly denies the Satan of the Bible and Milton. However, he likes angels and demons as myths. He accepts the demons and angels of Dante, since they are mythological rather than theological. As such, he goes along with the image of Satan, and demons and angels, identifying his heroes with them. So, like his

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approach to Islamic angels and jinn, Byron likes the image but not the belief of Christian angels and demons.

A pattern even emerges in Byron's thought on Christian prophets and clergymen. He views all prophets of revealed books as superstition and mythos. The law of nature is his guide, not the "prophets' law," not the Mosaic law. He disbelieves in the divinity of Jesus, saints, the Pope, clergymen, and evangelists; he adamantly antagonizes all priestcraft and priests. In the same zeal, he wages war on Prophet Muhammad and all Muslim clerics.

Additionally, Byron's views of Muslim paradise and hell are similar to his views on Christian heaven and hell. The poet emphatically rejects Muslim resurrection, paradise, and hell. In the same way, he denies the Christian physical resurrection. He also strongly speaks out against damnation and hell, and salvation and heaven. Death, to Byron, is an eternal sleep. His mind is settled on this point.

As for the topic of religious practices, the poet, as a general rule, dislikes the belief in organized religious practices. And for this reason, he views Muslim prayers as "erroneous." For the same reason, he severely condemns Catholic rituals--the communion, the mysteries, and the Thirty-Nine Articles as absurd and ignorant.

However, Byron is generally tolerant of Catholic mass services, since he views them as interesting mythology. He is even more tolerant on Muslim rituals of minaret calls and

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prayers, to the point that he prefers them to all religions' rituals. Basically, Byron shuns ideologies and not rituals in revealed religions.

Since the poet seeks no prophet's law of any faith, he follows nature's law. He believes that God gave him reason and instinct in order to live a moral life. Byron prefers to worship God in his own way, through speculation on God's creation. So his worship is innate, natural, and deistic. Therefore, he needs not rely on any organized religious laws. Of course, this explains Byron's enmity for the Islamic laws of infidelity and marriage. He believes in the innate law, the natural law.

Interesting is the fact that Byron not only targets Islamic creed in his satire, but he targets Christian and Jewish faith as well. As a result, the poet's opinions of Islam are transferred to Christianity and even Judaism. All three are revealed religions, and he antagonizes the same basic principles of each one with few exceptions. This leaves no doubt that there is a general pattern to the poet's religious thought.

Now that we have outlined our specific findings on Byron's overwhelming disagreements and his scant sympathy with Islam and Muslims, and gained understanding about Byron and his poetry by outlining the emerging pattern in Byron's thought on Christianity and Judaism, let us outline findings on the factors that may most influence Byron's tradition on

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Islam and Muslims (and other religions). Knowledge of such factors will help us gain greater insights and understanding of the poet and his works. Let us deal with these factors chapter by chapter.

In the Allah-related practices chapter, we find several factors at work. The Bible has influenced Byron's use of calls upon Allah. He transfers Jonah's story to an Islamic situation, making one believe that the Muslim ship incident is Byron's own orchestration. Panhellenism, or the politics to free Greece, influences Byron's utilization and mocking of calls to Allah. Muslim fighters call on Allah during Jihad, or holy war. The poet emphasizes the ship distress calls, war-calls, and vows by Allah because they have great bearings on Muslim hostilities with Christians, especially with the Greeks and other Europeans. English influence is also present. English authors, Shelley and Beckford, have influenced Byron's erroneous transcription of certain Islamic expressions.

Yet more important than any of these factors on Byron's treatment of Allah-related practices is deism. It is the single most influential factor on Byron's satire in this chapter, simply because deism rejects belief in God's interference with human beings. Deism considers God careless about his creation, and man rather than God the master of his destiny. Above all, deism is responsible for Byron's sympathy with the Muslim unity of God and the rejection of

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the divinity of Jesus, because these two are key deistic creeds. In this respect, prominent deists like Voltaire and Gibbon have influenced Byron's monotheistic views. Also, worth noting is that we have found Byron a remarkable deist, based on his beliefs concerning Allah, and the fact that he has professed himself to be a deist and Socinianist.

