

THE BYRONIC HERO IN THE WORKS OF LERMONTOV

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Annotation. This article analyzes the reflection of the archetype of the Byron hero created by Lord Byron in the work of M.Yu. Lermontov and his unique interpretation. The psychological depth of the image of the Byron hero in Lermontov's works, his internal conflicts, his separation from society and his connection with the concept of “surplus man” are examined. In particular, the image of Pechorin in the work “A Hero of Our Time” sheds light on how this archetype has undergone changes in Russian literature. The article also analyzes the similarities and differences between the heroes of Byron and Lermontov, as well as their philosophical and social significance.

Keywords: Byronic hero, Lermontov, Pechorin, Romanticism, superfluous man, psychology, alienation, individualism.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada Lord Bayron tomonidan yaratilgan bayroniy qahramon arxetipining M.Yu. Lermontov ijodida aks etishi va uning o'ziga xos talqini tahlil qilinadi. Lermontov asarlarida bayroniy qahramon obrazining psixologik chuqurligi, ichki ziddiyatlari, jamiyatdan ajralganligi va “ortiqcha inson” konsepsiyasi bilan bog'liqligi ko'rib chiqiladi. Ayniqsa, “Zamonamiz qahramoni” asaridagi Pechorin obrazi orqali bu arxetipning rus adabiyotida qanday o'zgarishlarga uchragani yoritiladi. Maqolada Bayron va Lermontov qahramonlari o'rtasidagi o'xshashlik va farqlar, ularning falsafiy va ijtimoiy ahamiyati ham tahlil etiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: Bayron qahramoni, Lermontov, Pechorin, Romantizm, ortiqcha odam, psixologiya, begonalashuv, individualizm.

Аннотация. В данной статье анализируется отражение архетипа байроновского героя, созданного лордом Байроном, в творчестве М. Ю. Лермонтова и его уникальная интерпретация. Рассматривается психологическая глубина образа байроновского героя в произведениях Лермонтова, его внутренние конфликты, отчуждение от общества и связь с понятием “избыточного человека”. В частности, образ Печорина в произведении “Герой нашего времени” проливает свет на то, как этот архетип претерпел изменения в русской литературе. В статье также анализируются сходства и различия между героями Байрона и Лермонтова, а также их философское и социальное значение.

Ключевые слова: байронический герой, Лермонтов, Печорин, романтизм, суперфлюозный человек, психологизм, отчуждение, индивидуализм.

Introduction.

The Byronic Hero stands as one of the most compelling and enduring archetypes in world literature, embodying rebellion, introspection, emotional intensity, and moral ambiguity. Originating in the works of Lord Byron, this figure became a defining symbol of Romanticism and deeply influenced many writers across Europe, including the Russian poet and novelist Mikhail Lermontov. In Lermontov's творчество, the Byronic Hero is not merely imitated but reinterpreted and transformed within the cultural, philosophical, and social context of 19th-century Russia. Through characters such as Pechorin in *A Hero of Our Time*, Lermontov explores the psychological depth, existential despair, and inner contradictions that define the Byronic Hero, giving the archetype a uniquely Russian dimension.

The Byronic Hero is typically characterized by a strong sense of individualism, defiance against societal norms, emotional turmoil, and a troubled past. Unlike traditional heroes, who are often morally upright and socially admired, the Byronic Hero is flawed, isolated, and frequently alienated from society. He possesses a sharp intellect, deep sensitivity, and a tendency toward introspection, yet he is often cynical, self-destructive, and incapable of forming lasting emotional connections. This complexity makes the Byronic Hero both fascinating and tragic, as he struggles to reconcile his inner desires with the external world.

Lermontov's engagement with the Byronic Hero reflects both admiration and critique. While he was undoubtedly influenced by Byron's works, he did not simply replicate the archetype; instead, he adapted it to reflect the realities of Russian society and his own philosophical concerns. In Lermontov's interpretation, the Byronic Hero becomes a symbol of the "superfluous man," a concept that emerged in Russian literature to describe individuals who are intelligent and capable but unable to find a meaningful role in society. This transformation adds a new layer of social and psychological depth to the archetype.

