Coleridge's Revisionary Practice from 1814 to 1818

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THESIS ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818, considering the integral role of William Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, published as part of *The Recluse* in 1814, on Coleridge's conception of his discrete *oeuvre*. It is via a detailed analysis of the way Coleridge ceased to speak "through" Wordsworth that this thesis unfolds its principal argument on Coleridge's revisionary activity. I principally consider the revisions at work in the *Biographia Literaria* (1817), *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) and the 1818 *rifacciamento* to *The Friend* (the periodical originally issued in 1809-1810).

Taking into account Coleridge's newly-emerging and subsequently evolving responses to Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy in the 1790s and 1800s, I will argue that the already-existing "radical Difference" between Coleridge and Wordsworth ever since the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) and the "Preface" (1800) further intensified following Wordsworth's failure to bring their grand scheme for a "first genuine philosophical poem", *The Recluse*, into completion. Especially after *The Prelude* Coleridge heard in 1807, *The Excursion* by means of his "comparative censure" fell short of meeting the long-cherished expectations. Whereas Coleridge's organic view of the world involved the recognition of an active mind seeking universal "Truth" through the inner synthetic faculties as well as the empirical laws in nature, Wordsworth's poem was founded upon an obscurely precarious ground between the phenomenal world and the inner self. Ultimately, Coleridge's disappointment with *The Excursion* on the basis of his theories on language and imagination, and the ensuing detachment from Wordsworth and their joint *oeuvre* gave him the autonomy to revise his past works in a way that ensured formation of a more sober relationship with his own past and a dialogic friendship with Wordsworth in which Coleridge came to realise the importance of speaking *to* a friend.

Affectionately dedicated to the joy of my life,

Likya Emek

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BL — *Biographia Literaria; or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, ed. by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, 2 vols (London and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983)

CL — *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by Earl Leslie Griggs, 6 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956-71)

CN — *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by Kathleen Coburn and others, 5 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957-2002)

CPR — Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. (original publication 1781/1787) trans. & eds. Paul Guyer; Allen W. Wood. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

CPrR — Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*. (original publication 1788) trans. & ed. Mary J. Gregor. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)

CpJ   Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment.* (original publication 1790) trans. Paul Guyer & eds. Paul Guyer; Eric Matthews. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)

PW   *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Poetical Works*, ed. by J.C.C. Mays, 3 vols. (Princeton University Press, 2001)

TF   *The Friend*, ed. by Barbara Rooke, 2 vols (London and Princeton: Routledge and Kegan Paul and Princeton University Press, 1969)

TT   *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Table Talk - Recorded by Henry Nelson Coleridge (and John Taylor Coleridge),* ed. by Carl Woodring, 2 vols (London and Princeton: Routledge and Kegan Paul and Princeton University Press, 1990)

WL   *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, ed. by Ernest de Selincourt, 8 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967-88)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to trace the integral role William Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814) played in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818, during which the latter carried out significant, though unsystematic, alterations on not only his early works but also his life and opinions. At the initial stages of this study I aimed, in broad strokes, to explore Coleridge's religious and spiritual commitments vis-à-vis his poetic self by especially taking his early poetry as a reference. However, as the work progressed, I found my research came up against a previously-unforeseen predicament that Coleridge was consistently and notoriously a "myriad-minded" man in the sense that he always engaged with incongruous points of view, and not usually in plain sight. From this followed the recognition, for example, that "Coleridge's early poetry" is actually and largely constituted by what Leader calls "secondary thoughts", subsequent insertions and immense revisions rather than being the once-and-for-all product of an original moment of composition. I hence came to the realisation that what he originally wrote is only one aspect of Coleridgean *oeuvre*, the rest is largely contingent upon his deep-seated revisionary activity and volatile self-interpretation that almost always afflicted Coleridge throughout his career. Considering, in addition, Coleridge's symbiotic partnership with Wordsworth,[1] his non-dualistic and primordial conception of language, his unsystematic and "muddled"[2] philosophical engagements, his slow and reluctant embrace of Multeity in

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[1] I take the term *symbiotic* (or *symbiosis*) as used by Thomas McFarland in *Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin* (1981), which will be elaborated further throughout this study.

[2] Seamus Perry in *Coleridge and the Uses of Division* (1999) maintains that in order to understand Coleridge's thought, one must first of all view it as "the experience and exploration of a *muddle*" rather than as "the solution to a problem" (p. 7). By digging out the "laudatory" implication of the word, Perry notes that the muddle "has an informal but determining structure, an internal arrangement of conflicting callings or visions of reality, and rises above the indignity of a sheerly incoherent conceptual mess: it comes from entertaining incompatible ideas about the one subject" which, Perry asserts, "Coleridge was made for." (p. 11)

Unity,[3] and his legacy that still overwhelms scholars and students alike, I came to

formulate my current research question: What impact did Coleridge and Wordsworth's

joint project, *The Recluse*, have on Coleridge's retrospective constitution of a discrete

oeuvre through his revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818?

To address this question, the investigation in this work will take into account

Coleridge's idiosyncratic responses to Kantian transcendental philosophy (beginning in the

1790s), the already-existing "*radical* Difference"[4] concerning the linguistic approach

between Coleridge and Wordsworth in the aftermath of the second edition of *Lyrical*

Ballads (1800), Coleridge's conception of imagination in relation to Kant and

Wordsworth, the effects of Wordsworth's failure to bring their grand scheme for a first

"genuine" philosophical poem, *The Recluse*, into completion on Coleridge, and the role

The Excursion (1814) played in Coleridge's plan for refashioning himself. Whereas

Coleridge's organic view of the world involved solid recognition of an active mind seeking

the universal "Truth" through inner synthetic faculties as well as empirical laws in nature,

Wordsworth's poem placed language on an obscurely precarious ground between the

outside world and the inner self, thereby eventually for Coleridge according with the

dualistic Kantian approach to language (as seen in his three *Critiques*) rather than

Coleridge's organic and non-dualistic approach.[5] In addition, after bringing "that prophetic

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[3] The term was first presented in the Malta notebooks on 17 December 1804 (*CN* II, §2344) and obviously signalled the critical changes Coleridge had undergone during the two years he spent in the Mediterranean. "Multeity" is Coleridge's preferred word for the diversity or plurality ever-present in the unified whole : "the Revelation of the Finite, of the *Multeity* in the Unity" (*Fragments*, II: 1320).

[4] In a letter to William Sotheby on 13 July 1802, Coleridge makes an affirmative statement concerning a fundamental divergence in their opinions, which they discovered "lately": "…we begin to suspect, that there is, somewhere or other, a *radical* Difference [in our] opinions" (*CL* V.II, p. 812). Two weeks later, he wrote another letter to Southey, talking about the "*radical* Difference in our theoretical opinions respecting Poetry" (*CL* V.II, p. 830.)

[5] Very broadly, Coleridge's organic theory relied on the fundamental idea that "the living whole is prior to the parts" (Lectures I, p. 196), hence each part is intrinsically bound up with one another. The organicism of Coleridge originated, as Perry states, from the "One Life vision" of Coleridge (1999, pp. 78-80).

Lay" (*PW* I.II, p. 816) into the open in *The Prelude* of 1807, Wordsworth's conception of imagination and fancy, terms of vital importance to his former symbiotic partner's poetics as well as his philosophical and theological views, gradually differed from that of Coleridge's. *The Excursion* is a distinctive case in terms of being yet another part of *The Recluse* project, but almost levelling imagination with its associative counterpart, fancy - a case which was fairly resolved through Coleridge's desynonymization of the word "imagination" in the *Biographia Literaria* (1817). This contributed to Coleridge's estrangement from *The Excursion*, hence *The Recluse* project, and his proper detachment from Wordsworth which, I maintain, eventually gave him a reactionary impulse and autonomy to revise himself to a distinguished effect from 1814 to 1818.

The connection between Coleridge's idiosyncratic and uniquely "expedient"[6] engagement with Kant's critical philosophy from the early years of his career, the grounds of his frustration with Wordsworth's *The Excursion* of 1814 (as part of *The Recluse*), and subsequent self-revisions in the following years (especially in the *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves* of 1817, and in the revised version of *The Friend* in 1818) has so far been a comparatively neglected venue in Coleridge studies. This unexplored aspect in the scholarship invites further investigation; therefore, my study attempts to address this gap in general. Drawing on a massive body of literature about Coleridge, my aim is to describe how Coleridge resolved to separate the body of his works from those of Wordsworth as a result of his realisation (especially in the mid-1810s) that to secure a proper "dialogue" and "friendship" with Wordsworth, it was time to speak *to* his once-symbiotic partner rather than speak *through* him. Indeed, it was high time he gave up the almost paternal investment in the making of Wordsworth's poetic genius because his own self as a writer

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[6] See: Class, 2012, pp. 13, 118.

was at stake more than ever after the realisation that Wordsworth's employment of language and imagination in *The Excursion*, which was meant to be a portion of the first great philosophical poem Coleridge designed with Wordsworth, turned out to be distinctively Wordsworthian and Kantian, but only remotely Coleridgean.

Coleridge developed a joint *oeuvre* conception with Wordsworth during their symbiosis which, as I will maintain throughout this study, intermittently continued until the mid-1810s. A significant product of this joint *oeuvre* image in later stage of their symbiosis was his poem of 1807, "To William Wordsworth", which I take to be a "symbiotic reaction" (as opposed to what I will call "revisionary" or "dialogic reaction" in the following chapters). Along this line, my argument about the joint *oeuvre* image will suggest that Coleridge's perception of his *oeuvre* in this process often depended on an unconscious perception of his relationship with another, preferably superior, figure in his life. Once Coleridge discovered the spark of genius in Wordsworth, he was instantly compelled to register the discovery on his own body of works as well. In the context of this study, Coleridge's perception of his *oeuvre* as inextricably connected with the other, Wordsworth, is crucial to my consideration of the symbiotic relationship between them and its dissolution after *The Excursion* (1814). I therefore aim to investigate how Coleridge's attitude towards the function of a "friend" underwent a substantial and long-sought change in the aftermath of his disappointment with *The Recluse* project in 1814.

After *The Excursion*, Coleridge felt compelled to give up the habit of speaking through Wordsworth, and as a consequence he had to realise his independence from Wordsworth through elimination of this conception. I argue that Coleridge ultimately found himself trapped in loops of revisionary production and, in a way, compensation, especially from 1814 to 1818. During this revisionary process, I hold, he prominently

transitioned from a joint *oeuvre* image into discrete author image with separate name and body of works in the absence of both Wordsworth and the expectations Coleridge had projected on him for almost as long as they collaborated. These terms will largely constitute the typology I will keep referring to as part of my "authorship model" vis-à-vis Coleridge and Wordsworth throughout this work. In the centre of my investigation lie Coleridge and his revisions from 1814 to 1818; notwithstanding this, his personal and professional exchanges with Wordsworth and his interpretation of Kant also lie at the heart of my argument. Therefore, the switch between central figures and perspectives in the following chapters is systematic and intentional.

CHAPTER ONE – KANT, COLERIDGE AND WORDSWORTH ON LINGUISTIC DUALISM AND IMAGINATION

> From my early reading of Fairy Tales, & Genii &c &c — my mind had been habituated to the Vast — & I never regarded my senses in any way as the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions not by my sight – even at that age. Should children be permitted to read Romances, & Relations of Giants & Magicians and Genii? – I know all that has been said against it; but I have formed my faith in the affirmative. – I know no other way of giving the mind a love of "the Great," and "the Whole." – Those who have been led to the same truths step by step thro' the constant testimony of their senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess – They contemplate nothing but parts – and all parts are necessarily little – and the Universe to them is but a mass of little things. Letter to Thomas Poole, 16 October 1797. (Coleridge, *CL* I, p. 354)

Kant's Copernican Revolution and "Transcendental Turn" in the Three *Critiques*

Kant's "Copernican Revolution" came as a milestone in philosophy as it paved the way for reconfiguration of the established parameters of philosophical inquiry. With his approach Kant revolutionised the content and grounds of knowledge, radically severing its ties with pre-ordained transcendent assumptions. The *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781)[7] clarified his critical venture as follows:

> Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about them *a priori* through concepts that would extend our cognition have, on this presupposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition, which would agree better with the requested possibility of an *a priori* cognition of them, which is to establish something about objects before they are given to us. This would be just like the first thoughts of Copernicus, who, when he did not make good progress in the explanation of the celestial motions if he assumed that the entire celestial host revolves around the observer, tried to see if he might not have greater success if he made the observer revolve and left the stars at rest. (*CPR*, B XVI)

Kant's enthronement of mind by placing it in the centre of his epistemology was a ground-breaking moment in philosophy as well as in metaphysics. John R. Silber also explains that

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[7] First published in 1781, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* was later revised in 1787. There are important differences in several sections of the work, and editors today use the second edition as the base while providing the original version within the text. Therefore, references to the first *Critique* are commonly given in the form A 123 or B 123, referring to the original and the revised editions respectively.

Kant's "Copernican Revolution" consists, "in the recognition of the knower's contribution to the knowledge of objects. Instead of vainly striving to assure the conformity of our ideas to objects, Kant argued that we should rather concern ourselves with the necessary conditions of experience to which objects must conform if they are to be known" (1963, p. 182). Those "necessary conditions of experience" are the *a priori* forms established in our cognition "in advance", prior to sense experience, and all the objects are subject to such *a priori* mediums as temporality, spatiality and causality so that they are experienceable and knowable.[8] This radical leap in philosophy aimed to transform our approach to epistemology and metaphysics. With his move (or the transcendental method, as explained in the first *Critique*, A 1, B 27), Kant aimed to replace the "transcendent metaphysics" with the "transcendental philosophy".

Traditional (i.e. transcendent) metaphysics sought to ontologically ground the existence of the foundation of being - the *principium essendi* – on the self-revelation of that first principle in the phenomenal world - the *principium cognoscendi*. It was this system of "pseudo-science of metaphysics" that Kant renounced in order to ground metaphysics on a more solid ground of philosophy because metaphysics, once "called the queen of all the sciences" was at the time "despised on all sides" (*CPR*, A IX). Kant therefore aimed to acknowledge the shortcomings of *traditional*-dogmatic philosophy and metaphysics. He said in the first *Critique* that it was his utmost duty as the "transcendental critique" to come to the scene and obstinately "appeal to healthy human understanding" with reference to the power of Reason, instead of "attempt[ing] new dogmatic proofs"

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[8] Accordingly, time, space and causal order are concepts *a priori* to human perception, and we make sense of the phenomenal world by means of them. They do not, however, have any *a posteriori* presence beyond human perception.

