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I

The biblical Cain is alluded to in several of Byron's works, even long before the poet's rewriting of the biblical story in 1821. The penultimate stanza of the Incantation in Manfred is one of the early references to the first murderer of the world.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,

By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,

By that most seeming virtuous eye,

By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;

By the perfection of thine art

Which pass'd for human thine own heart;

By thy delight in others' pain,

And by thy brotherhood of Cain,

I call upon thee! and compel

Thyself to be thy proper Hell! (1.1.242-51)^[1]

What is worth noting here is that this allusion refers more to the murderous sin and evil nature of the biblical Cain than to the melancholy disposition of Byron's metaphysical hero, who was not yet created in 1817, the year in which Manfred was written.

There is no denying that Byron exhibits towards the Gothic hero in Manfred a sympathy similar to that which he shows in Cain towards the biblical villain. While he argues the case of Cain's murder by presenting the criminal's mental sufferings before the crime, he pushes Manfred's crime into an obscure background and brings into relief the remorse, despair, and burdensome sense of guilt of the Gothic hero. Both techniques render the two characters sympathetic and elevate them to the status of heroes. Especially in the second case, the past crime that a Gothic audience would expect of a Gothic villain/hero is so ambiguous and highly enigmatic that critics feel baffled by the discrepancy between the Incantation and Manfred's characterization within the play. Andrew Rutherford, for example, claims that Byron excludes from his actual portrayal of Manfred's personality "the more objectionable qualities" as presented in the Incantation, "by an artistic sleight of hand amounting to dishonesty." As a result, "the reader—like the author—could enjoy the romantic villainy without ever facing its real implications" (85). Leslie A. Marchand, on the other hand, argues that the Incantation was originally written against Lady Byron and her allies and that it consequently contains "lines that seem so obviously directed against her as to be inappropriate in the context of the drama" (77). Following Marchand's argument, Daniel M. McVeigh also claims that "the inappropriate charges of hypocrisy and malice are remnants of the earlier curse, [. . .] not assimilable into the thematic body of the play" (608).

Cain and Manfred are truly brothers, as the Incantation indicates, but in the sense that they share several common features more than in the sense that they are both heinous criminals as hinted in the above quotation. They are overtly akin in several respects. Both are melancholy (not in the Freudian sense, but in the sense that the term is generally used) and dejected; both show a lack of interest in the

outer world and devote the entire force of their energy to self-examination. Both are victims of fate; both fail to resolve their inner conflicts. In both their conversations and soliloquies self-criticism and self-reproaches abound. Strictly speaking from a Freudian point of view, however, while Cain exhibits all the traits of melancholia (in the Freudian sense), his predecessor Manfred displays only the features of normal mourning.

Two articles that apply Freud's observation on melancholia to Byron's Manfred were published in two interdisciplinary journals in 1992, neither of which is entirely devoted to this topic, though. One is D. L. MacDonald's "Incest, Narcissism and Demonality in Byron's Manfred," published in Mosaic; the other is Pamela A. Boker's "Byron's Psychic Prometheus: Narcissism and Self-Transformation in the Dramatic Poem Manfred," published in Literature and Psychology. MacDonald focuses on Byron's transformation of the traditional Faustian pact with the devil and argues that "the psychodynamics of incest" determine Byron's melancholia, or as Goethe calls it, Byron's hypochondria, which is characteristic of his revision of that tradition (26). Boker, on the other hand, details Manfred's narcissism at full length. She traces the process in which Manfred overcomes step by step his unresolved Oedipus complex and narcissistic disorder to achieve mature narcissism and hopefully the "establishment of a higher moral and socially positive superego subsequent to the conclusion of the play itself" (12).

While they rightly observe intriguing resemblance between Freud's observation on melancholia and Byron's characterization of Manfred, they both ignore, though in different degrees, Freud's distinction between melancholia and mourning. Boker, for instance, replaces "melancholia" with "mourning" when she quotes from Freud "the distinguishing characteristics of melancholia." This substitution is symptomatic of her indifference towards Freud's careful differentiation between them. These two terms are used interchangeably (and incorrectly) several times in her two-page application of Freud's theory on melancholia.^[2] MacDonald, on the other hand, provides a more detailed study of Manfred's melancholy

features, such as his exaggerated self-reproaches, cessation of interest in the outside world, and suicidal tendencies. He does pay attention to Freud's distinction between the features of mourning and melancholia and sees in Manfred's loss of Astarte a loss of an ambivalent love, the triggering cause of melancholia (32).

