



FATE AND FREEDOM IN THE WORKS OF BYRON AND LERMONTOV

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada George Gordon Byron va Mikhail Lermontov ijodida “taqdir va erkinlik” tushunchalarining badiiy va falsafiy talqini qiyosiy jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Maqolada romantizm davri adabiyotining asosiy g‘oyalaridan biri bo‘lgan inson erkinligi va uning chegaralari, shuningdek, inson taqdirining muqarrarligi masalalari yoritiladi. Ayniqsa, Bayronning “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage” va “Manfred” asarlari hamda Lermontovning “A Hero of Our Time” asari misolida qahramonlarning ichki ziddiyatlari, individualizm, fatalizm va ijtimoiy munosabatlar chuqur tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda har ikki adib ijodidagi o‘xshash va farqli jihatlar ochib berilib, ularning jahon adabiyotidagi o‘rni va ahamiyati asoslab beriladi.

Аннотация. В данной статье представлен сравнительный анализ художественно-философской интерпретации понятий «судьба и свобода» в произведениях Джорджа Гордона Байрона и Михаила Лермонтова. Рассматриваются вопросы человеческой свободы и её пределов, являющиеся одной из главных идей литературы романтического периода, а также неизбежность человеческой судьбы. В частности, глубоко анализируются внутренние конфликты героев, индивидуализм, фатализм и социальные отношения в произведениях Байрона «Паломничество Чайльд Гарольда» и «Манфред» и Лермонтова «Герой нашего времени». Исследование выявляет сходства и различия в творчестве обоих писателей и обосновывает их место и значение в мировой литературе.

Ключевые слова: судьба, свобода, романтизм, Байрон, Лермонтов, фатализм, индивидуализм, трагедия.



Annotation. This article provides a comparative analysis of the artistic and philosophical interpretation of the concepts of “fate and freedom” in the works of George Gordon Byron and Mikhail Lermontov. The article discusses the issues of human freedom and its limits, which are one of the main ideas of the literature of the Romantic period, as well as the inevitability of human fate. In particular, the internal conflicts of the heroes, individualism, fatalism, and social relations are deeply analyzed in the works of Byron “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage” and “Manfred” and Lermontov’s “A Hero of Our Time”. The study reveals similarities and differences in the works of both writers, and justifies their place and significance in world literature.

Keywords: fate, freedom, Romanticism, Byron, Lermontov, fatalism, individualism, tragedy.

Introduction.

George Gordon Byron and Mikhail Lermontov represent two of the most influential voices of Romantic literature, and their works offer a profound exploration of the enduring philosophical tension between fate and freedom. This tension lies at the very heart of Romantic thought, where the individual is simultaneously perceived as a free, self-determining agent and as a being constrained by forces beyond personal control. In the poetic and narrative worlds created by Byron and Lermontov, fate and freedom are not mutually exclusive concepts but deeply intertwined dimensions of human existence, shaping the characters’ actions, emotions, and ultimate destinies. Their treatment of this duality reflects both shared Romantic ideals and distinct cultural, historical, and philosophical perspectives rooted in English and Russian traditions.

In the works of Byron, the concept of freedom is often presented as an essential and defining characteristic of the human spirit. His characters, especially those embodying the Byronic hero archetype, assert their independence through rebellion against social norms, moral constraints, and even divine authority. This assertion of freedom, however, is rarely absolute or unproblematic. In works such as Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and Manfred, the protagonists pursue personal autonomy



with great intensity, yet their freedom often leads to isolation, suffering, and a confrontation with inevitable fate. Byron's vision of freedom is thus paradoxical: it is both empowering and destructive, offering liberation while simultaneously exposing the individual to the consequences of their choices.

Fate in Byron's poetry is often portrayed as an ambiguous and sometimes oppressive force. It may be understood as a combination of external circumstances, historical conditions, and internal psychological drives that limit the individual's capacity to act freely. In *Manfred*, for example, the protagonist struggles against an undefined but powerful force that seems to govern his destiny. Despite his intellectual and spiritual strength, Manfred is unable to escape the consequences of his past actions, suggesting that fate operates as an inescapable dimension of existence. This tension between the desire for freedom and the inevitability of fate creates a tragic dynamic that is central to Byron's poetic vision. His characters are often aware of their fate, yet they continue to resist it, embodying the Romantic ideal of defiance even in the face of inevitable defeat.