(*CPR*, A 784 / B 812).[9] This radical turn, Kant argued, could be possible by replacing the concept of "transcendent" with the "transcendental", which acts as necessary condition for the possibility of knowledge of any kind (*CPR*, A 845 / B 873 - A 848 / B 876). In the first *Critique*, Kant himself gives the definition of "transcendental" as follows: "I call all cognition transcendental that is occupied not so much with objects but rather with our *a priori* concepts of objects in general. A system of such concepts would be called transcendental philosophy" (*CPR*, A 12).[10] For Kant, this transcendental approach in fact safeguards metaphysics since it grounds knowledge of the metaphysical realm as *a priori*. Reversely, as Monika Class states, "If we attempt to infer the existence of God by including him within the chain of natural causes, like Hartley or Spinoza, then God too must be conditioned rather than unconditioned, limited rather than unlimited" (2012, p. 21). Metaphysical concepts thus cannot be grasped by looking at the phenomena; and this brought Kant to a point where he abandoned the question of whether we can prove that God exists or not. Instead, he found it more fitting to his philosophical position to ask whether it is necessary for God to exist in the phenomenal world (*CPR*, B 13-14). Renouncing the pseudo-metaphysics that had been insecurely established in previous ages therefore enabled Kant to lay the foundations of metaphysics as a solid branch of *Wissenschaft*.

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[9] As Frank Thilly puts it, "Kant repudiated dogmatic metaphysics, uncritical metaphysics, all metaphysics that attempts to solve the problem of ultimate reality without previous examination of the power of reason. The traditional metaphysics offers itself as knowledge of the understanding that is demonstrable *a priori*. We can have such knowledge only in physics and mathematics; we can know *a priori* only the forms and categories of our perceived world. We cannot look for God and the soul in nature: they are not objects of experience among other objects, phenomena in the space, time, causal order. We can, therefore, have no such a priori knowledge of God, the cosmos, the soul, as the old metaphysics professes to have." (1925, p. 343)

[10] Kant's "transcendental philosophy", Simon Haines in *Redemption in Poetry and Philosophy* (2013) explains, is concerned 'not with objects, with how or how far we can be said empirically to 'know' or experience them, as in Hume and his British predecessors: but with the way things must be, or rather the way the mind must be, for it to have experience, or for experience to be had, at all." (p. 78)

Any quest for a transcendent ground in the acquirement of knowledge was hence countered by the Kantian epistemology, established on the tripartite exchange between Sense, Understanding and Reason: "All our cognition starts from the senses," Kant states, and it "goes from there to the understanding, and ends with reason, beyond which there is nothing higher to be found in us…" (*CPR*, A 299). Kant hence distinguishes the Senses from Understanding and Reason on grounds that the former is not capable of forming judgments, hence can lay no claims to Truth: "...it is correctly said that the senses do not err; yet not because they always judge correctly, but because they do not judge at all. Hence truth, as much as error, and thus also illusion as leading to the latter, are to be found only in judgments" (*CPR*, B 350). According to Kant, therefore, it is both Understanding and Reason that can collaboratively have access to the Truth by virtue of forming judgements, and providing representations: Whereas understanding is "a faculty of unity of appearances by means of rules" called synthesis, Reason as the "supreme faculty of cognition" acts as "the faculty of the unity of the rules of understanding under principles", hence never directly applying "to experience or to any object, but instead applies to the understanding, in order to give unity *a priori* through concepts to the understanding's manifold cognitions, which may be called 'the unity of reason,' and is of an altogether different kind than any unity that can be achieved by the understanding" (*CPR*, B 359). As a result, a unified knowledge of the phenomenal world is synthesised by the mind as long as Understanding operates as a constitutive epistemological agent of "manifold cognitions" whereas Reason is a regulative and guiding faculty that provides "unity *a priori*".[11]

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[11] Kant refuses to attribute any sort of independent, superior – hence constitutive – epistemic authority to reason over understanding in his transcendental idealism, as he makes clear: "…the transcendental ideas are never of constitutive use…they have an excellent and indispensably necessary regulative use, namely that of directing the understanding to a certain goal respecting which the lines of direction of all its rules converge at

Kantian terminology for such division of roles between Sense, Understanding and Reason is known as the "transcendental unity of apperception".

In the first *Critique*, after providing descriptions of Sense, Understanding and Reason, Kant is quick to counter the metaphysical "misinterpretations and delusions" that seek to creep into "the inferences of reason" (*CPR*, B 366). He points to the epistemological error that Reason is "ceaselessly elevated by the powerful though only empirical proofs that are always growing in its hands" (*CPR*, A 624 / B 652). Here, Kant draws attention to the transcendental principle that Reason enables the *a priori* conditions through which Understanding is able to operate; however, it does not possess any constitutive role in this interaction. As Michael Friedman (1992) explains:

> Although reason too plays an indispensable role in experience, the concepts proper to it - the so-called ideas of reason, such as the idea of God, or the idea of the world as a complete totality - cannot be realized or instantiated in experience at all. Nevertheless, ideas of reason - the idea of a highest intelligence or wise Author of the world, for example - still function legitimately to guide empirical enquiry into the objects that can be given in experience. (p. 73)

Kant accordingly aims to refute the claims about the metaphysical conundra, which seek to apprehend Reason as the highest medium to attain knowledge of the transcendent realm. For Kant, by overstepping the transcendental limits he draws, traditional metaphysics strives to draw "concepts from pure reason"; however, "they are not merely reflected concepts but inferred concepts" (*CPR*, B 367). In the critical philosophy, therefore, whereas senses supply us with the preliminary cognition of the phenomena, constitutive Understanding and regulative Reason complement each other since they are mutually dependent in conditioning our knowledge of the world as unified as it can be. Metaphysics

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one point…it lies entirely outside the bounds of possible experience - nonetheless still serves to obtain for these concepts the greatest unity alongside the greatest extension." (*CPR*, A 645 / B 673)

as the domain of *noumena*[12], on the other hand, though conceivable within the limits of

Reason alone, cannot claim authority over knowledge.

In traditional metaphysics, the concept of *noumena*, thing in itself, is presented as a

realm independent of experience, but laying claims to reality; and it is claimed to operate

beyond the temporal, spatial and causal relations.[13] Nonetheless, by grounding knowledge

on the world that can be experienced (*phenomena*) by the senses and subsequently shaped

by perceiving mind (by means of Understanding and Reason), Kantian transcendental

deduction therefore undermines the traditional conception of *noumena*, relegating it to a

purely conceptual realm:

> If we understand thereby only objects of a non-sensible intuition, of which our categories are certainly not valid, and of which we can therefore never have any cognition at all (neither intuition nor concept), then *noumena* in this merely negative sense must of course be allowed… For one must concede that the categories alone are not sufficient for the cognition of things in themselves, and without the *data* of sensibility they would be merely subjective forms of the unity of the understanding, but without any object. Thinking in itself, to be sure, is not a product of the senses, and to this extent is also not limited by them, but it is not on that account immediately of any independent and pure use, without assistance from sensibility, for it is in that case without an object. And one cannot call the noumenon such an object, for this signifies precisely the problematic concept of an object for an entirely different intuition and an entirely different understanding than our own, which is thus a problem itself. (*CPR*, B 343)

Kant hence provided a clear-cut distinction between the *phenomenal* and *noumenal* world,

and propounded that within the limits of his transcendental method we can only attain

knowledge by means of synthesising our perception of the *phenomena - noumena* being

by definition beyond the realm of experience and, hence, epistemology. It can only be

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[12] Whereas *phenomena* denote anything in the outside world that constitutes our experience (appearance), *noumena* refer to things in themselves, *Ding an Sich*, released from experience.
[13] See: Chapter Three, "On the ground of the distinction of all objects in general into *phenomena* and *noumena*" in *CPR*, B 294-315.

conceived within the realm of Reason alone, hence constituting a grey area for Kant's transcendental argument.

Transcendental Method, Kant's Dualistic Conception of Language and Two Levels of Imagination

In Kant's transcendental system, the argument about exchanges between *a priori* forms of the mind and the world of senses is closely related with Kant's view of language. Michael Forster in "Kant's Philosophy of Language?" (2012) holds that during the time he wrote the three *Critiques* (1781-1790) Kant was committed to a fairly traditional form of Enlightenment dualism between thought and language, defending the primacy of Reason over linguistic forms, and according "no fundamental role to language" in his critical philosophy (p. 487). In the *Critique of The Power of Judgment* (1790), Kant epitomizes this view with the assertion that "no language fully attains or can make intelligible" aesthetic ideas, i.e. "representation[s] of the imagination", which occasion "much thinking" (*CpJ*, 5:314). Being always in a subordinate position and falling short of supplying the means to properly communicate ideas, linguistic signs for Kant are not capable to capture and convey the thoughts in one's mind. Forster explains that,

> Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, as well as in his other two *Critiques*…scrupulously avoids using such terms as 'language', 'sentence', and 'word' in fundamental explanatory roles, in favor of using...terms [such] as 'thought', 'judgment'…[and] when he defines the latter terms, again avoids using terms which refer to language…(p. 488)

In this respect, within the terminology of Kant's critical philosophy, language is not considered as an integral or integrated medium in terms of conveying the products of thought, but it is defined necessarily in a dualistic way. This argument is highly important in its implications: Assigning priority to thoughts over linguistic forms brings about the

idea that language is a product of the *a posteriori* concepts of the mind and it is made possible by thought, not the other way around. This view eventually undermines the idea that human thought (or, by extension, aesthetic output) depends on language. Knowledge and truth, in this respect, cannot be attained and pursued by means of the precarious interplay of signifiers in language.

In a philosophic tradition from Plato, Aristotle to Descartes, Hume and Kant, imagination has been defined in a variety of contesting ways, and attributed relatively vague functions, poised somewhere between mind and body (mediating these dualistic concepts placed on the mental and physical levels). Whereas for Plato imagination merely mimics how the world appears to us, thereby failing to give us the truth itself, Aristotle counters this view by arguing that rather than presenting us copies of copies of the actual objects, imagination as an indispensable agent of intellectual activity and perception is capable of representing universally acceptable aspects of experience. For both Plato and Aristotle, however, imagination is still a medium that copies the world, merely acting as a reproductive, rather than a productive, agent at its best bridging the gap between sense (corporeal nature) and intellect (incorporeal nature).

Early in the Enlightenment period, René Descartes (1596-1650) considered imagination as an agent that gives way to "misleading judgment" due to its "blundering constructions" (1931, p. 7), hence constituting an obstacle and irrelevance to intellect's search for knowledge and Truth.[14] An examination of his references shows that Descartes conceived of imagination as forming images, hence pointing to its necessarily reproductive, mimetic, ornamental feature and underscoring its non-functionality in search

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[14] On this topic, see: *Mind's World: Imagination and Subjectivity from Descartes to Romanticism*. Alexander M. Schlutz, 2009.

for the Truth and production of meaning. Later, Edmund Burke (1729-1797) granted

imagination *a sort of* creative power, incorporating fancy and invention, but he cautiously

added that imagination is not able to produce "anything absolutely new" but is merely

capable of varying "the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses"

(*On Taste*, p. 17).[15]

Especially in the first and third *Critiques* of Kant, imagination is presented as

functioning on two levels: It is either reproductive, i.e. based on previous sensual data, or

productive, which emerges as a significant synthesizer of experience, making it available

to the mind. In the first *Critique*, Kant explicitly states that such a synthesis comes as the

result of imagination, which is "a blind though indispensable function of the soul, without

which we would have no cognition at all, but of which we are seldom even conscious"; and

its role of synthesis "pertains to the understanding, and by means of which it first provides

cognition in the proper sense" (*CpR*, A 78 / B 103). In the first *Critique*, as Rudolf A.

Makkreel maintains, Kant's conception of imagination serves "the constitutive demands of

the understanding and the regulative ideals of reason" (1990, p. viiii). Kant hence makes it

clear that it does not have the power to create totally new experience.[16]

It is true that by the third *Critique*, Kant expanded his definition and moved to "a

more holistic perspective" (Makkreel p.2). Imagination in the *Critique of Judgment*, by

power of its comprehension and creation of aesthetic ideas, re-emerges as a faculty that

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[15] "Besides the ideas ... which are presented to the senses; the mind of man possesses a sort of creative power of its own; either in representing at pleasure the images of things in the order and manner in which they are received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called Imagination; and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention and the like. But it must be observed, that this power of the imagination is incapable of producing anything absolutely new; it can only vary the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses." (Burke, *On Taste,* pp. 16-17)
[16] Kant explicitly remarks that "the temperament as well as the talents that would allow a free and unlimited movement (such as imagination and wit) require discipline in many respects" (*CPR*, A 710 / B 738)

"contribute[s] to the interpretation, as well as to the constitution, of experience" by presenting "rational ideas to sense" (Makkreel, p.1). But still, in this *Critique*, although imagination "as a productive cognitive faculty" is "very powerful in creating, as it were, another nature", it is – "no doubt always in accordance with analogous laws" – limited by "the material which the real one gives it" (*CpJ*, 5:314). In Kant's transcendental deduction, therefore, whereas reproductive imagination based on "the law of association" is seen as an instrument with which "We entertain ourselves…when experience seems too mundane to us", its productive counterpart – bound by the rules of understanding – is able to step "beyond nature" (*CpJ*, 5:314) only to a certain extent.