One of the most significant representations of the Byronic Hero in Lermontov's work is Pechorin, the protagonist of *A Hero of Our Time*. Pechorin embodies many of the classic traits of the Byronic Hero: he is intelligent, charismatic, and self-aware, yet deeply disillusioned and emotionally detached. He engages in relationships and adventures not out of genuine passion but as a means of alleviating his boredom and existential emptiness. His actions often lead to the suffering of others, yet he remains indifferent, reflecting a profound moral ambiguity.

Pechorin's introspection is a key element of his character. Through his diary entries, readers gain insight into his inner world, revealing a man who is acutely aware of his own flaws and contradictions. He recognizes his inability to love sincerely and his tendency to manipulate others, yet he feels powerless to change. This self-awareness distinguishes him from many other literary characters and aligns him closely

with the Byronic tradition, where the hero is both the subject and the critic of his own existence.

However, Lermontov's portrayal of the Byronic Hero also introduces a critical perspective. Unlike Byron's heroes, who often possess a certain grandeur and romantic appeal, Pechorin is presented in a more realistic and sometimes unflattering light. His actions are not glorified but examined with a sense of irony and moral questioning. This approach reflects Lermontov's broader critique of the Byronic ideal, suggesting that such a character, when placed in a real social context, may be more destructive than admirable.

The theme of alienation is central to both Byron's and Lermontov's heroes, but in Lermontov's work, it takes on a distinctly Russian character. Pechorin's alienation is not only personal but also social and cultural. He exists in a society that lacks opportunities for meaningful engagement, leading to a sense of stagnation and purposelessness. This context amplifies his *внутренний конфликт* and reinforces the idea that his behavior is, at least in part, a product of his environment.

Another important aspect of the Byronic Hero in Lermontov's works is the exploration of freedom and fate. Pechorin often acts as though he is *свободен*, making choices based on his own desires and impulses. However, there is also a sense that he is trapped by his own nature and *обстоятельства*. This tension between freedom and determinism adds a *философская глубина* to his character, raising questions about the extent to which individuals can shape their own destinies.

Lermontov also expands the emotional and psychological dimensions of the Byronic Hero. While Byron's characters are often driven by passion and rebellion, Lermontov's hero is marked by a profound sense of *скука* and existential emptiness. This shift reflects a broader transition in Romantic literature, from the celebration of intense emotion to a more introspective and sometimes pessimistic exploration of the human condition.

The influence of the Byronic Hero can also be seen in Lermontov's poetic works, where themes of loneliness, rebellion, and inner conflict are recurrent. His lyrical *героя* often express a longing for freedom and a *глубокое недовольство* with the world around them, echoing the sentiments of Byron's poetry while also incorporating elements of Russian *философская традиция*.

In examining the Byronic Hero in Lermontov's works, it is important to consider the historical and cultural context in which he was writing. The early 19th century in Russia was a period of significant social and political tension, with increasing awareness of the limitations imposed by autocratic rule and rigid social structures. This environment contributed to the emergence of the "superfluous man" and shaped Lermontov's interpretation of the Byronic Hero as a figure who is both a product of his time and a critique of it.

Furthermore, Lermontov's own life and personality may have influenced his portrayal of such characters. Like his героя, he was known for his rebellious nature, introspective tendencies, and чувство отчуждения. This personal connection adds an additional layer of authenticity and emotional intensity to his works, making his exploration of the Byronic Hero particularly compelling.

The legacy of the Byronic Hero in Lermontov's works extends beyond his own time, influencing subsequent generations of Russian writers, including Dostoevsky and Turgenev. The themes of alienation, moral ambiguity, and psychological depth that characterize Lermontov's герои became central to Russian literature, shaping its development and contributing to its global significance.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, the Byronic Hero in the works of Lermontov represents both a continuation and a transformation of the Romantic archetype. While drawing on the characteristics established by Byron, Lermontov reinterprets the figure within a Russian context, emphasizing psychological complexity, social alienation, and existential questioning. Through characters like Pechorin, he offers a nuanced and critical exploration of the Byronic ideal, revealing its limitations and последствия. This synthesis of influence and innovation not only enriches our understanding of Lermontov's творчество but also highlights the enduring relevance of the Byronic Hero as a symbol of the human struggle for identity, meaning, and freedom.

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