The English tradition, panhellenism, Christianity, and deism play significant roles in Chapter Three on angels. First, English writers like Sale, Beckford, D'Herbelot, Moore are major influences on Byron's use of angels and jinns. Since he portrays angels and jinns as myths, Byron is also motivated by the influence of old mythologies. Second, the poet's characterization of angels and jinn as Byronic heroes fighting against Muslims is related to the influences of panhellenism or politics; Byron was a lover of Greece and died in her cause. Third, his use of Muslim angels as fallen angels is attributed to English author Thomas Moore and Christianity. Fourth, the poet's disbelief and satire of Muslim angels are the result of his own deism, which rejects belief in such heavenly creatures.

At the heart of the poet's treatment in Chapter Four, or the Qur'an, are the English tradition, panhellenism, and deism. To begin with, major English influences on Byron's attitude toward the Qur'an are Sale, Gibbon, Prideaux, Beckford, Rycaut, Montagu, and others. Next, panhellenism is evident in Byron's antagonism to the Qur'an's ideology of

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Jihad or holy war. As well, deism is a key factor on Byron's perception of the Qur'an as the poetry of Muhammad, rather than a revelation from God. Deists do not believe in revelation, and Byron has made it clear many times that no books are revealed.

Then, in Chapter Five, Prophet Muhammad, English influence on Byron is tremendous, while panhellenism, Christianity and deism are significant factors. English writers, namely the polemicists of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and those afterwards--Dante, Prideaux, Ross, Knolles, Rycaut, Moore, and others--all stand behind Byron's antagonism of Muhammad. Less polemic writers like Sale, Gibbon, and Montagu have slightly influenced Byron's thought on the prophet of Islam.

Panhellenism or English politics, with its reaction to Islamic Jihad, or Muslim conquest of the Eastern Roman Empire is a major reason for Byron's enmity with Muhammad. The Islamic power of the followers of Muhammmad was responsible for taking Greece, his beloved country, and holding it for 400 years. The Islamic occupation of Spain for 800 years, and that of Jerusalem and Sicily, and the Islamic raids in Europe are also major factors behind Byron's antagonism to Muhammad.

Also, Christianity has its influence on Byron's treatment of the Prophet Muhammad. Christians disbelieve in the Prophethood of Muhammad, although in Islam Moses and Jesus

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assured their followers of Muhammad's coming. So the Christian view seems to have influenced Byron. Western culture must have shaped the poet's mind directly or indirectly, despite his antagonism of Christianity.

Yet, deism, with Voltaire and Gibbon's deistic views of Prophet Muhammad and all prophets in general, has shaped Byron's hostility toward the Prophet. Deism does not accept the notions of prophethood or revealed religions.

The English tradition, Christian tradition, panhellenism, and deism are prominent factors in Byron's treatment of paradise in Chapter Six. First, influences by English writers are immense and influential. The majority of critics, namely Prideaux, Dryden and Moore, depict Muslim paradise as a place for carnal pleasures and sexual license. Byron's belief is identical to theirs. Another factor, the Christian tradition, that does not stress the physical aspect of heaven, has reinforced Byron's criticism of Muslim paradise. Third, there is no doubt that panhellenism has fed the poet's imagination on Jihad, martyrdom, houris, and paradise. Yet, most importantly, deism has shaped Byron's denial of the afterlife with its physical rewards. One can understand Byron's religious thought best by examining his deistic perception of the afterlife. He is settled that death is an eternal sleep.

Byron's allusions to prayers and mosques in Chapter Seven are somewhat shaped by Christianity and panhellenism,

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deism, romanticism, and personal perceptions. Christian culture and panhellenism work together on the poet's mind. Therefore, he supports the cross against the crescent. He hates to see St. Sophia turned into a mosque, and calls the West for a crusade to rid Greece of Muslim occupation. As for deism, it marks the poet's disbelief in organized prayers, but still deism is not generally bothered by rites and rituals as they in themselves are harmless, and may cause no wars. Byron's admiration for Muslim devotions like prayers, mosques and minaret calls, but not Muslim ideologies, can be attributed to romanticism, which cherishes the novelty of everything, even in religion. And on a personal level, Byron likes art and architecture, so he regards the physical features of mosques with admiration.