Kant, Coleridge and the *Coleridgean Kant*

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy (1988) assert in *The Literary Absolute* that Kant "opens up the possibility of Romanticism" because the philosopher focused on the integral role of the creative self and subjective recreation of the outside world by underscoring the view of reality in the image of one's self (p. 29). On the other hand, critics such as Kathleen M. Wheeler (1989) suggest that "Kant's influence was [n]either necessary [n]or decisive for the change from Augustan and Enlightenment attitudes to Romantic ones" considering the view that his predecessors "in both the English and the German tradition" had achieved a lot of advancements "decades before Kant was well-known in England" (p. 42). This view is opposed by critics such as Julie Carlson (1990), whose trenchant criticism towards the common tendency to "to lose sight of the German connection" and to "dismiss Germany as foreign to English sensibilities" (p. 55) aims to counteract such scholarly views as Wheeler's. Instead, Carlson aims to establish in Romantic scholarship the view that rather than writing in isolation, the British romantic

writers – surely with a few exceptions – were mostly aware of the recent developments in Continental philosophy as well as literature. Therefore, recent critics such as Peter Mortensen (2004) more openly highlight that "The emergence of Romanticism in Britain coincided with a dramatically increased awareness of Continental literature" (p. 1), and that the philosophy of Kant is also "known to have initiated, among other philosophical and cultural phenomena, an entire movement that became known as early German Romanticism" (Class, 2012, p. 1), hence playing an indispensable role in formation of British Romanticim as well. When England was first introduced with critical philosophy of Kant, Class regonises, "it had a greater impact on the native culture than is commonly recognized" (p. 1). The emphasis on "native culture" is crucial here: Class tries to show that Kantian ideas were circulated in the cultural milieu of London and Bristol and that these ideas were even part of political movements, such as London Corresponding Society. Here, the social and political implications of Kantian philosophy are at stake: Class integrates Kantian ideas with the movement for constitutional reform in the 1790s and, thus, revises views that critical philosophy was alien to or incompatible with English reform and Jacobinism (because of alleged tendencies mainly in Kant's aesthetics to eliticism and Romantic conservatism).[17]

René Wellek's *Immanuel Kant in England 1793–1838* (1931) is one of the earliest works on the history of early reception of Kantian critical philosophy in England. He mainly argues that whether they understood or misunderstood Kant, the British reception was in the form of either repudiating his system altogether or struggling to adapt it to the

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[17] For further reading, see: Wheeler, K.M. (1989) "Kant and Romanticism". *Philosophy and Literature 13*(1), 42-56. Micheli, Giuseppe. "The Early Reception of Kant's Thought in England 1785–1805" in George MacDonald Ross and Tony McWalter, eds. *Kant and His Influence*, Bristol, Thoemmes Press, 1990. pp. 202-314. Marshall, Donald G. *Kant and English Nature Poetry*. 1991.

British ethical, philosophical as well as religious traditions. For Wellek, and he was right, Coleridge himself epitomized the latter camp. However, he undermines Coleridge's active role in the reception of German philosophy to Britain as, for Wellek, Coleridge could not but fail to be an innovator in philosophy due to "a fundamental lack of real philosophical individuality in Coleridge" (p. 66). However, I line myself with Monika Class (2012) when she maintains that Wellek's approach missed an important point by individually examining the actors enabling transmission of Kantian ideas in England, without properly investigating other less known but influential actors in the dissemination of ideas at the time.

To address this matter of contention, Class presents a detailed account of the early transmitters of Kantian ideas and the factors affecting the misinterpretation or over-interpretation of Kant's critical philosophy in England. She puts that the initial dissemination of Kantian philosophy in England dates back to 1787[18], and that there were some historically-less-known but very significant figures such as Friedrich August Nitsch[19], whose interpretations and lectures were influential in making critical philosophy spread "especially in the radical and dissenting milieu of England", and it was thanks to these people "that Kant's principles found a larger English audience and had a greater impact on English writers of the period …than has previously been thought" (2012, p. 18).

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[18] This is the year when Karl Leonhard Reinhold published his "Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie" ("Letters about Kantian Philosophy") from 1786 until 1787 in Germany and, as Class explains, "The initial dissemination of Kant's philosophy in England began at the time of Reinhold's *Briefe* in 1787" (2012, p. 18). Class adds that "Although translations of Kant's writings had appeared in English since 1796, knowledge of German was necessary to read and study Immanuel Kant's three *critiques*...Yet, despite the absence of translations of the three *critiques* in 1790s Britain, one of Kant's shorter writings as well as expositions of his works were readily available in English for non-German speakers like Coleridge before 1798." (2012, pp. 1-2)

[19] "In May 1796…Friedrich August Nitsch published his lectures about critical philosophy under the title *A General and Introductory View of Professor Kant concerning Man, the World and the Deity*." (Class, 2012, p. 2)

Although, Class adds, "Nitsch's name appears...nowhere in Coleridges papers, his work left nevertheless an unmistakable mark in Coleridge's thought" (p. 186).

It has been a massively-investigated subject in Coleridge studies that his growth of mind owes a great deal to his responses to or borrowings from the German critical-philosophical tradition, including Schiller, Schelling, Lessing, and Kant. In *Coleridge and German Philosophy* Paul Hamilton suggests that such"philosophical adventures" of Coleridge are "informal" and adventurous due to the lack of complete "systematic presentation" (2007, p. 1). However, considering the topic of this study, I subscribe to the idea that ever since his first perusal of the Kantian texts in June 1799,[20] it was largely the critical philosophy that supplied Coleridge with the means to gradually extricate himself, as Engell and Bate put it, "from a primary reliance on materialism, from a view of mind and of poetry as largely built on an associative rather than an imaginative faculty" (1983, p. cxxxiii). Coleridge hence became among the most important contributors to the reception of Kant in England, and his idiosyncratic adoption and portrayal of Kant has had a lingering influence on Kant's reception for decades. Early scholarship on the dissemination of Kantian ideas in England in the nineteenth century and Coleridge's handling of the critical philosophy was hardly uncontroversial: The scholarly debate mainly focused on either Coleridge's plagiarisms and misinterpretation of Kant (Wellek,

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[20] This surely does not mean that Coleridge read or knew the Kantian material well at this time (most probably he just flicked through them), but that he must have had some notions about Kant in and around this time. I subscribe to Monika Class's (2012) demonstration that "Coleridge read Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* in German sometime after his return from Germany in June 1799" (p. 3). In the fifth chapter of her book, Class presents the proofs for this argument: "Before Coleridge left Göttingen on 24 June 1799...he sent a letter to his sponsor Josiah Wedgwood summarizing his activities. Justifying his expenses, Coleridge wrote: 'I shall have bought 30 pounds worth of books (chiefly metaphysics/ & with a view to the one work, to which I hope to dedicate in silence the prime of my life)' (*Letters* I, p. 519)" and she also quotes "Coleridge's confession in 1822 that he had bought a pirate copy of Kantian lectures during his first stay in Germany: 'Before I left Germany in 1799, I procured from the Nachdrücker or privileged Book-pirates a thin Octavo of two or at most 3 Sheets, under the name of Kant's Logic – doubtless, published by, or from the Notes of, one of his Lecture-pupils' (*Marginalia* III, p. 256)" (p. 121).

1931), (Fruman, 1971), or the defensive confrontation of such charges by recognition of Coleridge's philosophical merits across the ages (Muirhead, 1930). Largely pioneered by McFarland , who held in *Coleridge and the Pantheist Tradition* that "we are faced not with plagiarism, but with nothing less than a mode of composition - composition by mosaic organization rather than by painting on an empty canvas" (1969 , p. 27), recent scholarship has drawn more heavily on the transmission of ideas (rather than individual ingeniousness and originality), focussing on the contribution Coleridge made as both a poet and yet another important transmitter of the continental philosophy (MacKinnon, 1974); (Schulz, 1985); (Mortensen, 2004); (Hamilton, 2007); (Class, 2012).[21]

It is true, as Class informs, that Coleridge read Kant's first *Critique* in German "sometime after his return from Germany in June 1799"[22] but his "perusal of Kantian texts" surely precedes this date (2012, p. 3). It was as early as May 1796 that Coleridge planned to learn German in Jena so he could read and translate "Kant, the great german [sic] Metaphysician", among other German authors (*CL* I, p. 209). By the time he decided to read Kant in German, as Class informs, Coleridge had been regularly corresponding with

> a member of Nitsch's Kantian Society in London: John Thelwall...This leading spokesman…wrote on the margins of his copy of *Biographia Literaria* that he had several philosophical discussions with Nitsch...Another supporter of Nitsch's work was Coleridge's Bristol mentor, Dr Thomas Beddoes (1760– 1808). He reviewed Nitsch's exposition in the *Monthly Magazine* and advocated the translation of Kant's works in a letter to the editor written on 28 March and published in May 1796…Beddoes had discussed Kant's epistemology three years earlier in

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[21] Also see: Lovejoy, A. O. (1940). 'Coleridge and Kant's Two World'. Essays in the History of Ideas, 7, 341–62. Orsini, G. N. G. (1969) *Coleridge and German Idealism* (Carbondale, Ill). Loades, A. (1978). 'Coleridge as Theologian: Some Comments on His Reading of Kant'. *Journal of Theological Studies* 29, 410–26. Ashton, Rosemary (1980) *The German Idea: Four English Writers and the Reception of German Thought, 1800-1860.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Shaffer, E. (2004). 'Coleridge and Kant's "Giant Hand" ', in R. Görner (ed.), *Anglo-German Affinities and Antipathies*. Munich: Iudicium, pp. 39–56.
[22] Class dates Coleridge's "initial immersion in Kant's *first critique*" to 1801. (2012, p. 122)

his *Observations on the Nature of Demonstrative Evidence* (1793)... (2012, p. 2)

Most probably, Coleridge's initial desire to study Kant stemmed from his desire to reconsolidate the philosophical and theological aporias (e.g. the Hartleyan-associationist views and Unitarianism) his mind was occupied with ever since the early years of his career. As Alexander M. Schlutz (2009) also emphasizes,

> Kant's transcendental perspective on epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics presented for Coleridge a philosophical means of liberation, for Kant's critical system afforded him a position from which to counter the associationism of David Hume and David Hartley, which suggested the mechanical determination of the human mind by the empirical forces of cause and effect, a philosophical assumption that had at this point become as ethically troubling for Coleridge as it had been for Kant. (pp. 214-15)

As Coleridge in the early stages of his acquaintance with the critical philosophy was seeking to make his own philosophical views more consistent and less precarious, and to mitigate the metaphysical and religious predicaments he had been inflicted with at the time, he aimed to base the foundation of his metaphysical preoccupations and conception of "Reason" on an intellectually satisfying philosophical argument.[23] Kant's critical philosophy, at least initially, seemed to supply him with the means to participate in this disquisition by taking "possession of" Coleridge "as with the giant's hand" (*BL* I, p. 153). For Coleridge in the 1790s, Kant was a "great" metaphysician whose philosophy would potentially guide him through the arduous task of merging his theological convictions with philosophy in the long run. However, German and especially Kantian ideas were to be kept secret during late 1790s and early 1800s as the philosopher's name was strongly associated

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[23] Coleridge in the *Biographia Literaria* provided a retrospective account of those days as follows: "After I had successively studied in the schools of Locke, Berkeley, Leibnitz, and Hartley, and could find in none of them an abiding place for my reason, I began to ask myself; is a system of philosophy; as different from mere history and historic classification, possible? If possible, what are its necessary conditions? I was for a while disposed to answer the first question in the negative, and to admit that the sole practicable employment for the human mind was to observe, to collect, and to classify. But I soon felt, that human nature itself fought up against this wilful resignation of intellect; and as soon did I find, that the scheme, taken with all its consequences and cleared of all inconsistencies, was not less impracticable than contranatural. (*BL* I, p. 141)

with Jacobinism.[24] Coleridge therefore took precautions (especially after his return from Germany) in the face of attacks by the Anti-Jacobins and studied Kant "in silence" (Vardy 2010, p. 13; Class 2012, p. 127). The secrecy demanded by his material at hand must have inspired Coleridge to use these ideas with hardly any explicit references to Kant. Finding it hard, at least initially, to make full sense of the critical philosophy, Coleridge resorted to his own interpretive skills and those of others so that he could formulate his own response to Kant.

Two names must be specifically mentioned: Karl Leonhard Reinhold and Friedrich August Nitsch. In the process of formulating his doctrine of the unity of Reason, Kant famously asserted that theoretical (i.e. speculative) and practical reasons are distinct applications of the same Reason.[25] According to this, whereas in the former such ideas as the soul, the world and God are "regulative principle[s] through which reason, as far as it can, extends systematic unity over all experience" (*CPR*, A 682-6 / B 710-4), its practical counterpart has a constitutive role (*CPR* A 800 / B 828)[26] in that these three ideas emerge as its postulates (*CPR*, A 328-9 / B 385-6; *CPrR*, 5: 134-8). It is, however, only within the scope of morality that the practical Reason can take on a constitutive role, and Kant

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[24] See: Lewis W. Beck (1971) "Kant and the Right of Revolution", *Journal of the History of Ideas* Vol. 32, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1971), pp. 411-422. Also see: James Schmidt (2003) "Inventing the Enlightenment: Anti-Jacobins, British Hegelians, and the 'Oxford English Dictionary'", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (Jul., 2003), pp. 421- 443.

[25] In the first *Critique*, Kant stressed the unification of "practical with speculative reason" (*CPR*, A 8I6 / B 844). In the *Groundwork*, he required "that the critique of a pure practical reason, if it is to be carried through completely, be able at the same time to present the unity of practical with speculative reason in a common principle, since there can, in the end, be only one and the same reason, which must be distinguished merely in its application" (4:391). Later in the second *Critique* he emphasized "the union of pure speculative with pure practical reason in one cognition."(*CPrR*, 5:121)

[26] "…if the conditions for the exercise of our free choice are empirical, then…reason can have none but a regulative use, and can only serve to produce the unity of empirical laws…which can therefore provide none but pragmatic laws of free conduct for reaching the ends recommended to us by the senses, and therefore can provide no pure laws that are determined completely *a priori*. Pure practical laws, on the contrary, whose end is given by reason completely *a priori*, and which do not command under empirical conditions but absolutely, would be products of pure reason. Of this sort…are the moral laws; thus these alone belong to the practical use of reason and permit a canon."

therefore firmly stressed that faith can be justified through Reason alone, but it is beyond

possibility to ground it epistemologically.[27] The first Kantian ideas to reach England were

also filtered through the expositions of Reinhold,[28] who largely disregarded Kant's

epistemological concerns and focused instead on the practical function of Reason so that

"he could win massive public interest, especially by those seeking an endorsement of

rational religion" (Class, 2012, p. 18). Reinhold also turned attention away from Kant's

reservations respecting the constitutive role of practical Reason at the end of the first

Critique and Kant's ethics, and suppressed "the sceptical dimension of the *Critique of Pure*

Reason"; hence "in the mid-1780s… the German reading public associated the name

'Kant' with the debate on rational theology" and Kant's critical philosophy arrived at

England "under the same banner" (p. 25). Like Reinhold, Nitsch selectively highlighted the

constitutive function of practical Reason in critical philosophy. Class explains that

Coleridge especially followed Nitsch's interpretation of Kant even after he read the

philosopher's works in the original, because Nitsch's lectures supplied him with "a version

of the Kantian system" that was relatively more appealing for "Coleridge's urgent quest for

metaphysical oneness" than Kant's transcendental account of the constitutive role of

practical Reason: "The latter baffled Coleridge in parts and left him wondering what it

could do for his belief, whereas Nitsch's introduction had introduced critical philosophy as

a relatively straightforward defence of rational belief" (p. 183). This interpretive line aided

and encouraged Coleridge's metaphysical speculations, by means of which he created a

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[27] "*The Critique of Pure Reason* introduced a strict dualism between the realm of knowledge and that of ethics, and distinguished sharply between their respective functions of Reason. Only in the realm of morality could (practical) Reason play a constitutive role." (Class, 2012, p. 22)

[28] As Nicholas Adams (2010) states, Kantian philosophy was "corrected and systematized" by means of "interpretations" presented by such figures as Reinhold "during Kant's lifetime", and Kant's ideas could not evade the "fate" of being "conflated" through these interpretations, though it was partially owing to the works of these mediators that Kant "became the towering figure of German philosophy…" (p. 28)

"Coleridgean Kant" to make the German philosopher the subject of his personal response. During his study of Kant in silence, therefore, Coleridge took his own initiative to transform Kant in such a way that he almost "calibrated" the latter's conception of Reason and transcendental metaphysics by responding to the philosopher's views through the selective accounts of the mediators as well as through his own quest for transcendent metaphysics.