The interplay between fate and freedom in Byron's works is also closely linked to the concept of individualism. The Byronic hero is a figure who embodies the highest expression of individual will, yet this individuality is often achieved at the cost of social connection and emotional fulfillment. The hero's rebellion against fate is, in many ways, an assertion of personal identity, but it also leads to a sense of alienation and existential loneliness. This duality reflects Byron's own life experiences, including his exile from England and his participation in the Greek War of Independence, where he actively sought to assert his freedom while also confronting the limits imposed by historical and political realities.

Lermontov's treatment of fate and freedom, while influenced by Byron, develops these themes in a distinctly Russian context, characterized by a deeper sense of introspection, fatalism, and philosophical reflection. In *A Hero of Our Time*, the protagonist Pechorin serves as a powerful example of the tension between fate and freedom. Like Byron's heroes, Pechorin is highly self-aware and deeply conscious of his actions, yet he is also acutely aware of the limitations imposed upon him by



his own character and by the society in which he lives. His sense of freedom is therefore complicated by an underlying belief that his life is, to some extent, predetermined or shaped by forces beyond his control.

Pechorin's reflections on his own behavior reveal a profound engagement with the concept of determinism. He often questions whether his actions are truly the result of free will or whether they are the inevitable outcome of his personality and circumstances. This philosophical ambiguity places him in a state of constant internal conflict, as he attempts to reconcile his desire for autonomy with his awareness of the constraints that define his existence. Unlike Byron's heroes, who often embrace rebellion as a form of self-expression, Pechorin's rebellion is tinged with irony and skepticism. He recognizes the futility of his actions, yet he continues to act, driven by a combination of curiosity, boredom, and existential dissatisfaction.

Lermontov's poetry further explores the theme of fate through its emphasis on existential isolation and emotional depth. In many of his lyrical works, the speaker expresses a sense of being trapped by circumstances beyond his control, whether these are social, emotional, or metaphysical in nature. At the same time, there is often a strong desire for freedom, particularly in the form of spiritual or emotional liberation. This tension between constraint and aspiration creates a powerful emotional dynamic that is characteristic of Lermontov's poetic style. His use of imagery, particularly in relation to nature, reinforces this theme by depicting landscapes that are both beautiful and indifferent, reflecting the dual nature of freedom as both a source of inspiration and a reminder of human limitation.

Nature plays a significant role in both Byron's and Lermontov's exploration of fate and freedom. For Byron, nature often symbolizes the vastness and power of the external world, against which the individual asserts their freedom. In works like *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, the natural landscape serves as a backdrop for the hero's journey, highlighting both the grandeur of creation and the insignificance of human existence. This relationship between the individual and nature reflects the Romantic belief in the sublime, where the overwhelming beauty and power of the natural world evoke both awe and a sense of human limitation.



In Lermontov's works, nature similarly functions as a symbolic space in which the themes of fate and freedom are explored. However, his depiction of nature is often more melancholic and introspective, emphasizing themes of isolation and existential reflection. In poems such as "The Sail," the image of a solitary vessel navigating a vast and unpredictable sea serves as a metaphor for the human condition, illustrating the tension between the desire for freedom and the inevitability of fate. The sail is both free and constrained, driven by the wind yet subject to forces beyond its control, mirroring the human experience of navigating between autonomy and determinism.

The philosophical underpinnings of fate and freedom in Byron and Lermontov's works are deeply rooted in Romanticism's emphasis on subjectivity and individual experience. Both poets challenge the Enlightenment notion of a rational, predictable universe governed solely by logic and reason. Instead, they present a vision of reality that is complex, uncertain, and often contradictory, where human beings must navigate a world that is both meaningful and indifferent. This philosophical perspective is particularly evident in their treatment of moral responsibility, where characters are held accountable for their actions while also being influenced by factors beyond their control.

The legacy of Byron and Lermontov's exploration of fate and freedom extends far beyond their own time, influencing later literary movements and philosophical thought. Their works anticipate elements of existentialism, particularly in their emphasis on individual responsibility, freedom, and the inherent absurdity of existence. Writers such as Fyodor Dostoevsky were deeply influenced by Lermontov's psychological depth and philosophical concerns, while Byron's influence can be seen in the continued popularity of the Byronic hero in literature and popular culture.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, the themes of fate and freedom in the works of Byron and Lermontov represent a central concern of Romantic literature, reflecting the complex interplay between individual agency and external constraints. While Byron



emphasizes the dramatic assertion of individual freedom in the face of fate, Lermontov offers a more introspective and psychologically nuanced exploration of the same themes. Together, their works provide a rich and multifaceted understanding of the human condition, highlighting both the possibilities and limitations of freedom within the context of an unpredictable and often indifferent universe.

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