Questions and doubts abound, however, if we take Freud more seriously and apply his definition more thoroughly. Whereas Byron's characterization of Cain anticipates Freud's description of melancholia to a surprisingly large extent, his characterization of Manfred differs from Freud's melancholia at some very crucial points. Owing to the material limits of the present essay, a fuller analysis of Cain's melancholia is not possible; the rich complexity of the depiction requires and well deserves a separate discussion of its own. The focus here therefore lies on a comparison between Manfred's mourning and Cain's melancholia.

II

Melancholia, according to Freud, shows the following five distinctive mental features:

a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment. (11: 252)^[3]

It is plausible to claim, as MacDonald and Boker do, that Manfred suffers from melancholia as well, since he shares the first four features quoted above with Cain. Manfred is dejected, isolated from the outside world, unable to love (though gentle towards others), and unable to act, as is Cain. Freud, nevertheless, continues to assert that mourning exhibits the same traits except for the last one—"the lowering of the self-regarding feelings." It is true that Manfred seems to exhibit this feature as well in his obsession with self-reproaches; he is also tempted to commit suicide. But there are nuances between Manfred and Cain in

two aspects with regard to this important feature that differentiates melancholia from mourning: the different degrees of their self-regard and the underlying mental mechanism behind their self-reproaches.

First of all, the vicissitudes of self-regard that the two heroes undergo proceed in two opposite directions. Intriguingly, they are succinctly encapsulated in Freud's statement that "in mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself" (11: 254). While Cain reviles himself, Manfred maintains his sense of superiority in the face of temptation and forced subservience. Upon encountering Lucifer, Cain expresses self-abhorrence for his instinctive clinging to a hateful life; "I live," he claims,

But live to die: and, living, see no thing
 To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,
 A loathsome and yet all-invincible
 Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I
 Despise myself, yet cannot overcome—
 And so I live. Would I had never lived! (1.1.109-115)

Manfred, by contrast, actually attempts suicide in his search for 'self-oblivion' (1.1.144). Without the cowardice that Cain disdains in himself, Manfred seems to be cursed like the Wandering Jew to live and suffer eternally. As he says to the Witch of the Alps,

I have affronted death—but in the war
 Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
 And fatal things pass'd harmless—the cold hand
 Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
 Back by a single hair, which would not break. (2.2.135-39)

Cain's already depressed feelings are intensified by Lucifer's panoramic guided tour through space and time.^[4] Although defiant in his encounter with Lucifer, Cain ends up acknowledging to the fallen angel, "Alas! I seem Nothing" (2.2.420-21), and reiterates this self-debasement to Adah,

but now I feel

My littleness again. Well said the spirit,

That I was nothing! (3.1.67-69)

Granted that Lucifer is the projection of Cain's inner self, the latter's challenging attitude towards the former reflects his ambivalent perception of himself. Manfred, in comparison, retains his pride all through the play, triumphing consecutively over the temptation and threat of the seven spirits, the chamois hunter, the Witch, Arimanes, Nemesis and the spirits, the Abbot of St Maurice, and finally the demons that come to snatch him away. This "series of supernatural visitations" is criticised by Philip Martin as "a monotonous dramatization of the defiance motif" and contains "no real plot" (125); he sees it as aimless "thrills of Gothic horror" (129). Rutherford expresses a similar view and argues,

Byron is inventing actions and situations which show Manfred's pride and independence, but which have no further meaning, no relation to life as we know it, and no correspondence to an intellectual concept. (85)

Although critics like Boker and James Twitchell endeavour to trace Manfred's psychological changes in his confrontation with various personae, there is no denying that these scenes convey and intensify the impression of Manfred's "greatness, pride, and strength of will" (Rutherford 85). Even his final demise is generally perceived more as a triumph over death rather than as a due punishment for his mysterious crime.