Coleridge was in such a process of scrutinizing his deeply-entrenched opinions in light of critical views of Kant when he came to the awareness of Wordsworth's poetic genius in 1797 at Racedown.[29] His attraction to the critical philosophy, I would like to suggest, intensified as he came to recognize the potential in Wordsworth's poetry, and thought he found his other (and better) half with poetic genius, spurring him to design a philosophical poem for Wordsworth, later to be named *The Recluse,* a similar version of which he had been working on around 1796-97 (*CN* I, §213), but due to "Many circumstances, evil and good" the poem, "which was to have been entitled 'THE BROOK' had to be dropped (*BL* I, pp. 195-196). It was surely the emergence of Wordsworth in his life that he refers as a "good" circumstance, and it can be strongly inferred that Coleridge gave up his own project, just to assign it to Wordsworth in spring of 1798.

Drawing attention to Coleridge "the poet" in his analysis of Coleridge's treatment of Kant, Donald M. MacKinnon (1974) argues that his assessment of the philosopher "has to do with *a poet's understanding* of one of the most commanding figures in the whole history of Western philosophy" (p. 183; emphasis added). My argument fundamentally differs from MacKinnon since my examination of Coleridge's initial adoption and

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[29] It was not until March 1797 that the relationship of Coleridge and Wordsworth commenced, despite their prior acquaintance with one another - Coleridge read Wordsworth's poems as early as 1793, and they once had been at the same meeting in Bristol.

response to critical philosophy will lay the emphasis on Coleridge-the-philosopher's assessment of Kant to enable his joint project with Wordsworth-the-poet to write a "great philosophical poem", *The Recluse*. In other words, I will also be investigating how Coleridge's preoccupation with the Kantian philosophy especially after he started collaborating with Wordsworth from 1797 shaped his evolving reaction to Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (1807) and *The Excursion* (1814) as the only completed parts of *The Recluse* project.

As Seamus Perry (1999) suggests, we cannot sharply talk about Coleridge's "epistemological" shift from empiricism to German philosophy, as "old ambiguities persist in the new German-inflected voice" (p. 5). Accordingly, one of the most definitive aspects of Coleridge's thinking as well as philosophical method stemmed from his circular and dual thinking. He was hence able to accommodate incongruent elements in his intellectual *potpourri*, and because of this he could not adhere to any system but questioned it bits by bits. Amidst Coleridge's oscillations between idealism and realism, writes Perry,

> there is a third variation in this divided Coleridgean epistemology, a very
> non-Kantian one, which promises to have things both ways : this finds a
> solving unity already objectively *there*, in experience, waiting to be
> discovered in the immediacy of perception, not just made up by the
> resourceful, subjective consciousness. This, I need hardly say, is the
> promise of the One Life, here (as elsewhere) holding out the prospect of
> providing the unity…as well as the diversity…all at once. (p. 104)

In this regard, even though Kant appealed to Coleridge's philosophical predicaments when he first met the philosopher's works, he gradually became alienated from the definitive aspects of the Kantian philosophy, such as the regulative function of the Reason, possibility of the *noumena*, free will, "phenomenality" of religion and God.[30] This is why,

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[30] Kevin Hart in "Religious Experience and the Phenomenality of God" differentiates between "the phenomenality of God" and "religious phenonomena": Whereas the former concept challenges the Kantian

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Perry goes on to say, "we should not be too simple in our Kantian presumptions" (p. 104). Coleridge responded to critical philosophy and played a significant role in its transmission to England; however, he had to find in a uniquely Coleridgean way to interpret the material to create forking paths for himself: Not necessarily to choose from, but to ensure they continue to exist in his philosophical system at once. As he later noted in *Biographia*, "…philosophy is neither a science of the reason or understanding only, nor merely a science of morals, but the science of BEING altogether, its primary ground can be neither merely speculative or merely practical, but both in one" (*BL* I, p. 252).

Coleridge's central metaphysical concern, according to Perry, was to ensure the coexistence of "oneness" in the face of "manifold experiences", as a notebook entry of November 1799 testifies, "I would make a pilgrimage to the burning sands of Arabia, or &c &c to find the Man who could explain to me there can be oneness, there being infinite Perceptions – yet there must be oneness, not an intense Union but an Absolute Unity, for &c" (*CN* I, §556). Coleridge's adherence to Multeity in Unity[31] enabled him to formulate his response to Kantian concept of Reason because, as Perry suggests, "Coleridge seeks a brand of unity that will not depend on the renunciation of nature, but will bring the plurality of mortal beauty into a more immediate relationship with the unity of God; and this breeds a conception of the relationship between Reason's unity and Understanding's plurality" (1999, pp. 67-68). The route he followed in the process of digesting Kantian philosophy is substantially Coleridgean, as Paul Hamilton (2007) explains:

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limitation imposed on religious experience "that comes from an acceptance of the critical philosophy", the latter is characterized by the notions of "the sacred", "religious acts", "proclamation", "religious knowledge", "sin" (2010, p. 134), which are relegated by the critical philosophy to a non-philosophical and therefore transcendent realm. For Coleridge, religion could not solely be associated with experience, nor can it be consigned to mind only – he had a way of thinking between "realism" and "idealism", and this way of thinking is largely similar to "Phenomenological thinking" which, as Hart informs, takes "the 'third path' between realism and idealism…" (p. 135)

[31] The term was first presented in the Malta notebooks on 17 December 1804 (*CN* II, §2344).

> Epistemological and ethical orientations in [Coleridge's] writings often result from his departure from original sources in order to inflect them with a recognizably personal response. Logical categories and categorical imperatives are often made to contradict their primary functions by being obliged, when Coleridge handles them, to implement strategies…inimical to the founding purpose they possessed in their home philosophies. (p. 89)

With this in mind, I wish to investigate how the underlying dissonance between those "original sources" and Coleridge's personal responses had an effect on Coleridge's philosophical conversations with Wordsworth prior to and after *The Excursion* (1814).

Coleridge's Response to Kant's Transcendental Method, Dualistic Conception of Language and Two Levels of Imagination

According to Kant, metaphysical concepts such as "God" and "free will" are, as Christoph Bode (2009) remarks, only "useful assumptions" and "regulative ideas"; they do not have any kind of demonstrable existence and, hence, "not constitutive of knowledge" (p. 593). Bode therefore emphasizes that Coleridge's divergence from Kant's philosophy was largely "caused by Coleridge's religious needs and convictions" (p. 604). Coleridge underlined this fundamental divergence in the *Opus Maximum*: "The points in which I disagree with the illustrious sage of Königsberg" are those "in which he differs from the Christian code…" (pp. 39-40). For critics such as Wellek (1931), religion and faith presuppose renouncement of thought and critical thinking and, hence, Coleridge has been severely criticised on grounds of attempting to reconcile Kantian metaphysics with religion (or Christianity, to be more precise) in the first place.

Coleridge revered Kant and mentioned his name with great respect and honour as late as 1817 (*BL* I, pp. 153-156; II, p. 89) and surely long after this date. I therefore differ from Bode when he suggests that "he was totally indifferent to Kant's critical revolution in

philosophy" (2009, p. 600). The more acceptable explanation is, as also put by Bode, "that Samuel Taylor Coleridge…refused to accept *any* of the key elements of Kant's *Critical Philosophy*", but this does not amount to saying that "Kant's Copernican Revolution was lost on him" (2009, p. 600). Rather, I hold in this study that Coleridge may not have fully understood Kant, but he was able to locate the aspects of the philosophy of that "sage of Königsberg" which did not accord with his metaphysical convictions and developed his response accordingly.[32] As he later held in the *Biographia,* "true metaphysics are nothing else but true divinity, and… false metaphysics can be effectually counteracted by true metaphysics alone" (*BL* I, p. 291). As as result, critical philosophy came to be a vital reference for, Class maintains, "Coleridge's deepest theological enquiries throughout his life, sometimes as a source of comfort and at other times as a source of frustration" (2012, p. 180). Largely by virtue of his muddled way of thinking and ability to adopt parallactic and multiple positions simultaneously, Coleridge had to renounce noteworthy and "key" parts of the Kantian critical philosophy on grounds of his religious commitments. And his idiosyncratic response began to develop from here.

Coleridge's essential motivation for philosophical inquiry was, first and foremost, to anchor the faith in God on solid philosophical grounds. This is why he had once planned his *Logosophia* to be titled "Christianity the one true Philosophy" (*CL* III, pp.533-4). As John Muirhead noted, "There is a sense in which Coleridge's whole philosophy was a Philosophy of Religion" (1930, p. 217). This is true because Coleridge held that the term "Philosophy", described in ontological terms, is "an affectionate seeking after the truth"

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[32] Bode argues that "Coleridge knew Kant's categorical imperative well; he gave it in different versions, sometimes watered down to a 'Do unto others…' truism…In absolute contrast to the Kant of the Streit der Fakultäten, Coleridge saw philosophy not only as a handmaiden to Christian religion, but Christian religion as the culmination of all philosophy…" (2009, p. 602)

while keeping in mind that "Truth is the correlative of Being" (*BL* I, p. 142). Coleridge therefore had to differentiate his own philosophy from Kant as they had fundamental and methodological divergences of thought in terms of their respective pursuits of knowledge. In a letter to Poole in March 1801, Coleridge made a transcendental distinction between the passive and active mind by saying: "if the mind be not *passive*, if it be indeed made in God's Image, & that too in the sublimest sense – the Image of the *Creator* – there is ground for suspicion, that any system built on the passiveness of the mind must be false, as a system" (*CL* II, p. 709). Even though he agrees with Kant respecting the active mind, Coleridge's theological pursuits inevitably clashed with Kant's transcendental idealism and the functions of the mind in his philosophy. In other words, Coleridge's study and response to Kant was bound to show fundamental divergences due to his theological views merged with philosophical pursuits. Therefore, Coleridge countered the Kantian views of "Reason" as regulative agent of mind and "understanding" as its constitutive counterpart on the ground that, in the Kantian philosophy, they were conceived as faculties merely capable of producing representations.

From the early acquaintance with the Kantian texts and ideas around 1799 until *The Friend* of 1809-10, Coleridge - "mediated by English publications" at the time - held Understanding predominantly as an empirical agent of knowledge, hence relegating it to a relatively lower position compared with Reason (Class, 2012, p. 170). In a letter of October 1806, for example, he made an explicit statement about the function of Understanding as "that Faculty of the Soul which apprehends and retains the mere notices of Experience" whereas Reason was defined as "most eminently the Revelation of an immortal soul, and its best Synonime" (*CL* II, p. 1198). On the other hand, beginning especially with the periodical *Friend*, Coleridge sought after fixed principles in politics,

philosophy and poetry, devoting himself to making sense of the background states of mind and anchoring due schemata. Coleridge noted in the *Biographia* that it was also "one main object of THE FRIEND" to "establish [the] distinction" between Reason and Understanding (*BL* I, p. 175), which henceforward carried, as Class notes, "enormous weight within Coleridge's thought as a whole and in particular within his morality, theology and political philosophy" (2012, p. 171).[33]

The Kantian distinction between Sense, Understanding and Reason in their respective operations on knowledge hence found a Coleridgean counter-argument in the periodical: "Sense" replaced Coleridge's prior contempt for "Understanding", and the latter was elevated to a higher status, now complementing the exalted faculty of "Reason" and functioning as the precondition for experience (pp. 187-190). However, compared to Kant's synthesizing medium, Coleridge's conception of Understanding still played a restrained role vis-à-vis Reason, which for Coleridge was a superior and divine faculty at all times. As Roy Park observes, Coleridge pursued "a higher reason capable of intuiting ideas as real not merely regulative" (1968, p. 336) whereas in Kant, the ideas are mere assumptions (1969, p. 365). By attributing to Reason a fundamentally "productive", non-representational and constitutive function, Coleridge was obviously speculating about the "highest problem of philosophy".[34] Whereas Kant refused to attribute any sort of independent or superior epistemic authority to Reason over Understanding, hence aiming to refute the claims about the metaphysical conundra, Coleridge prioritised Reason to such

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[33] As McFarland (1993) once asserted: "there is an infallible way to distinguish a true Coleridgean from a dabbler or from those who have encountered him in survey courses, no matter how enthusiastic these dilettantes may seem to be. That shibboleth, that litmus test, is provided by Coleridge's distinction between reason and understanding." (1993, p. 165)

[34] As he put it in 1817: "Whether ideas are regulative only, according to Aristotle and Kant; or likewise constitutive, and one with the power and life of nature, according to Plato, and Plotinus…is the highest problem of philosophy." (*Lay Sermons*, p. 114)

an extent that "he even claimed that it was capable of revelation" (Class, p. 182) – hence

simultaneously making an overt pronouncement about his own metaphysical agenda, as he

occasionally but boldly stated, "Reason is from God, and God is Reason" as a recurring

statement in several works (*Fragments* II, 1995, p. 128). Coleridge therefore made use of

these concepts for his own theologically-attuned theories on language and imagination.