In Chapter Eight, Charity and Hospitality, deism, romanticism, and personal sentiments are strong. Deism lies behind Byron's abundant sympathy with Islam and Muslims. Byron's message is that these two virtues are within the natural man whom God created. It seems to me that he views Muslims as such, at times, particularly his Muslim Albanian friends. These virtues are also very attractive to romanticism. This perception works on the personal level, too. Since Byron himself was a very generous person, he must have also admired these virtues of the Muslims, and anybody else who was charitable and hospitable. Since the poet found the Christians of his time less charitable and generous, he

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employs the Muslims as an example to move the Christians to be charitable and hospitable. However, when Byron's giaour kills the sultan and terminates hospitality and charity, the poet plays on political sentiments.

When the poet comes to fasting and pilgrimage in Chapter Nine, panhellenism, deism, Christianity and the English tradition are at work. The context of his fantasy about Ramadan is politics or panhellenism. Byron's giaour takes revenge on the sultan on Bairam's eve and turns the Ramadan feast into a tragedy for Greece's sake. Deism, however, may also be a factor, since this philosophy denies fasting and restrictions on people. Christianity and the English tradition both affect his terminology, while romanticism shapes his liking for the novel celebration of Bairam during the closing night of Ramadan.

A close look at Byron's treatment of the marriage law in Chapter Ten reveals that Byron utilizes several approaches. The first is the English tradition, which bans and condemns polygamy, in favor of monogamy. Then at a personal level, the poet does not believe in wedlock. Next, panhellenism comes into focus when describing Islamic marriages to female Greek slaves. Such marriages, according to Gleckner, symbolize the conflict between Turkey and Greece. Byron desires nothing less than freeing Greece from the Muslim power. As for deism, it might have some impact on his views of polygamy.

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In Chapter Eleven, the poet shuns the Islamic law of infidelity. Deism, panhellenism, Christianity, and personal lifestyle all serve as factors in Byron's references. Deists do not consider infidelity forbidden as long as it does not cause personal harm. As for Byron's panhellenism, it is strongly at the root of the issue. Leila, the punished female, stands for Greece, and Byron's message is to free Leila, or Greece. Christianity may be related to the Western tradition, which does not enforce infidelity punishment in Byron's time. On the point of personal lifestyle, the poet is a womanizer and could care less for laws governing infidelity. Byron maintained an incestuous relationship with his half-sister Augusta, and had an Italian mistress who was married, in addition to his claims of a great numbers of other mistresses and prostitutes. Furthermore, many critics insist on Byron having been a homosexual. These aspects of his personal life contribute to understanding why the poet treats infidelity as he does.

Now that we have examined findings on factors contributing to Byron's treatment of Islamic allusions in these chapters, the variety of influences working on the poet becomes evident. Deism is the factor that has gone unnoticed until now in this study. In some chapters, the English tradition and panhellenism are significantly influential. Christianity and romanticism are less influential. And finally, the most interesting contributing

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factor is Byron's personal perspective, based on his own views, personal experience and lifestyle.

General Conclusions

A number of observations can be made about Byron and his treatment of Islamic allusions, after having examined the previously mentioned findings and factors. What becomes immediately clear in this study is that Byron is a traditionalist in his treatment of Islamic allusions. This is true since he frequently follows the majority of other members of the English tradition who speak disagreeably of Islam and Muslims. The English culture generally is unsympathetic with Islam, and Byron is part of that culture. Therefore, the poet's culture is one influence on his disagreeable stand of Islam, and not necessarily Christianity.