Cain insists on his love for Adah, Enoch and Abel, although it is greatly compromised by his melancholia, or, so to speak, his ego loss. Manfred, on the other hand, loses his final link to humanity after the death of Astarte. His opening

soliloquy illustrates how destitute the world has become after that “all-nameless hour:”

—Good, or evil, life,
 Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
 Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
 Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
 And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
 Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
 Or lurking love of something on the earth.— (1.1.21-27)

In addition to his haughty command of supernatural beings and rejection of human tenderness, Manfred exhibits megalomania both in his declaration that “my embrace was fatal” and in his comparison of himself to “the most lone Simoom,” which “seeketh not, so that it is not sought, / But being met is deadly” (2.1.88, 3.1.132-33). Contrary to what happens to Cain, Manfred’s self-regard is gradually strengthened in his various encounters. His potent defiance against the spirits that come to snatch him away is in sharp contrast with Cain’s recalcitrant but ineffective rebellion; he successfully spurns the evil demons by contending that “I stand / Upon my strength” (3.4.119-20).

The other difference between Manfred and Cain, an even more crucial one than their different degrees and tendencies of self-regarding feelings, is the mental mechanism behind their self-reproaches. In melancholia, according to Freud, “the self-reproaches are reproaches against a loved object which have been shifted away from it on to the patient’s own ego.” The libido previously cathected towards a love-object is withdrawn into the ego after the loss of the love-object and “serve[s] to establish an identification of the ego with the abandoned object.” As the ego incorporates this lost love-object into itself, part of the ego is altered and criticised by the remaining part of the ego (11: 257-58). This significant

mechanism behind the self-reproaches of a melancholic is one of the most remarkable features of Cain, but it is lacking in Manfred.

There is ample textual justification for Cain's identification with Abel, Adam, Eve, and God; he continually lapses into the same faults that he finds in these people. Such narcissistic identification is absent in Manfred; his portrayal of Astarte, in which he idealizes her and attributes all virtues to her, does not correspond at all to his self-reproaches. His self-reproach lies solely in his taking full responsibility for Astarte's death, a reproach not applicable to Astarte; although she may have been responsible for her own death, Manfred does not blame her for that. He laments,

I loved her, and destroy'd her!

[. . .]

Not with my hand, but heart—which broke her heart—

It gazed on mine, and withered. (2.2.117-19)

Marchand's and McVeigh's speculation on the Incantation would have been an intriguing support for the argument that Byron's narcissistic identification was revealed in the publication history of the Incantation. If its original target was actually Lady Byron, then its re-application to the autobiographical hero Manfred resembles Cain's identification with his lost love-objects; Byron was reproaching himself for what he previously accused his lost love-object of. There is, of course, an immediate objection to the high importance attached to Lady Byron, which this interpretation requires. But what is even more vital is that the dramatic text of Manfred itself does not suggest any narcissistic identification behind Manfred's self-reproaches at all.

Concerning "the riddle of the tendency to suicide which makes melancholia so interesting—and so dangerous," Freud suggests a regression to the stage of sadism as the only solution. He writes,

The melancholic's erotic cathexis in regard to his object has thus undergone a double vicissitude: part of it has regressed to identification, but the other part, under the influence of the conflict due to ambivalence, has been carried back to the stage of sadism which is nearer to that conflict. (11: 261)

A melancholic patient's thoughts of suicide are, therefore, expressive of his murderous impulses against the lost love-object. In the opening scene of Cain the melancholy hero feels ashamed that he has been dragging out his hateful existence because his death instinct has failed to overcome his life instinct. After Lucifer successfully intensifies his melancholia by diminishing his self-regard, Cain is on the verge of killing Enoch, which can be interpreted symbolically as a suicidal impulse. The reason he gives to the alarmed Adah for his sudden hostility to the little boy applies not only to himself but also to the long lost love-objects, Adam and Eve, who should be the real target of the hostility. He claims,

'Twere better that he ceased to live, than give

Life to so much of sorrow as he must

Endure, and, harder still, bequeath. (3.1.132-34)

As God's rejection of Cain's offering further increases the melancholic hero's senses of frustration and disappointment in love, his hostility is magnified and displaced onto Abel, who again symbolizes both Cain himself and his lost love-objects, Adam and Eve.