 As Philipp Hunnekuhl (2017) argues, after having his "empiricism undone by

[Kant's] critical philosophy", Coleridge went beyond Kant's view that ideas of the mind

are only "regulative" and complete knowledge of the outside world is never possible as we

only have access to the world of (finite) *phenomena* and human beings are not able to

access to the world of *noumena* (pp. 51-52). As Schlutz also observes,

> For Kant, however, things as they might be in themselves, independent of
> the categories our consciousness imposes on them, let alone 'The unity of
> all', are categorically out of our cognitive reach and cannot become objects
> of knowledge at all. In a Kantian framework, no more can be 'revealed',
> even by the faculty of reason, than the epistemological boundaries beyond
> which the philosopher dare not and cannot venture. (2015, p. 501)

Dissatisfied with Kant's "modest humility with regard to the powers of the intellect" (*The

Philosophical Lectures*, p. 538), Coleridge grew more interested, contrary to Kant, in the

ability of Reason to constitute ideas and its capability to access the *noumenal* world –

Dinge an Sich.

 Hamilton (2007) argues that "Coleridge agreed with Kant that ideas of reason were

uncontainable within our understanding" but he opposed Kant's restriction of "our

apprehension of ideas into a sense of their progressiveness and productivity" (p. 4).

According to Kant's epistemology, the rational perception of the world demands a

"synthesis" of understanding through which our inner faculties make sense of the

phenomenal world. On the other hand, this proved to be an unfavourable aspect of Kantian

philosophy for Coleridge, as Schlutz (2009) argues, "Coleridge, much like Kant, saw the self's very essence as residing in its connection to the noumenal law of reason, which for Coleridge, however, was not merely a transcendental, but decidedly a divine principle. This equation of metaphysics and religion, Coleridge felt, also had to be Kant's own, albeit unexpressed, conviction" (pp. 215-16). Coleridge therefore retrospectively reflected in Chapter 9 of his *Biographia*:

> In spite of [Kant's] declarations, I could never believe, it was possible for him to have meant no more by his *Noumenon*, or THING IN ITSELF, than his mere words express; or that in his own conception he confined the whole *plastic* power to the forms of the intellect, leaving for the external cause, for the *materiale* of our sensations, a matter without form, which is doubtless inconceivable. (*BL* I, p. 155)

He was instead of the opinion that "Images and Thoughts possess a power in and of themselves, independent of that act of the Judgement or Understanding by which we affirm or deny the existence of a reality correspondent to them" (*CL* IV, 641). Coleridge's method in this respect, as Joel Harter (2011) agrees, is "personal and experiential in a way that Kant's is not" (p. 120). As he wrote in a notebook entry of 1809:

> What is the common principle of the Philosophical Systems of Des Cartes, (Lock?) Berkley, Hume, and Kant? That Our Senses in no way acquaint us with Things, as they are in and of themselves...the properties, which we attribute to Things without us...this very *Outness*, are not strictly properties of the things themselves, but either constituents or modifications of our own minds...therefore all our Knowledge is confined to Appearances, our philosophy a philosophy of Phaenomena... (*CN* III, §3605)

It was hence Coleridge's aspiration, as Perry also notes, to "rescue one kind of Kantian noumena, the ideas of Reason, from their Kantian inaccessibility" because the Coleridgean Reason is by no means Kantian as it is "governed by its ideas of 'allness' and 'oneness'" (1999, p.128). Even though he may not have access to the *noumenal* world, Coleridge's recondite relationship with the fragment and the whole ("muddle", as Perry puts it) and his

views of the transcendent existence of God compelled him to speculate that Reason must

be constitutive. Coleridge hence crossed the boundary drawn by Kant between the realm of

phenomena and that of *noumena* by means of attributing mind a relatively more active role

so that it can perceive the Truth that is, for him, necessarily beyond our sensations.

Coleridge's engagement with the exchange between language and thought,

combined with his metaphysical investigations, was a prominent factor determining his

conception of linguistic forms and their formative powers distinctive from Kant's dualistic

views. James C. McKusick (2009) presents a comprehensive examination of Coleridge's

speculative remarks on "linguistic universals" and suggests that his conception of language

was distinctively Romantic due to his references to the primordial, "prehistoric origin of

language" – the so-called *Ursprache* (p. 575).[35] Indeed, even during his early years of

radical politics in the 1790s, as Tim Fulford (1991) holds it, his political sermons

"produced different practices of figurative language - scriptural, intimate, satirical. From

them Coleridge formed a theory by describing such language as an intimation of the

mind's unity with God" (p. xvii). Indeed, Coleridge wrote in September 1800 to William

Godwin:

> 'Is Logic the *Essence* of Thinking?' in other words—Is *thinking* impossible
> without arbitrary signs? &—how far is the word 'arbitrary' a misnomer?
> Are not words &c parts & germinations of the Plant? And what is the Law
> of their Growth?—In something of this order I would endeavor to destroy
> the old antithesis of *Words & Things* , elevating, as it were, words into
> Things, & living Things too. (*CL* I, pp. 625-26)

According to this, words are not seen as merely arbitrary signs but their lexicon is

constituted by the objects they point to in the first place, ultimately being capable of

expressing the essential characteristics of things: Coleridge conceived of "words" as

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[35] That is, as McKusick (2009) explains, 'the primordial language spoken by Adam and Eve in the Garden of
Eden, in words believed to express the essential nature of things." (p. 574)

"living powers, not merely articulated air" (*Essays* II, p. 249). In a notebook entry of April, 1805 Coleridge wrote that

> ln looking at objects of Nature while I am thinking, as at yonder moon dim-glimmering thro' the dewy window-pane, I seem rather to be seeking, as it were *asking,* a symbolical language for something within me that already and forever exists , than observing any thing new. Even when that latter is the case, yet still I have always an obscure feeling as if that new phenomenon were the dim Awaking of a forgotten or hidden Truth of my inner Nature/ It is still interesting as a Word, a Symbol! It is…the Creator! [and the Evolver!] (*CN* II, §2546)

Coleridge's religious views were hence inextricably connected with his theory of the "ultimate" origin of language and "the origin of human consciousness" (McKusick, 2009, p. 574). For him, linguistic signs were able to express "certain universal aspects of human cognition, and if we could only discover the remote origin of all human languages, we would learn something fundamental about human nature" (p. 587). Coleridge therefore aimed to handle such views in his works to properly reflect the underlying philosophical arguments. In a notebook entry of 1803, Coleridge therefore mentioned his plans to write a "philosophical Romance to explain the whole growth of Language" (*CN* I, §1646). Early Coleridge in his poems used "colloquial speech and superstitions as a way of exploring the presence of spiritual intimations in ordinary language" so that he could ensure "mental and linguistic unity with God" (Fulford, 1991, pp. xvii-xviii). After all, Coleridge from these years held that it was through recognition of language's constitutive function with regards to thought and understanding that we could appreciate the "consubstantiality of God and the Word" (McKusick, 2009, p. 576).

The more Coleridge developed his own eclectic and idiosyncratic philosophical response to Kantian transcendentalism, the more he sought to establish "new grounds for understanding both social and literary discourse" and he expressed this "in opposition… to

Immanuel Kant's views on philosophy" because language "was vital in Coleridge's attempt to show that the mind, contrary to Kant's critique of its powers, could have *a priori* knowledge of itself and the world" – an attempt which gave rise to the *Biographia*, "which sought to make the creative wordplay of imagination the means by which, contrary to Kant, the mind could know itself, and re-create God's own linguistic creation by the Logos" (Fulford 1991, p. xix). In other words, Coleridge's investment in linguistic speculation culminated in his practice of distinguishing between historical and conventional use of words and synonyms, and novel relations as well as associations brought about by development of human thought: "Desynonymization", a term devised by Coleridge in 1803 (*CN* I, §1336). It was indeed Coleridge's expertise, as he had recognised very early in his career, to desynonymize: "bring me two things that seem the very same," he wrote in his notebook on December 1804, "then I am quick enough to shew the difference, even to hair-splitting" (*CN* II, §2372). Hamilton explains that Coleridge treated "linguistic usage as philosophical evidence, letting the language '*think* for us'", which later progresses into the idea that language is a "model" for extension of knowledge – an idea explained by Coleridge's "theory of desynonymy" (1983, p. 4). As Nicholas Halmi (2009) also observes, for Coleridge, desynonymy was "nothing less than the philosopher's social responsibility", which "Coleridge himself took seriously, formulating and defending distinctions between…imagination and fancy, primary and secondary imagination, reason and understanding…" (p. 345). Coleridge held that ordinary language was inadequate for conveying thoughts as they are, hence poetic diction and philosophical speculation approximated the origins of language, exempt from the wear-and-tear of the mundane transactions of life. "Coleridge's theory of desynonymization", as McKusick (2009) accordingly observes, "provides a central focus for all of his speculations on language

theory. It enables him to describe the evolution of language as a process involving both conscious volition and the merely functional responses of ordinary discourse to the exigencies of everyday life" (p. 585). The "innovations of desynonymy", in this respect, are largely irreconcilable with the common language (Hamilton, 1983, p. 62) because desynonymy "is meant to illustrate how knowledge advances: it uses the example of the proliferation of language through the discovery that words we had thought were synonymous in fact have different meanings" (p. 4). Coleridge's conception of language and the power of words gave way to his special emphasis on poetic diction and defamiliarization in poetry, as well as formulation of his idiosyncratic philosophy vis-à-vis Kant's separation of thought and language.

Coleridge's response to Kant's transcendental conception of "productive" imagination (which is subject to the rules of constitutive Understanding and regulative Reason), on the other hand, originated from his theological pursuits of the *noumena*, whereas non-phenomenal contact with the divine realm fell considerably at odds with Kant's definition of imagination as an agent of the transcendental unity of apperception. Coleridge's own theory of imagination (surely inspired by Schelling) developed in the course of years and culminated in his acclaimed definition in the *Biographia Literaria* (1817), I assert, owes much to his transcendent appropriation of the Kantian terms such as Sense, Understanding and Reason.

Prior to *The Friend* of 1809, however, Coleridge's conception of imagination was not as elaborate or categorical as he later put it in the *Biographia*. When we look at his letters and notebook entries, we can see a variety of references to imagination: He either

mourns the loss of imagination (hence loss of poetic powers) in himself as early as 1801,[36] or he considers imagination as a faculty that is able "to send ourselves out of ourselves" in 1802.[37] It was during his Mediterranean years[38] that he began to formulate imagination as "the *modifying* Power in that highest sense of the word" distinct from fancy[39], and in 1807, he calls imagination a "Laboratory, in which Thought elaborates Essence into Existence."[40] These descriptions mainly point out Coleridge's evolving conception of the vital role of

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[36] "…all sounds of similitude keep at such a distance from each other in my mind, that I have *forgotten* how to make a rhyme…The Poet is dead in me - my imagination (or rather the Somewhat that had been imaginative) lies, like a Cold Snuff on the circular Rim of a Brass Candle-stick, without even a stink of Tallow to remind you that it was once cloathed & mitred with Flame…I was once a Volume of Gold Leaf, rising & riding on every breath of Fancy-but I have beaten myself back into weight & density, & now I sink in quick-silver, yea, remain squat and square on the earth amid the hurricane, that makes Oaks and Straws join in one Dance, fifty yards high in the Element…" A letter to William Godwin, 25 March 1801. (*CL* II, pp. 713-14)

[37] Coleridge says in the letter to Southeby in July 1802, "It is easy to cloathe Imaginary Beings with our own Thoughts & Feelings; but to send ourselves out of ourselves, to *think* ourselves in to the Thoughts and Feelings of Beings in circumstances wholly & strangely different from our own/ hoc labor, hoc opus/ and who has atchieved it? Perhaps only Shakespere. (*CL* II, p. 809)

[38] Coleridge left England for Mediterranean in April, 1804 (and he did not return until August 1806) for various reasons, as Kooy (1999) outlines: "poor health, a tiresome wife, a love affair with a woman without hope of consummation, and failed 'genial spirits'" (p. 102). He travelled to Sicily and Malta and in January 1805, started working as the Acting Public Secretary of Malta under Alexander Ball, a Civil Commissioner. A variety of works have so far shed light on the importance of his Mediterranean venture itself on Coleridge's views on art, criticism and philosophy. See: Donald Sultana (*Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Malta and Italy*, 1969), Elinor Shaffer ("Infernal Dreams", 1989), Eduardo Zuccato (*Coleridge in Italy*, 1996), Michael John Kooy ("How Public Service Shaped the Friend", 1999) and, more recently, Tilar J. Mazzeo ("Coleridge's Travels", 2009), and Barry Hough and Howard Davis (*Coleridge's Laws: A Study of Coleridge in Malta*, 2010).

[39] As he wrote in a letter to Richard Sharp on 15 January, 1804: "Wordsworth is a Poet, a most original Poet-he no more resembles Milton than Milton resembles Shakespere-no more resembles Shakespere than Shakespere resembles Milton-he is himself: and I dare affirm that he will hereafter be admitted as the first & greatest philosophical Poet-the only man who has effected a compleat and constant synthesis of Thought & Feeling and combined them with Poetic Forms, with the music of pleasurable passion and with Imagination or the *modifying* Power in that highest sense of the word in which I have ventured to oppose it to Fancy, or the *aggregating* power-in that sense in which it is a dim Analogue of Creation, not all that we can *believe* but all that we can *conceive* of creation. Wordsworth is a Poet, and I feel myself a better Poet, in knowing how to honour *him*, than in all my own poetic Compositions, all I have done or hope to do-and I prophesy immortality to his *Recluse*, as the first & finest philosophical Poem, if only it be (as it undoubtedly will be) a Faithful Transcript of his own most august & innocent Life, of his own habitual Feelings & Modes of seeing and hearing." (*CL* II, p. 1034)

[40] In September 1807, he jotted down the following: "Form is factitious *Being,* and Thinking is the Process. Imagination the Laboratory, in which Thought elaborates Essence into Existence. A Psilosopher, i.e. a nominal Ph[ilosopher] without Imagination, is a *Coiner-Vanity,* the *Froth* of the molten Mass, is his *Stuff* and Verbiage the Stamp & Impression. This is but a *deaf* Metaphor-better say, that he is guilty of Forgery-he presents the same [sort of] *Paper* as the honest Barterer, but when you carry it to the *Bank,* it is found to be drawn on-Outis, *Esq*. His words had deposited no Forms there, payable at Sight-or even at any imaginable Time from the Date of the Draft." (*CN* II, §315)

imaginative power not only in poetic activity, but also in philosophy and metaphysics:

While he previously feared at one point in 1801 that "Philosophy & Poetry [could]

neutralize each other"[41] and, therefore, he considered that it was only through

"disburthen[ing] my self of all my metaphysics" that he could be "in possession of my

present faculties" and could devote himself "to a long poem" (*CL* II, p. 799), Coleridge

later developed his theory of imagination so much so that he was able to demonstrate the

integral role of imagination in not only poetry, but also metaphysics and philosophy.