There is one observation of Byron that reinforces the idea that he willfully chooses to conform to the English tradition, which offers a disagreeable image of Islam. The poet's misconceptions about Islam are more widespread in his poetry than in his prose. It is interesting to point out that Byron's notes to his poems convey some objective information about Islam, while his poetry offers biased material. Readers are likely going to be influenced more by the unsympathetic view of Islam Byron projects in his poetry than in his notes. They may not even turn to the notes, at the back of his works in fine print. One may, consequently, assume that perhaps Byron's intention is to convey

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misconceptions of Islam to readers of his poetry, like other English writers before and in his time.

Let us now turn to the objectives behind Byron's Islamic references. The poet definitely utilizes Islam in his poetry and prose for his own purposes.

He has literary motives in mind with some Islamic allusions. For instance, he employs Azrael, jinn, and afrit as Byronic heroes. Then, the poet uses the image of houris to describe some of his female characters.

More importantly, the poet emphasizes Muslim virtues to correct Christians. His focus on the unity of God, as well as charity and hospitality is to warn Christians to shape up.

While he applies the unity of God, images of paradise, Azreal, jinn, houris, devotion, and charity and hospitality for his own purposes, Byron does not like or accept the ideology behind them. When he praises Islam he prefers it to Christianity, especially Muslim belief in the unity of God over the Trinity, divinity of Jesus, original sin and damnation. Byron also values the genuine sincerity of Muslims in their prayer and charity. Yet, other than these few points of acceptance, the poet rejects Islam.

Byron carries the same attitude for Islam to Christianity--beliefs, religious figures, and practices. For both he expresses some sympathy; yet, for both he expresses mostly criticism.

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The poet's unitarian views and praises of charity and prayers pleases Muslims, for in Islam God may forgive all sins except partnership with Him. However, Byron's criticism of most of the Islamic beliefs and laws offends Muslims.

Next, Byron uses Islam for his political ends. He employs Muslim Allah-related war-cries, the Prophet Muhammad, paradise, houris, Munkir and Nakir, the Qur'an, mosques, Ramadan, marriage, and infidelity to advance the Greek cause. Islam was responsible for the destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire and its capitol, Constantinople. So Islam and Muslim power should be attacked to further the Greek cause of liberation from the four-hundred-year Muslim domination. Byron does his best to make every allusion to Islam count for this cause. In practice, he dies fighting the Muslims for the Greek cause. In practice, shortly after Byron's death, Greece became free. Byron's policy, an important one in the British policy toward Greece, achieved its objective.

Then comes deism, the number one factor behind Byron's criticism of Islam, and all religions for that matter. Deism is also at the root of his criticism of Christianity and Judaism. He likes the ethics of any religion, including Islam. Byron appreciates religions, not because they are from God, but because of their standing ethics. He also

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likes the morals of any other religion or philosophy. So religion and philosophy to him are one in the same.

Significance of Study

This study will undoubtedly have an impact, not only on readers of Byron and other English authors who employ Islamic allusions or discuss Islam, or Muslim readers but also on future research that deals with Byron and other literary figures.

Scholars of Byron and English literature will learn a great deal about Islam. The comparative nature of the study is helpful because it makes the study much more informative. Byron's allusions to Islam are compared to the Qur'an and/or the traditions of Muhammad, which provides any scholar with a basic introduction and understanding of the true nature of Islam.

At the very least, the study will inform scholars or readers of Byron or English literature about the truth of Islam. Such information is necessary and valuable, since evidence exists that the West, as a whole, is not well informed about Islam. This is unfortunate, especially since there are numerous materials (books, periodicals, articles, tapes) on Islam available in many Western libraries and bookstores. George W. Cornell, an Associated Press religion correspondent, remarks: "Although Muslims have become a growing part of the U.S. population, Islamic specialists say there is scant understanding of that faith among others, or

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of its expressed connections with Judaism and Christianity" (4). Also, modern Muslim scholars in North America believe that inaccuracy about Islam remains prevalent. Dr. Mohammad Kaiseruddin, President of the Muslim Community Center of Chicago, writes: "Information about Al-Islam is either lacking or misleading, and 'amazingly distorted'" (24). He calls for corrective measures against misinformation and defamation of Islam and Muslims (24). Dr. Siddiqi shares the same ideas with Kaiseruddin (21-22). As Kaiseruddin states, the image of Islam in the West is distorted, and this has been so since the Middle Ages. It is unfortunate that such misinformation about Islam continues today, in an age of unbelievable advances in telecommunications that more closely link the predominately Muslim East to the Christian West. Educating readers will alter the inaccurate and critical Western perceptions of Islam.