In comparison, Manfred's suicidal attempts bear no connection with any aggressiveness towards Astarte, the lost love-object. Idealization and self-reproaches abound in his depiction of Astarte—"Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—" (2.2.116). The few traces of aggressiveness to be found in Manfred towards the dead heroine refer to the past (2.2.117-20). In his "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego," Freud devotes two chapters to elucidating two expressions of emotional ties, identification and being in love,

which are first formed in one's early childhood in relation to one's father and mother. As Freud writes, "The normal Oedipus complex originates from their confluence" (12: 134). The different emotional ties of Cain and Manfred with their lost love objects are characteristic of these two emotional ties.

Both identification and being in love are ambivalent in nature. "Identification," according to Freud, "can turn into an expression of tenderness as easily as into a wish for someone's removal." As in "the first, oral phase of the organization of the libido," in identification one assimilates one's love-object by eating and annihilates it in that way (12: 134-35). In Cain's narcissistic identification with God, Adam and Eve, he imitates what he criticises in these lost love-objects, which enables him to abandon his libidinal position. While in identification the object is incorporated into the ego, in love it is the object that "consumed the ego." In the state of being in love, we observe "the phenomenon of sexual overvaluation," in which one's love-object "enjoys a certain amount of freedom from criticism." There is a tendency towards idealization of the love-object, which is "treated in the same way as our own ego" and which "serves as a substitute for some unattained ego ideal of our own" (12: 142-43). Manfred's idealization of Astarte is obvious in his portrayal of her as a better version of himself. All her physical attributes are similar to his own, but "soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty." Her intellectual aspiration is also akin to his own, but with "gentler powers." She also possesses virtues that are absent in his personality, such as "pity, and smiles, and tears," tenderness and humility (2.2.105ff.). Manfred's narcissistic choice of Astarte as a love object makes it possible for a narcissist like him to love her in the same way as he treats his own ego; this choice renders it likely that his narcissistic libido overflows on to her. Even though he acknowledges that "it were / The deadliest sin to love as we have loved," he wishes to "bear / This punishment for both" so that Astarte can be "one of the blessed" (2.3.123-27). Even though Astarte may have committed suicide, as K. McCormick Luke speculates from Manfred's remark that Astarte is "without a tomb" (2.4.82, quoted in Luke 23), Manfred takes on the responsibility for her

death and suffers from an overwhelming sense of guilt. His sexual overvaluation and idealization of Astarte are strongly conveyed in his proclamation that “Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—” (2.2.116).

Manfred’s account of his part in causing Astarte’s death is so vague and mysterious that it arouses suspicion over its credibility. The audience is tempted to agree with the Chamois Hunter’s comment, “This cautious feeling for another’s pain, / Canst thou be black with evil?” (2.1.80-81), and lament with the Abbot, “This should have been a noble creature” (3.2.160). The noble and gentle spirit that Manfred exhibits in the play contradicts with his severe self-incriminations, which appear to be megalomania and Byronic histrionics. It is difficult for the audience and critics to accept without question Manfred’s confession that his embrace is fatal and his encounter deadly. But the Witch may know better than the Hunter and the Abbot, who have only short encounters with the hero. She claims,

Son of Earth!

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;

I know thee for a man of many thoughts,

And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,

Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.

I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me? (2.2.32-37)

If we admit that the death of Astarte has an enormous impact on Manfred’s life, so intense that it makes a narcissist like him long for self-oblivion, then it is reasonable to deduce a change in his relation with the external world after that fateful hour. The hero as presented to the audience in the play is the remorseful guilt-ridden gentle and noble Gothic hero, while the hero as presented in the Incantation and Manfred’s self-incriminations is proud and asocial, aggressive and destructive towards his beloved and enemies alike. These two aspects of Manfred

conflict with each other, and it is exactly the coexistence of the potentialities towards both extremes that characterises Manfred's fated nature.