Eventually, as Myers also confirms, Coleridge's theory of poetic imagination ended up

deriving "theoretical coherence from the metaphysical assumptions in which they are

embedded" (1987, p. 9).

Considering Coleridge's recognition of Sense, Understanding and Reason in a

hierarchical way in *The Friend* of 1809,[42] I aim to demonstrate in the following chapters

the striking effect of this tripartite category on Coleridge's conception of imagination and

fancy in the 1810s, resulting in the two imaginations of the *Biographia* in 1817. In other

words, I will be seeking to delineate the similarities between fancy and sense, primary

imagination and Understanding, and secondary imagination and Reason in terms of their

respective functions. This is a significant point considering Coleridge's exchanges with

Kant because he not only employed the Kantian terms and integrated them into his own

ontological argument, but he also used those concepts to pave the ground for his theory of

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[41] In a letter to Poole on 1 February, 1801 Coleridge wrote that "I hope, Philosophy & Poetry will not neutralize each other, & leave me an inert mass. But I talk idly-I feel, that I have power within me: and I humbly pray to the Great Being, the God & Father who has bidden me 'rise & walk' that he will grant me a steady mind to employ the health of my youth and manhood in the manifestation of that power." (*CL* II, pp. 668-9)

[42] Here Coleridge unfolded his views as follows: "When we make a threefold distinction in human nature, we are fully aware, that it is a distinction not a division, and that in very act of mind the Man unites the properties of Sense, Understanding and Reason' (*TF* II, p. 104 n).

imagination, which constitutes one of the most distinctive backbones of Coleridgean legacy.[43]

The correspondence between these concepts has been previously scrutinized by the critics as well. Kathleen Wheeler (1986), for example, brings up the argument that Coleridge's definition of imagination in the *Biographia* adopts "almost entirely the character of…reason" (p. 32). Schlutz (2009) has more recently argued that "The distinction between fancy and imagination" has its correspondent equivalence in "the distinction between the mechanical and empirical philosophy of association and the transcendental principles of Kantian and Idealist systems", informing the underlying arguments of the *Biographia* and *The Friend* (p. 229). What I am suggesting here differs from these views because they exclusively focus on the discrepancy between the functions of fancy and imagination, and the latter's association with Reason. On the other hand, I propose further differences in this context with the conviction that the formulation of imagination's distinctive functions (i.e. primary and secondary) and their different characteristics from fancy outlined in the *Biographia* must be read through the spectacles of Coleridge's idiosyncratic response to Kantian transcendental concepts - Sense, Understanding and Reason.

Coleridge and Wordsworth: From Symbiosis to Friendship and Dialogue
Coleridge had always been a figure in need of a friend, a guide, not only as a preceptor but also as a person to transform and be transformed by. He desperately needed someone to depend on not only in his private but also professional life, and Wordsworth became a

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[43] Wellek criticized Coleridge's interpretation accordingly: "Reason under Coleridge's hands returned to its old meaning of intellectual intuition, the limits between practical and theoretical reason are erased thereby and the whole flood of traditional metaphysics can again celebrate its triumphant entry." (1931, p. 108)

friend and partner to reciprocate this lack. Prior to the publication of *The Excursion* in 1814, a date which I take as the conscious emergence of Coleridge's self-centred revisions, he was preoccupied with instilling much of his "bold Optimism" (*PW* I.I, p. 280) into Wordsworth and, for this reason, the literary partnership between Coleridge and Wordsworth has been subject to numerous scholarly works. To date, however, there have been few works focusing on the impact of Coleridge's disillusionment with *The Recluse* project in general and *The Excursion* in particular. As far as I am aware of, there has not been a single monograph presenting Coleridge's determination in the aftermath of 1814 to reconsider his previous symbiosis with Wordsworth to eventually establish proper dialogue with him as a "friend". My distinct argument aims to fill in the gap that the critical attention to Coleridge and Wordsworth collaboration falls short of a comprehensive analysis of Coleridge's estrangement from Kant on one hand and Wordsworth's Kantian tendencies in *The Excursion* (1814) on the other - which, I suggest, had a permanent effect on his revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818.

The symbiosis of Coleridge and Wordsworth was systematically described by Thomas McFarland (1981) in *Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin*. Through his argument that in the symbiosis of Wordsworth and Coleridge the latter acted as the sublimated-masochistic partner (1981, p. 69), I think McFarland automatically (but probably not so consciously) suggests that it was Coleridge's somewhat "pathological" dependence on others and continual self-loathing, which went back to his childhood, that resulted in his *symbiosis* with Wordsworth, especially during the *annus mirabilis*. Accordingly, "Coleridge's varied miseries" including his procrastination, unstable will, infamous addiction and plagiarisms stemmed not necessarily from any specific "physical ailment" but from "a massive *anxiety*", which originated from not only the feeling that he was

abandoned by his mother but also from the psychological "castration anxiety" he suffered

because of his brothers (1981, pp. 112-116). Coleridge, according to McFarland, was

hence psychologically compelled to merge himself with another – and superior[44] – person,

especially with surrogate "brothers". This led Coleridge to idealise his relationship with

Wordsworth through his conception of a joint *oeuvre*.

Whatever the grounds of this dependence were, Coleridge at least in the early

stages of his life indeed seems obsessed with self-annihilation by means of affect so that,

as he addressed to Wordsworth in a notebook jotting of 1805, his "Spirit" could be "purged

by Death of its Weaknesses" and his "*identity* might flow into *thine*, & live and act in thee,

& be Thou" (*CN* II §2712). According to McFarland, this is *symbiosis*, and the symbiosis

of Coleridge and Wordsworth at times resulted in a tangled partnership and convoluted

productions: "Although most intellectual relationships mutually fecundate their

participants at least to some extent," says McFarland (1981), "that of Wordsworth and

Coleridge was…a development of attitude so complellingly intertwined that in some

instances not even the participants themselves could discern their respective contributions"

(pp. 56-57).[45] *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) was the first tangible output of this partnership (as

well as the ensuing "misunderstandings", as put by Newlyn (1986)), between the so-called

symbiotic partners.

Throughout this symbiosis, Coleridge shaped the philosophical views of

Wordsworth – which is largely incontrovertible, though not wholly uncontroversial. Some

critics bring attention to Coleridge's immense impinge upon the development of

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[44] As he wrote in July, 1797: "Wordsworth is a very great man - the only man, to whom *at all times* & in *all modes of excellence* I feel myself inferior." (*CL* I, p. 334)
[45] As Gravil exemplifies, *The Monk* "has appeared in both authors' collected works, because it is written in a style that might have been produced by either". (2009, p. 25)

Wordsworth's philosophical views[46], whereas others contend this view by holding that

Wordsworth's intellectual development was already in the making when he met Coleridge

in 1797;[47] that it is misguiding to attribute every line of novelty in his philosophical

thought and originality to Coleridge as the latter was, in fact, on the weaker side of this

relationship and did not have much to offer for Wordsworth[48]; or that such an assertion

(i.e. Coleridge must have informed Wordsworth's new ideas in poetry or prose) overlooks

the materialism and empiricism at times implicit in Wordsworth's thoughts and works.[49]

I hold that whether Wordsworth was a philosophical figure before meeting

Coleridge is irrelevant for this study, the focus here should be on what Coleridge thought

Wordsworth would philosophically achieve through *The Recluse*. When Coleridge in a

letter of August 1803 to Wordsworth advised him to move towards philosophy through

poetry,[50] he was most probably expecting that his symbiotic partner would follow his lead

in philosophy and compose their joint project accordingly. Therefore, considering the

overall argument in this study, I maintain that it was at Coleridge's instigation for the sake

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[46] H. M. Margoliouth (1953), for example, puts that but for Coleridge's intellectual assistance, Wordsworth would have achieved "no philosophy worthy of the name. As Dorothy opened the eye of his imagination to the small and tender, so Coleridge provided that imagination with structure and order" (p. 78). Jonathan Wordsworth (1969) maintains that it was largely Coleridge's philosophical views that he supported prior to 1798 (e.g. pantheism, nature speaking divine language…) that had constituted the basis for Wordsworth's conception of nature in his poetry: Assimilating Coleridge's philosophical thought enabled Wordsworth to formulate "the doctrine of the One Life" and to paint "the way towards *Tintern Abbey* (pp. 193, 199). Stillinger (1994) also holds that "Coleridge was the more dominant of the two at this time, and it is becoming increasingly clear that when he and Wordsworth, in their joint efforts to reform the style and subject matter of English poetry, wrote the same kinds of poem and had the same ideas about literature, it was usually Coleridge who was the innovator" (p.11).

[47] See: Bruhn, Mark J., *Wordsworth Before Coleridge: The Growth of the Poet's Philosophical Mind*. 2018. Class also states that "Wordsworth was a philosophical thinker in his own right" (2012, p. 162).

[48] "Coleridge induced in the much stronger Wordsworth" says Bloom (1973), "no anxieties of poetic influence" (p. 57). Also see: Gravil, 2009.

49 See: Fruman, (1971) *Coleridge, the Damaged Archangel*. p. 524.

[50] "Sir G. B. and his wife both say, that the Picture [a portrait by Hazlitt] gives them an idea of you as a profound strong-minded Philosopher, not as a Poet. I answered (and I believe, truly—) that so it must needs do, if it were a good Portrait—for that you were a great Poet by inspirations, and in the moments of revelation, but that you were a thinking feeling Philosopher habitually—that your Poetry was your Philosophy under the action of strong winds of Feeling—a sea rolling high." (*CL* II, p. 957)

of *The Recluse* that Wordsworth must have become familiar with the Kantian critical philosophy. However, this study is not concerned either with the controversial issue of whether Wordsworth came to direct contact with the Kantian texts or not.[51] I am more interested in discovering how Coleridge with his philosophical pursuits informed Wordsworth in the making of *The Recluse*.

In terms of philosophy, Wordsworth was most certainly not only indifferent but also non-speculative as his poetic powers outweighed any learned intellectual speculation coming from books: in his "Tables Turned", for example, Matthew is advised that it is nature, not books, that nourishes poetic composition, because "Sweet is the lore which nature brings" (2010, p. 48). My position here is that Coleridge passionately aimed to instruct Wordsworth in his journey of writing the philosophical poem of *The Recluse*, and shared his philosophical research and increasingly idiosyncratic (though not original) speculations with his friend beginning from 1797. Coleridge must have thought it plausible to make a "division of labours" with Wordsworth; that is, the former was meant to be a "metaphysician" with distinctive philosophical views whereas the latter had the true poetic genius.[52] As Class (2012) also notes, "the poets had worked together on fairly equal grounds, as Coleridge had been solely able to claim the role as the philosophical thinker and literary critic. Philosophy was the area in which he could shine when he compared himself to Wordsworth" (p. 162). Coleridge must have thought they were to complement each other through their separate interests and strength; hence his acknowledgment of

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[51] Despite the lack of concrete evidence at hand, critics holding the idea that Wordsworth must have read Kant at some point in his life more often than not base their arguments on the link between Wordsworth's essay "The Sublime and the Beautiful" (1811-1812) and Kant's discussion of "the sublime" in *The Critique of Judgement* (Modiano, 1985; pp.128-129). It is not certain, however, whether Wordsworth read Kant himself or not; neither is it determinable with the evidence at hand.

[52] In a letter to Francis Wrangham on December 19, 1800 he said, "Wordsworth & I have never resided together…As to our literary occupations they are still more distant than our residences – He is a great, true poet – I am only a kind of Metaphysician." (*CL* I, p. 658)

being a mere "metaphysician" pursuing philosophical verification of his ideas, and

generous exaltation of Wordsworth during and even after their collaboration.

The Recluse Project (1798-1814)

The Recluse, jointly conceived by Coleridge and Wordsworth in March 1798, was planned

to be "a literary Work that might live" (*The Excursion*, p. 38). As Coleridge wrote to

Wordsworth in September 1799:

> I am anxiously eager to have you steadily employed on "The Recluse"...My
> dear friend, I do entreat you go on with "The Recluse"; and I wish you
> would write a poem, in blank verse, addressed to those, who, in
> consequence of the complete failure of the French Revolution, have thrown
> up all hopes of the amelioration of mankind, and are sinking into an almost
> epicurean selfishness, disguising the same under the soft titles of domestic
> attachment and contempt for visionary philosophies. It would do great
> good, and might form a part of "The Recluse".... (*CL* I, p. 527)

Coleridge's expectations of the poem were decidedly overwhelming,[53] and he obviously

had a high opinion of this chiasmatic[54] poetical venture because, as McFarland also

suggests, it was "projected as an alternative version of Coleridge's own system of

philosophy" (2002, p. ccxxix). It was such a philosophical initiative and what I would say

a bafflingly self-centred aspiration for dissemination of profound ideas that encouraged

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[53] As Perry (2014) summarizes, "…it would begin with the local verses of what is known as "Home at Grasmere" and then expand to include an anti-Lockean account of human nature; a rebuttal of empiricist epistemology; a refutation of theories of human evolution from the apes; a demonstration of the Fallenness of man as exemplified across the ages and the globe; an account of the hope of redemption; and finally a "grand didactic swell on the necessary identity of a true Philosophy with true Religion" and the metaphysical resolution of realism and idealism." (p. 148)

[54] Jerome Christensen (1981) states that "For the amicable chiasmus is the figure of method … Partaking of both poles, distinct from either, method is both the crossing plank from one side of the stream to the other and the eddy where circulates the proprieties of intention and act: *a* in *b*, *b* in a. Translucent, provisional, faultlessly deferential to the truth it serves—method follows the track of the chiasmus" (p. 258). Also see: Christensen, 1994, "The Method of *The Friend*" in *Rhetorical Traditions and British Romantic Literature*. ed. Don H. Bialostosky and Lawrence D. Needham. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, pp. 11-27.

Coleridge's investment in Wordsworth's poetical powers to write a great philosophical poem, to be called *The Recluse*, on "Man, Nature and Society" (*The Excursion*, p. 38).