But readers of Byron and English literature are not the only ones to gain from this study. Muslim scholars will also benefit. Being aware of misconceptions about Islam in the English tradition, a Muslim scholar will better understand the inaccuracies and their possible sources. He will also be able to defend Islam more effectively through educational channels--the writing of articles, giving of public lectures and dialogues, and teaching of Islam in religious studies courses or seminars. In their defense of Islam, Muslim scholars may find the comparative approach

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helpful. The use of Islamic background in their writing will shed light on the inaccuracies on Islam put forth in the Western world. Perhaps this will allow Muslim scholars to play a role in correcting the distorted image of Islam in the West.

Let us now address how scholars should approach the reading of Byron and English literature that contains Islamic references, in light of the findings of this study. They must be aware of the major trend in the English tradition to convey inaccuracies about Islam and Muslims. With this in mind, such literature should be read with a critical mind. Scholars must not readily accept information on Islam provided in English literature as truth. It has already been well established in this study that English authors before and during Byron's time were generally and, at times, extremely unsympathetic to Islam and Muslims. And, of course, Byron is no exception. Consequently, readers of English literature should turn to the Qur'an and traditions of Muhammad for accurate information on Islam. Of course, there is a small number of English authors who do provide objective information on Islam. However, distinguishing those writers who strive for accuracy on Islam is not as easy task, particularly without a solid understanding of Islam.

Aside from the benefits of this study to readers and guidelines for reading English literature with Islamic

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allusions or references, let us explore topics warranting further investigation.

This study may encourage scholars of Byron to research Byron's Islamic material further. Although this study has been quite comprehensive on Byron's Islamic allusions, there are still many other Islamic issues and traditions that should be researched. Byron's material is rich in references to the Muslim Orient's geography, economy, customs, superstitions, languages, and climates, among others. These are some possible topics for future research by scholars of Byron.

This study of Byron's Islamic allusions has additionally explored and exposed Byron's philosophical views, namely deism and its relationship with Islam. Byron as a deist has not been focused on before, other than a few allusions here and there. Although extensive discussion of the poet's deistic views that have influenced his Islamic views (and to some extent Christian views) has appeared in the evaluation and understanding sections of the previous chapters, there remain sides to Byron's philosophical thoughts and beliefs that are interwoven with deism. There are also philosophical trends of Byron which have not been touched on--Manicheanism, Pyrrhonianism, Spinozism, materialism, Zoroastrianism to name a few. Therefore, these are fruitful areas of future research on Byron.

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As for other researchers of English literature, they could explore the use of Islamic references in the works of other English authors besides Byron. Nothing like this has been carefully researched or written. Up to now, a few scholars, such as Chew, Smith, Hitti, Wiener, Said and Asfour have written surveys of English literature containing Islamic references, but none has before focused in depth on a single English author, as has been done with Byron in this study. More thorough investigations of individual authors are needed to determine more fully their treatments of Islamic material.

This examination and analysis of Lord Byron's Islamic allusions is insightful. His treatment has been carefully compared and contrasted to the Islamic and English traditions. Other factors contributing to the poet's handling of Islamic references have also been exposed and discussed. Together, all of these elements of the study serve to more completely understand Byron and his works. We have found him primarily unsympathetic to Islam. We have found the poet achieving his own purposes in utilizing Islamic allusions. We have found him following well established trends in the English tradition in the presentation of Islamic material. We have found Byron standing firm to his panhellenistic cause. We have found his personal beliefs and lifestyle sometimes contributing to his treatment. Most importantly, we have found the poet's religious and

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philosophical sentiments in his treatment of Islam and Muslims. All of these findings are particularly significant to the scholar of Byron.

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