The destructive aspect in Manfred's personality, though rather exaggerated in his self-accusations, is typical of what Freud calls "a sediment of feelings of aversion and hostility, which only escapes perception as a result of repression." These feelings exist in "almost every intimate emotional relation between two people which lasts for some time." Freud chooses a good illustration of this ambivalence of feeling towards the beloved from "Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupines," in which "no one can tolerate a too intimate approach to his neighbour" (12: 130). As for "the undisguised antipathies and aversions" towards strangers, Freud recognizes in them "the expression of self-love—of narcissism." He states,

This self-love works for the preservation of the individual, and behaves as though the occurrence of any divergence from his own particular lines of development involved a criticism of them and a demand for their alteration. (12: 131)

To Manfred, this "narcissism of minor differences" seems to apply to his former relation with Astarte as well. In the play he idealizes and over-values Astarte's minor differences from his own ego; in his reflection, however, Astarte's heart "gazed on mine, and withered" (2.2.119). It is not far-fetched to infer from his self-reproaches that Astarte was far from idealized and over-valued before her death.

Astarte's death, therefore, has triggered a transformation in Manfred's relation with her. As Atara Stein asserts in her "I Loved Her and Destroyed Her?: Love and Narcissism in Byron's Manfred," "the destruction of Astarte arises naturally and inevitably from Manfred's narcissism" (190). And as Alan Richardson claims in his "The Dangers of Sympathy: Sibling Incest in English Romantic Poetry," "Manfred's words suggest that his love was itself fated to destroy its object, as its end was not to cherish Astarte, but to assimilate her"

(751). There is no direct textual evidence to prove that Manfred has caused Astarte's death because of his narcissism, and nor is there any textual hint at the way he has destroyed her by his heart, as he himself claims. But his repressed hostility and aversions, not uncommon in intimate emotional ties, are evinced in his remorseful reflection. Idealization and overvaluation, as Freud argues, "happens especially easily with love that is unhappy and cannot be satisfied;" sexual overvaluation is always reduced by each sexual satisfaction. When Astarte was still alive, Manfred's narcissism kept her at a safe distance to prevent his own ego from being consumed by her, although some of his narcissistic libido was able to overflow on to this love-object, chosen according to the narcissistic type. Astarte, by contrast, gazed on his heart, with her "pity, and smiles, and tears," tenderness, and humility (2.2.113-15). Manfred's idealization and overvaluation of Astarte become intensified only after her death, after directly sexual satisfaction is inhibited. As Freud describes,

The ego becomes more and more unassuming and modest, and the object more and more sublime and precious, until at last it gets possession of the entire self-love of the ego, whose self-sacrifice thus follows as a natural consequence. The object has, so to speak, consumed the ego. Traits of humility, of the limitation of narcissism, and of self-injury occur in every case of being in love. (12: 143)

Hence, what previously would have been deemed a threat to his ego, i.e. Astarte's minor differences from him, is now cherished and overvalued. He is now willing to sacrifice himself by bearing alone the eternal punishment for their immoral love. He is now humble in relation to her, even though he still keeps his pride and his sense of superiority in front of supernatural beings and humans. His narcissism is limited so that self-annihilation becomes possible.

III

Added to the two different features discussed above, i.e. the different degrees of Cain's and Manfred's self-regarding feelings and the different mechanisms behind

their self-reproaches, there are two more discrepancies between Cain's melancholia and Manfred's mourning. One of them lies in the nature of these two heroes' losses, which are at the root of their respective painful mental states, and the other one lies in their choices of love-objects.