Paul Cheshire (2009) in his "Coleridge's Notebooks" provides an analysis of two entries by Coleridge, and in these jottings we can trace, through analogies and underlying ambitions on the part of Coleridge, his agenda with regards to *The Recluse*. The first one is an entry of September–October 1802, where Coleridge complains that he laid "too many Eggs with Ostrich Carelessness" (*CN* 1: §1248), and the other quotation is a jotting of October 1803, where Coleridge appreciates Wordsworth for "devoting himself to his great work" (*CN* 1: §1546). Cheshire draws an analogy between the "single great egg" conceived by Coleridge and *The Recluse*: Although the first impression when two entries are compared might be "of Coleridge's self-deprecation", Cheshire notes, there is a reversal once we uncover "an underlying identification with Shakespeare" as his "ostrich eggs passage was adapted from Edward Capell's recently reprinted preface to an edition of Shakespeare, who seemed bafflingly careless about the printing of his works" (2009, p 303). This is a great analysis, and I would like to answer Cheshire's question "If Coleridge the careless ostrich is the genius, what does that make Wordsworth?" and contravene his own answer "Given that Coleridge felt he had conceived the plan for *The Recluse*, it follows that Wordsworth had been allocated the 'dull work of incubation'" (p. 303). I do not believe that for Coleridge writing poetry was a tedious task whatsoever[55], nor do I think that for Coleridge the "egg" symbolizes only poetical or philosophical creations. In other words, Coleridge the "careless" ostrich is not different from Wordsworth in

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[55] As Coleridge himself associated "composition" of *poetry* with "pleasure", "delight" and "gratification" in the *Biographia*: "A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species (having *this* object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*." (*BL* II, p.13)

conceiving eggs of another kind, it was just an issue of dividing labours and producing multiple "eggs", though different *in kind*, through reciprocity. Cheshire's later addition seems to support my view here: "The ostrich allusion has other resonances…ostriches do not distinguish between their own eggs and those of others" (p. 303). This amounts to saying, in the context of *The Recluse*, that Coleridge could not but carelessly scatter his philosophical views and it is through the poetry of Wordsworth that his views would turn into tangible productions. Wordsworth did not merely incubate, he conceived an "egg" which, but for the views of Coleridge, would hatch but might not have survived long. *The Recluse* project is hence the embodiment of Coleridge's conception of a joint *oeuvre*. I argue that this was an effect Coleridge aimed to achieve so that he could continue speaking through Wordsworth, a strong wish that lingered in some form or other up until 1814.

One feels compelled to ask at this point: Why did not Coleridge himself devote his time to create such a project? Why did he find it convenient to set out on a great philosophical poem with Wordsworth? First of all, Coleridge had previously planned to write a philosophical poem (to be named "The Brook") but could not finalise it.[56] Secondly, when they met, Coleridge was so overwhelmed by the poetic genius of Wordsworth that he felt the latter would be the perfect poetic outlet for his philosophical ideas, hence he vigorously assigned this sublime task to him. The project therefore was, to a large extent, "Coleridge's own aspiration" but "had been projected into Wordsworth's venture" (McFarland, 2002, p. ccxxxi). This line of thought does not, nevertheless, amount to saying that Wordsworth's poetry on its own merely consisted of such primitive pursuits

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[56] As Coleridge mentioned in the *Biographia*: "I sought for a subject, that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply in itself a natural connection to the parts, and unity to the whole...Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem, which was to have been entitled THE BROOK." (*BL* I, pp. 195-196)

as retreat to pastoral landscape or simplicity. On the contrary, as Stephen Gill (2003) also confirms, Wordsworth had been a "philosophic poet" ever since the *annus mirabilis*, and "philosophical aspiration was integral to Wordsworth's sense of his poetic vocation" (p. 143).[57] However, both Wordsworth and Coleridge from the outset had divergent opinions as to how to compose a philosophical poem, differing "without knowing how crucially they differed": "Coleridge looked for Wordsworth to pronounce 'upon authority' a 'system of philosophy', whereas Wordsworth had declared only that his 'object' was 'to give pictures of Nature, Man, and Society' (6 March 1798)" (Gill, 2003, p. 144). Coleridge's conception of a joint oeuvre and his professional and psychological motivations behind this idea largely explains the way he came to guide and even overwhelm Wordsworth's idiosyncratic composition of philosophical poetry – at least to a certain extent until *The Excursion* (1814).

If we follow what Coleridge thought at the time, it becomes clear that *The Recluse* was to be the ultimate product of Coleridge philosophically speaking through Wordsworth. Whereas Coleridge previously failed to undertake such a comprehensively ambitious project, he sought to make himself an inalienable part of what would be Wordsworth's biggest poetic mission.[58] In other words, this project for Coleridge was meant to make Wordsworth follow his own mostly idiosyncratic philosophical synthesis. This was not a strategy *per se*, but an indispensable instinct for Coleridge of speaking through another.[59]

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[57] Gill adds that "in Wordsworth's case…the philosophical poetry underpins everything else. *The Ruined Cottage* and 'Tintern Abbey'; much, perhaps most, of *The Prelude*…much of *The Excursion*…To 'do justice' to all of Wordsworth's poetry, the challenge of the philosophic verse must be embraced." (p. 149)
[58] Wordsworth in 1804 wrote to De Quincey, underlining the importance of *The Recluse* for him, and stated it was such a work that he could "devote the Prime of my life and the chief force of my mind" to it. (*WL* I, p. 454)
[59] He occasionally wrote to Wordsworth such letters as follows: "I long to see what you have been doing. O let it be the tail-piece of 'The Recluse'! for of nothing but 'The Recluse' can I hear patiently…" (12 October 1799, *CL* I, p.538)

His seemingly-disparaging remarks in comparison with Wordsworth's poetic genius were not mere self-abasements but the means for personal as well as professional survival for him to cope with and compensate for the lack since he believed that "every generous mind . . . feels its Halfness" (*CN* III, §3325). McFarland, talking about "Coleridge's intense psychological need for collaborative support in almost anything he did", describes this lack as Coleridge's "masochistic and psychically clinging" reliance on Wordsworth (1981, p. 94). However, in my opinion this very tendency points to a more profound need for Coleridge: the need for a complementary counterpart so that he could react symbiotically and interact chiasmatically. For instance, Coleridge in "The Blossoming Of The Solitary Date-Tree" (originally written prior to and around *The Prelude* of 1807)[60] with the line "The buoyant child surviving in the man" (*PW* I.II, p. 811) seems to be addressing Wordsworth as such a partner that he wished, if he could, to maintain as part of his own body. This was also the case when he assigned *The Recluse* to Wordsworth back in 1798. We can say that Coleridge right at the onset aimed to erase the distinctions between his own contributions to the project and those of Wordsworth in order to seamlessly merge his philosophical thoughts with the verse of his symbiotic partner. Therefore, rather than making Coleridge dependent on Wordsworth only, this process proved that by subscribing to Coleridge's grand scheme, Wordsworth also acknowledged his philosophical dependence on Coleridge to write the poem, especially the central philosophical sections of it. This is why when Wordsworth heard in March 1804 that his friend was intent on leaving the country for Malta, he wrote nervously to Coleridge: "I am very anxious to have your notes for The Recluse. I cannot say how much importance I attach to this. If it should please God that I survive you, I should reproach myself for ever in writing the work if I

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[60] In the *Poetical Works*, the poem is dated as "1807-8? 1802-4?" See: *PW* I.II, p. 808.

had neglected to procure this help" (*WL* I, p. 452).[61] However, it was not until 30 May 1815, eleven years belatedly, that Coleridge wrote about the content of *The Recluse* he had projected at the time of their collaboration (*CL* IV 574-5). Wordsworth hence had to proceed to writing the parts he single-handedly could compose.

The Prelude (1807)

Wordsworth began writing the preliminary version of *The Prelude* in and around September 1798, after the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*. Coleridge got him to embark upon a truly major task of writing the first philosophical poem ever and Wordsworth was at first not aware how big the venture was and how overwhelming the project would be.[62]. He was surely worried whether he could manage to do justice to such a big undertaking, but as we see in *The Prelude,* he wished to create the poem as expected.[63] Coleridge read the first two books of *The Prelude* in January 4, 1804, before he headed for the Mediterranean. As he recorded in his notebook, "in the highest & outermost of Grasmere Wordsworth read to me the second Part of his divine Self-biography" (*CN* I §1801). I think the words presumably highlighted by Coleridge here are "divine" and "Self-biography": The project, as a "prelude" to *The Recluse,* emerged as the intertwinement of Wordsworth's poetic genius and intellect with the hopes of producing a grand poem

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[61] In another letter of 29 March, 1804, Wordsworth asked Coleridge for immediate action of sending his notes on *The Recluse*: "Your last letter but one, informing us of your late attack, was the severest shock to me, I think, I have ever received… I cannot help saying that I would gladly have given three fourths of my possessions for your letter on The Recluse at that time. I cannot say what a load it would be to me, should I survive you and you die without this memorial left behind. Do for Heaven's sake put this out of the reach of accident immediately." (*WL* I, p. 464)

[62] In May 1838, in a retrospective confession to George Ticknor, Wordsworth admitted that he "had undertaken something beyond his powers to accomplish". (Life, Letters, and Journals of George Ticknor, p. 167)

[63] "Oh, that I had a music and a voice
Harmonious as your own, that I might tell
What ye have done for me." (Book XI: 20-22)

through the philosophical views of Coleridge. In other words, Coleridge expected that his partner could accomplish writing *The Recluse* in a way that blended his autobiographical narrative with themes pointing to philosophical and divine truths all across the ages. However, Wordsworth had to learn how to be at ease with the autobiographical voice he was meant to adopt in *The Recluse* as he initially did not like the idea of talking too much of himself. He thought the personal details mentioned in *The Prelude* could only be justified with publication of *The Recluse* so the reader could see the larger picture.[64]

Coleridge was re-introduced to another version of the poem after his return from Malta at Coleorton in January 1807 (the thirteen-book *Prelude* as Wordsworth completed in 1805-06). Despite the divergences with Coleridge especially on the power of language in constitution of thought, *The Prelude* of 1807 made a considerably reassuring effect on Coleridge in terms of his expectations of a joint project, a philosophical poem. It was, after all, the "Poem to Coleridge", which strongly and profoundly stimulated him to respond with another poem, "To William Wordsworth", in which he extravagantly praised the poetic genius of his symbiotic partner.[65] James Heffernan once suggested that *The Prelude* was "Wordsworth's letter to Coleridge, and the *Biographia Literaria* was Coleridge's reply" (1969, p. 5). Mileur (1982) similarly suggests that *Biographia* is "a reply to Wordsworth's 'Growth of a Poet's Mind'" (102). I challenge this view with the following

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[64] In a letter of April 29, 1804 to Richard Sharp, Wordsworth mentioned having written "between two and three thousand lines…", and added that "It seems a frightful deal to say about oneself, and of course will never be published (during my lifetime I mean) till another work [The Recluse] has been written and published, of sufficient importance to justify me in giving my own history to the world." (*WL* I, p. 470)

[65] This is a crucial turn in my argument about their lingering *symbiosis*: Coleridge was instigated to write a fairly major poem in his career as a reaction to another poem which was written by Wordsworth at Coleridge's own instigation so that the latter could speak through the former. This must be why Coleridge at the time cherished high hopes that his friend, the "great bard", was close to completing "An Orphic Tale indeed / A Tale divine of high and passionate thoughts", and gave his heart a "More than historic…prophetic Lay" as Wordsworth was the divine singer of a "high theme…sung aright" for the first time (PW II.II, p. 1031). The poem indeed seemed to Coleridge as a proper preamble to their joint project itself and he felt compelled to reciprocate duly.

proposition: *The Prelude* was indeed Wordsworth's letter, but the reply was apparently "To William Wordsworth" (1807) which, I argue, is a poem of "symbiotic reaction" because, taken together, the two texts reveal no dialogue as it would be the case if we took the terms "letter" and "reply" for granted. Instead, in order to understand the relationship between Wordsworth and Coleridge, the works must be considered as complementary voices of two writers, one of whom recently claimed to have lost his poetic powers ("Dejection: An Ode" of 1802), conferring them all on Wordsworth's verse.[66] I suggest that the poem was Coleridge's last tangible – and candidly hopeful – attempt to retain the division of labours he had long envisaged for himself and Wordsworth. This must be why, for example, Coleridge in 1807 promised posthumous fame and immortality to Wordsworth as long as he remained loyal to the themes Coleridge envisaged for him:

> O great Bard!
> Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
> With stedfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
> Of ever-enduring men. The truly Great
> Have all one age, and from one visible space
> Shed influence! They, both in power and act,
> Are permanent, and Time is not with *them*,
> Save as it worketh *for* them, not *in* it. (*PW* I.II, p. 817)

Here, Coleridge does not solely and self-renouncingly assign the role of "great Bard" who will join the "permanent" company of "ever-enduring" authors to Wordsworth; he simultaneously (but not overtly) attributes the role of a mentor, the man of guidance and influence, to himself. Upon hearing the poem, *The Prelude*, Coleridge was hence proud that he was the moving spirit behind Wordsworth's masterpiece which, as Kenneth Johnston (2003) tells us, is "very much a modern epic, with its emphasis on the growing

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[66] This is one of the reasons Morton D. Paley (1996) takes "To William Wordsworth" as a work marking Coleridge's transition to "Later Poetry" because "it renounces the grand poetry of public statement that had been so important to him from the late 1780s onwards." (p. 12)

selfconsciousness of its hero, more central to its story than all the mighty places and events through which he passes…" (p. 70). Coleridge in "To William Wordsworth" similarly pointed out that with *The Prelude,* Wordsworth was able to reflect "the foundations and the building up / Of a Human Spirit", which acted as a medium pointing to the intrinsic relationship between the mind and the phenomenal world, and revealed the latter to the "understanding mind" (*PW* I.II, p. 816). In the following part, I aim to read *The Prelude* through Coleridge's spectacles and demonstrate the grounds for his passionate appraisal in "To William Wordsworth".