According to Freud, mourning and melancholia are both reactions to the loss of a loved object. In melancholia, the object may not have died, but "has been lost as an object of love." The melancholic "cannot consciously perceive what he has lost," i.e. "he knows whom he has lost but not *what* he has lost in him" (11: 253-54). In Cain, the loss of Paradise symbolizes Cain's loss: he realizes that he has been expelled from Paradise, but he can only imagine what is inside Paradise. He desires a glimpse of it, but that desire can never be fulfilled. He vividly describes the sight he sees every day when lingering about Paradise, the angels waving "fiery swords / before the gates" and "the immortal trees which overtop / The cherubim-defended battlements" (1.1.84ff.). This image would have been a most apposite metaphor to portray the unconscious, which is guarded by a censoring agent, and symptoms, which are the repressed breaking through the censorship and coming to life in a distorted form. As the play gradually reveals, Cain suffers from the loss of Adam and Eve as love objects. These previous love-objects still live on, yet Cain's libido-cathexis has been withdrawn into his own ego. His strong desire for the lost Paradise together with his defiance against Jehovah manifest the two sides of one coin; they are symbolic of Cain's ambivalence towards his parents. He bears grudges against them, but his love for them survives in the form of regressive narcissistic identification with them, which is "the preliminary stage of object-choice" (11: 258).

While Cain's loss is not easy to detect and its nature not easy to determine, Manfred's loss of Astarte is relatively overt. His opening soliloquy makes it clear that Astarte's death is the source of his painful dejection and cessation of interest in the outer world (1.1.21-27). Astarte is not lost as a love object, not in the way Adam and Eve are lost to Cain. On the contrary, Manfred's libido-cathexis remains directed towards her; nor is its content changed into its opposite, hatred or

indifference, as it is in Cain. In fact, Manfred's libido-cathexis has become so fixated that it cannot be withdrawn and redirected to other objects. Astarte's death has rendered Manfred inaccessible to any excitations from the outer world; they are as "rain unto the sands" (1.1.23). As Freud argues about mourning, "people never willingly abandon a libidinal position, not even, indeed, when a substitute is already beckoning to them" (11: 253). Manfred clings to his libidinal position after Astarte's death through his remorse and self-reproaches, which help to retain the libido-cathexis and intensify his idealization and overvaluation of her. His encounter with the Phantom of Astarte serves as the reality-testing that is needed to free the fixated libido.

Stein argues that the Phantom is evoked to serve Manfred's own ends, i.e. "to assuage his guilt and assure him that her love for him is everlasting." She asserts, "It is perhaps her refusal to fulfill his wishes that causes Manfred to collapse for it clearly reveals to him the limits of his powers" (204). Stein's overall interpretation of Manfred's narcissism is intriguing and convincing, but there is a discrepancy between her assertion and the original text regarding Manfred's encounter with the Phantom. This encounter is no doubt the climax of the play and it brings a distinct change in Manfred, who up to then has been inaccessible to any outward influences. It is true that one of the spirits in the Hall of Arimanes describes Manfred as "convulsed" after the Phantom has disappeared (2.3.158). Yet in comparison with his falling senseless in act 1 scene 1 upon seeing the seventh spirit appearing in the form of a beautiful female figure, which is presumably Astarte, Manfred is surprisingly much more composed in this encounter with the Phantom of the actual Astarte.

According to the play, instead of "collapsing" as Stein claims and "falling senseless" as he has been in the previous encounter, Manfred ponders over Astarte's prophecy and his composure is praised by one of the spirits. For the first time in his encounters with spirits, he thanks Nemesis "for the grace accorded" and "depart[s] a debtor" (2.4.167-68). Immediately after this, Manfred reappears on the stage in act 3 scene 1, calm and ready to face death. He exclaims,

There is a calm upon me—

Inexplicable stillness! which till now

Did not belong to what I knew of life. (3.1.6-8)

He is even tempted to call this calmness “the sought ‘Kalon’, found,” though he distrusts the efficacy of philosophy (3.1.13). With regard to the effect of this encounter, Luke’s observation is more faithful to the play than Stein’s. He claims that after seeing the Phantom, “the omnipresent curse of act one has been abated or stilled for a moment at least, which suggests that Manfred is not entirely outside the realm of grace” (24). Luke does not attempt to explain the significant change in Manfred brought about by the appearance of the Phantom. A Freudian interpretation, however, suggests the pivotal role of this encounter, through which Manfred’s fixated libido-cathexis towards Astarte is finally given up. As Freud proclaims, “Each sexual satisfaction always involves a reduction in sexual overvaluation” (12: 143). Manfred’s encounter with Astarte does not grant him any direct sexual satisfaction, but it does contribute to a reduction of his overvaluation of her. There is no more mention of her by Manfred after the encounter; his entire energy is thereupon devoted to confronting the fact of his imminent death.

In addition, and even as Stein herself observes, “Manfred finally achieves a genuine connection with another human being” (210). He dies holding the hand of the Abbot. The Phantom, though refusing to forgive Manfred, bestows on him the permission to die, which has been denied him up to then, as he tells the Witch (2.2.135-39). Having been condemned as the Wandering Jew to linger in this world with an unbearable curse—”Nor to slumber, nor to die” (1.1.254)—Manfred has attempted to kill himself but fate seems to have forbidden it. Astarte’s prophecy of his death lifts this curse. Her phantom appearance frees Manfred’s libido-cathexis, so that a portion of it can be redirected to the Abbot. Once free, the libido-instinct can become weaker and thus ebbs away in the face of a much stronger death instinct.

According to Freud, there is “an antithesis between ego-libido and object-libido,” i.e. “The more of the one is employed, the more the other becomes depleted” (11: 68). Manfred may have broken Astarte’s heart, as he accuses himself of doing, because his ego-libido was so strong that his object-libido was not enough to satisfy her. With Astarte dead, the entire force of Manfred’s energy seems to concentrate on his remorse and self-reproaches, which not only retains the object-libido but also strengthens it to the maximum degree. As the object-libido increases, so the ego-libido, i.e. the self-preservative instincts, decreases.^[5] Therefore as long as Manfred’s libido-cathexis is still fixated towards Astarte, the lowering of his ego-libido would inevitably lead him to suicidal attempts. At the same time, however, these attempts can only fail since his ego-libido and object-libido converge and gather force when his libido-cathexis is retained and enforced through remorse and self-reproaches. When Manfred speaks of his failed suicidal attempts as if he is doomed to live eternally, it is his fixated libido-cathexis that is dragging him away from death “by a single hair.” He can only die after the fixated libido-cathexis is withdrawn and given up.

In another connection, Cain’s and Manfred’s choices of love-objects echoes an inference of Otto Rank in an intriguing way, which Freud adopts in his paper on melancholia. Freud states previously in his paper on narcissism that a person may love according either to “the narcissistic type” or “the anaclitic (attachment) type” (11: 84). He implies later in his paper on melancholia that the lost object-cathexis in melancholia must have been “a strong fixation” and yet have had “little power of resistance.” This contradiction implies, he claims adopting Otto Rank’s remark, that “the object-choice has been effected on a narcissistic basis, so that the object-cathexis, when obstacles come in its way, can regress to narcissism” (11: 258).

Manfred’s love for Astarte is obviously “effected on a narcissistic basis.” As Manfred describes to the Witch,

She was like me in lineaments—her eyes,

Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.

Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own— (2.2.105-16)

Luke is right in claiming that incest is not the theme of Manfred (15). While it is difficult to ascertain the blood relation between Manfred and Astarte because of Byron's deliberate ambiguity, there is little need to do so here. The above-quoted portrayal of Astarte itself suggests strongly the narcissistic nature of Manfred's love, whatever their actual blood relation is. Astarte shares Manfred's interests, thoughts, and mind. Besides being a spiritual double of Manfred, she is also his physical double. This is not only a subjective and imaginative view of Manfred's but appears an agreed fact, since he notes that others have commented on their affinity. Whatever might go after the interrupted phrase of Manuel, "The lady Astarte, his—" (3.3.47), it is more relevant and significant that Astarte stands to Manfred for both "what he himself is" and "what he himself was." Furthermore, in Manfred's idealization of Astarte, she is also "what he himself would like to be" (Freud 11: 84), although the idealization is greatly intensified only after her death: she has gentle powers, emotions, tenderness, and humility, virtues that Manfred lacks but admires. This strong narcissistic fixation is capable of causing

melancholia, according to Rank's theory. Manfred's loss of Astarte does not originate melancholia because it is the nature of this loss that determines his mourning instead of the narcissistic nature of his object-choice. His is not a loss from slight or frustration but one from the death of the love-object; his libido-cathexis is not withdrawn upon his own ego but fixated.

Cain's object-choices are much more complex than Manfred's; his is a multiple loss. On the one hand, his relation with Adam and Eve is anaclitic, the former being "the man who protects him" and the latter "the woman who feeds him" (Freud 11: 84). His love for Abel, Adah, and Enoch, on the other hand, is narcissistic. Abel is of the same origin and gender as Cain, whereas Adah is his double, a twin; they are both, like Cain, victims of the same eternal curse elicited by Adam and Eve. In Freud's terms, Abel and Adah are both "what he is." Enoch, by contrast, was "once a part of himself" and reminds Cain of "what he was." In an intriguing way, Byron locates Cain's loss of anaclitic love-objects in the past, foregrounding his loss of narcissistic love-objects in the present and the future. His loss of narcissistic love-objects triggers his melancholia because it reminds him of his primal loss of Adam and Eve as anaclitic love-objects.

In Byron's rendering of the biblical story, his advancing the birth of Enoch before the murder is one of the most significant changes. First of all, Enoch's birth reduces Adah's love for Cain. This reminds Cain of the diminution in the care and attention he suffered with the birth of Abel. The newly generated jealousy revives the childhood jealousy and contributes to a murderous impulse towards Abel; in this connection, Cain's sudden impulse to kill Enoch likewise arises in one sense from jealousy. It is remarkable that Cain reclaims the larger portion of Adah's love after his crime. While Adah previously indicates the possibility of protecting Enoch from Cain's murdering hands by all means, she chooses to side with Cain in the future if Enoch ever bears any murderous impulse towards his father. Secondly, Enoch himself is a narcissistic love-object to Cain. The hereditary curse is the most agonizing when he knows that he will one day lose his little son. Cain is no doubt mourning for himself when he laments over the unjust eternal curse on

the innocent Enoch, but at the same time he is also advancing Enoch's death and suffering from that imaginary loss in advance.

Abel's coming of age is another invention of Byron's besides the birth of Enoch. His maturation signifies consummation with his twin-sister and taking over the duty of presiding over offerings. Cain's relation with Adam and Eve within the play seems indifferent if covertly hostile; his ambivalence (love and hate) towards them has long been transferred respectively onto Paradise and Jehovah. In comparison, Cain's relation with Abel remains dangerously ambivalent. Abel not only shares Adam and Eve's parental love with Cain, but as a latecomer he snatches away a much larger portion of that love. Cain is without doubt jealous of Abel, but he is also drawn to his younger brother on a narcissistic basis. Abel's maturation leads to a diminution in his love for Cain, in response to which Cain identifies himself with Abel. His murder of Abel signifies two aspects of his identification with his victim. Towards the end of the play, Cain exclaims,

Oh, earth! Oh, earth!

For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I

Give thee back this. (3.1.542-44)

Cain sacrifices Abel to Mother Earth just as Abel sacrifices first born lambs to Father Jehovah. On the one hand, Cain identifies himself with Abel's role as a sacred executioner. On the other hand, Cain sacrifices Abel just as Abraham would sacrifice Isaac, or as later Jehovah does Jesus. Cain's sacrifice of Abel actualizes the tension between father and son under the tradition of son sacrifice. While he identifies himself with Adam by so doing, Abel is identified with Cain himself. Killing Abel is for Cain in one sense parallel to killing himself.

Endnotes

^[1] McGann's complete edition of Byron's poetical works is used throughout this essay, with act, scene, and line numbers cited parenthetically.

^[2] See Boker, 8-9.

^[3] The Penguin edition of Freud's works in fifteen volumes is used throughout this essay, with volume and page numbers cited parenthetically.

^[4] Compare and contrast with the cosmic voyage in Goethe's *Faust*.

^[5] Freud claims in his "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" that "a portion of the ego-instincts was seen to be libidinal" and he suggests that the narcissistic libido (ego-libido) be identified with the "self-preservative instincts" (11: 325).

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First Response

This essay represents a thoughtful comparison of the psychology of the protagonists in Byron's dramas, *Manfred* and *Cain*. The similarities and differences in their attitudes to themselves, their loved ones, and their loss of these loved ones, are traced by reference to Freudian psychology – a framework which leads to interesting and original insights into both works.