One of the most fundamental distinctions between Coleridge's and Kant's philosophical views concerned the place of metaphysics, God, religion and *noumena* in their respective philosophies, and the question of whether human beings are capable of seeing into the existence of such concepts. For Coleridge, establishing his thought "by habituating philosophy to religion, and making religion amenable to philosophy" was of central importance to this thought; such a "marriage" enabled him to hold the view, as he expressed it in *Philosophical Lectures* of 1818-19, that "religion never can be philosophy, because the only true philosophy proposes religion as its end and supplement" and therefore, he held, "there can be no true religion without philosophy…" (p. 264). On the other hand, as Jonathan Roberts (2015) remarks, Wordsworth's attitude towards religion "might include matters such as his fluctuating relationship to the church, the baptism and burial of his children, his theological outlook, and his impact on religious debate in the nineteenth century", and his "religious experience" is constituted by such "first-person epiphanies ('spots of time')" as we can see in *The Prelude* (p. 694). Despite his relative distance from religion and philosophy, Wordsworth handled these topics in a way that, to a certain extent, satisfied Coleridge in 1807. The lines "I yearn towards some philosophic

song / Of truth that cherishes our daily life, / With meditations passionate from deep / Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse / Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre" (Book I: 232-236) illustrate the merging of Coleridge's philosophical, hence religious, agenda with Wordsworth's spiritual austerity vis-à-vis nature. At times, the religious tone in *The Prelude* is so strong (e.g. "When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked / Religiously in silent blessedness" (Book VI: 617-618)) that one may even think the lines could have been written by Coleridge himself.

"[H]ad he evaded Coleridge's sway" Perry (2009) asserts, Wordsworth "would not have become Wordsworth, most particularly not the author of *The Prelude*" (p. 661). I would like to slightly contravene Perry's suggestion because I hold that Wordsworth could have written the poem, and it would be *The Excursion* written seven years prematurely. What I mean is that the persisting symbiotic relationship between Coleridge and Wordsworth, combined with the overwhelming expectations about *The Recluse*, created such a pressure on Wordsworth in *The Prelude* that he seems to be alternating between his own voice and the invisible (but "reliably present") voice of Coleridge. In other words, for Coleridge, the reason *The Prelude* was so much of a success was because in the poem he could see the glimpses of the philosophical system he had been forging by himself – and Wordsworth was hence sometimes a devout religious man, sometimes almost a pantheist deriving religious experience from nature throughout the poem.

Another fundamental aspect of Coleridge's thinking in relation to the critical philosophy of Kant was that although he defended the constitutive mind, his metaphysical quest did not merely depend on the mind because nature (or the phenomenal world) also

partook in it.[67] As Tim Milnes (1999) also maintains, Coleridge sought to achieve a "harmonization" so that he could eventually "defeat the philosophies of mechanism and complete the logical propaedeutic of Kant without succumbing to the impieties of absolute idealism" (p. 310). The harmony he was looking for could be realised through commitment to the idea that nature and human mind are continuous with each other, being actively engaged in one another's realm in a non-dualistic way.[68] Considering that Coleridge could not conceive of the mind without transcendent references, its phenomenal correlative would definitely also be abound with divine characteristics.

In *The Prelude*, nature is therefore almost divine, as "her works…hold forth a genuine counterpart / And softening mirror of the moral world" (Book XIII: 287-289). Wordsworth talks about contently "mingling with the world", which at once makes him commune "With God and Nature" (Book II: 449-454). However, nature is not merely a reflection of the mind, the mind is also actively interacting with nature, and one can gain consciousness of it through contemplation. The poet hence is able to profoundly interact with it. This is a considerable contrast with the Kantian view of the phenomena because nature is not restricted by the boundaries of the human mind as a transcendental agent. The following passage illustrates the way Wordsworth's lines coincide with Coleridge's conception of the mind:

> … yet the mind is to herself

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[67] See: Modiano, 1985, pp. 154-160.

[68] As Wheeler (1986) suggests, "Coleridge insisted that this view makes it impossible to account for knowledge or to have any knowledge, and that the idealist solution is nonsensical, giving too much constructive power, or the wrong kind of power, to an externally conceived mind. Alternatively, we can see mind as a natural part of the course of natural events, with experience as neither subjective nor private nor mental, but the interactions and interrelations of natural objects, including minds. Imagination and intelligence are not, then, thought to 'create' the world of subjective experience based on some unknowable objective reality, thus denying the force of a natural world constantly at odds with, and pressing itself upon, intelligence. Imagination and intelligence are basic aspects of experience which can profoundly affect and alter experience for the better or the worse." ("Coleridge's Theory of Imagination", p. 31)

> Witness and judge, and I remember well
> That in life's everyday appearances
> I seemed about this period to have sight
> Of a new world—a world, too, that was fit
> To be transmitted and made visible
> To other eyes, as having for its base
> That whence our dignity originates,
> That which both gives it being, and maintains
> A balance, an ennobling interchange
> Of action from within and from without:
> The excellence, pure spirit, and best power,
> Both of the object seen, and eye that sees. (Book XII: 368-380)

In such a landscape, nature is not only an external object, it also acts upon mind in a way that informs it. In this respect, it is this exchange that makes Wordsworth the genuine poet of *The Prelude*:

> When, as becomes a man who would prepare
> For such a glorious work, I through myself
> Make rigorous inquisition, the report
> Is often chearing; for I neither seem
> To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,
> Nor general truths which are themselves a sort
> Of elements and agents, under-powers,
> Subordinate helpers of the living mind.
> Nor am I naked in external things,
> Forms, images, nor numerous other aids
> Of less regard, though won perhaps with toil,
> And needful to build up a poet's praise. (Book I:159-169)

Although such valences may bring pantheistic undertones into mind, I do not subscribe to the idea that Wordsworth is a thorough pantheist (or panentheist, for that matter) in these lines. Rather, I see here a Wordsworth dutifully struggling to combine his own autobiographical account with the expectations of Coleridge for the joint *oeuvre*.

Kant asserts that mind contains the (*synthetic-*)*a priori* notions (such as the laws of space and time as well as arithmetics and geometry) and God as a metaphysical concept must belong in the realm that is unknowable by the parameters of epistemology. Although we can conceive of metaphysical notions, they are not directly derived from any empirical

evidence in nature: Because our mind has *a priori* the sense of "time" and "space", and applies them onto objects of experience, as Kant puts it, "…we ourselves bring into the appearances that order and regularity in them that we call nature, and moreover we would not be able to find it there if we, or the nature of our mind, had not originally put it there" (*CL* II, p. 241). According to Kant's proposition, then, it is perception that determines the nature of experience in the phenomenal world, and apart from that, nothing can be the object of knowledge. In *The Prelude*, however, nature takes an active action, for example, to arouse emotions in us:

> The morning shines,
> Nor heedeth man's perverseness; spring returns—
> I saw the spring return, when I was dead
> To deeper hope, yet had I joy for her… (Book XI: 22-25)

Nature and the inner life, in *The Prelude*, are not superior to one another; they are complementary to human beings' cognition of the phenomenal (as well as the *noumenal*, Coleridge would assert) and can alternately work together.

The mind hence divinely ordained in *The Prelude* points to harmonious unity out of multiple forms in nature, as the poet confirms:

> …in all things
> I saw one life, and felt that it was joy.
> One song they sang, and it was audible,
> Most audible then when the fleshly ear,
> O'ercome by grosser prelude of that strain,
> Forgot its functions, and slept undisturb'd. (Book II: 435- 440)

Once the poet eclipses the automatized effects of the sensually informed external stimuli, the "fleshly" organs, he can reflect more focusedly on the workings of his mind, and the exchange between Reason and Understanding. However, this does not mean blocking the sense completely out and confining oneself to the machinations and perceptions of the mind. Both must be engaged in order to activate the mind's receptivity to not only its own

conceptions but also to nature as it is. Coleridge's solution to these multiple forms of
nature is "multeity in unity", a Coleridgean term denoting a reconciliation of "multeity" of
those "motions of the sense / Which seem, in their simplicity, to own / An intellectual
charm…" (Book I: 582-584) with an all-pervading unity originating in the mind. This is
how the multeity in unity functions in our struggle to make sense of the world and our
experience of it. Wordsworth's following lines bear testimony to the influence of this
crucial concept on *The Prelude*:

> Add also, that among the multitudes
> Of that great city oftentimes was seen
> Affectingly set forth, more than elsewhere
> Is possible, the unity of man,
> One spirit over ignorance and vice
> Predominant, in good and evil hearts
> One sense for moral judgments, as one eye
> For the sun's light. When strongly breathed upon
> By this sensation—whencesoe'er it comes,
> Of union or communion— doth the soul
> Rejoice as in her highest joy; for there,
> There chiefly, hath she feeling whence she is,
> And passing through all Nature rests with God. (Book VIII: 830-842)

The poetic voice here explicitly affirms the role of the transcendent entity in ensuring the
harmonious coexistence of multiplicities and unity. In other words, "Multeity" is not a case
to be tackled with, or to be ruled out. The "muddle" *per se* in the sense Perry uses it serves
well to understanding the lines above: refusal of mind's complete dominance over nature
requires one to recognise the reciprocal and a not-necessarily-hierarchical nurturing
process between them. One may, as in the case of Coleridge, make a lifelong effort to
arrive at unity, but multeity has a simultaneous reality.

It is through the divine blessing of God that Wordsworth thinks we can get a
glimpse of the "one". I suggest that we can trace Coleridge's line of thought in the
following piece of *The Prelude*:

> The mind of Man is fram'd even like the breath
> And harmony of music. There is a dark
> Invisible workmanship that reconciles
> Discordant elements, and makes them move
> In one society. (Book I: 354-358)

The "workmanship", though non-graspable through the senses and is not visible (hence "dark" and belonging to the *noumenal*), is able to exert control over "Nature" which, "by extrinsic passion… / Peopled my mind with beauteous forms or grand, / And made me love them" (Book I: 576-578). Wordsworth's account in *The Prelude* of a realm which – though "Invisible" to the "human eye" lives yet "to the heart" – exists "beyond the reach of" knowledge[69] is therefore definitely the locus of *noumena*. The enquiry into the metaphysical (hence transcendent) conception of *noumena* was laid substantial emphasis in Coleridge's transcendent philosophy due to the idea that once we relegate the *noumenal* world to an unknown realm, religion would automatically go under erasure. Coleridge therefore strictly questioned the Kantian idealist system which, he thought, relied too heavily on the machinations of the mind. This idea could be the moving impetus behind Wordsworth's composition of the following lines while Coleridge was in Malta: "What [would] then [remain] in such eclipse, what light / To guide or chear? The laws of things which lie / Beyond the reach of human will or power, / The life of Nature, by the God of love / Inspired—celestial presence ever pure" (Book XI: 96-100). That is to say, we can hold that the philosophical inspiration informing these lines of the thirteen-book *Prelude*

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[69] "I was only then
Contented when with bliss ineffable
I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves, and all that seemeth still,
O'er all, that, lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart" (Book II: 424-430)

can be inferred on the basis of Coleridge's philosophical concerns and religious agenda at the time.

Considering the literature on Wordsworth's relationship with language as a medium of expressing his personal history in *The Prelude*, we can see that it is predominantly centred around the idea of language as incapable of verbalising his thoughts (See: Borck, 1973; Lee, 2019). This view is largely grounded upon Wordsworth's theory of ordinary language in the 1800 "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads*. However, I must note here that whereas the *Lyrical Ballads* itself was a joint project of two poets, *The Prelude* is the product of a bigger project designed by a poet and a philosophically-attuned "metaphysician". Therefore, Wordsworth here was meant to be guided by the philosophical precepts communicated to him by Coleridge, as well as still having his own theory of ordinary language in mind. This aspect of collaboration resulted in a curious case in *The Prelude*: Wordsworth at times suffered from inaction and inexpression in the face of language, as the following lines from the poem illustrate:

> Oh mystery of man, from what a depth
> Proceed thy honours! I am lost, but see
> In simple childhood something of the base
> On which thy greatness stands…
> (…)
> I see by glimpses now, when age comes on
> May scarcely see at all; and I would give
> While yet we may, as far as words can give,
> A substance and a life to what I feel (Book XI: 330-344)

The poetic voice here nostalgically reminisces the days he thought "words" were able to express and give meaning to his inner thoughts, hinting at the idea that Wordsworth has already lost his faith in language's divine power to constitute and express thoughts through the filters of the mind. On the other hand, most probably when he feels the strong presence of Coleridge, we see the poet's faith in the linguistic signs to convey just the right meaning

– as if he is letting Coleridge speak through him. In this part of my demonstration, it is the "speak through" moment that I would like to focus on in order to highlight the parts that appealed to Coleridge in the thirteen-book *Prelude* in 1807.

Words and their immediate correspondence with the referents was the most defining characteristic of Coleridge's conception of language rooted in his religious orientation. As discussed previously, this topic is also another matter of divergence from Kant, whose dualism vis-à-vis words and thought radically clashed with Coleridge's organicism. He therefore believed that language could be the medium to ensure the unity with the Absolute, divine presence of God. I hold that Wordsworth in *The Prelude*, especially in parts that he is addressing Coleridge, dealt with words and the images they correspond in a way that highlighted the spiritual and Godly bond between them. In this respect, when Wordsworth says "…Thou, my Friend…art no slave / Of that false secondary power, by which, / In weakness, we create distinctions, then / Deem that our puny boundaries are things / Which we perceive, and not which we have made. / To thee, unblinded by these outward shows, / The unity of all has been reveal'd" (Book II: 216-227), he refers to arbitrary relationship between linguistic signs and corresponding objects. This dualistic approach does not appeal to Coleridge, according to whom words have divine origins, organically producing thoughts. Wordsworth in *The Prelude* makes a similar point when he writes that it is not "in a mystical and idle sense" but "in the words of reason" that "each most obvious and particular thought" is "deeply weigh'd" (Book II: 235-238). Elsewhere, Wordsworth goes back to his adolescent years and excitedly remembers his first recognition of the divine power of words by writing that his "ears began to open to the charm / Of words in tuneful order, found them sweet /For *their own sakes*…" (Book V: 580-582).

I therefore hold that in *The Prelude* (in thirteen books) the words designated the immediate presence of language in constitution of thought and its transcendent origin: In the first Book, Wordsworth underscores the vitality of "Wisdom and Spirit of the universe" which as the "Soul that art the eternity of thought" give "breath" and "everlasting motion" to "forms and images" (431-434) – which I take as reference to words and linguistic signs, exemplifying the way Wordsworth conceived of "forms and images" bearing divine and eternal elements. Wordsworth in the subsequent lines makes it clear that it is this "Wisdom" and "Spirit" that ubiquitously lays bare "feeling and thought" by intertwining "The passions that build up our human Soul": "Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man, / But with high objects, with enduring things, / With life and nature" (Book I: 436-441). In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth's treatment of language reaches even such a point that we can see conspicuous lines in which he almost pays homage to language in general and poetry in particular as the intermediary channel to make him gain recognition of the language in the phenomenal reality "abroad":

> …through this verse my mind hath looked
> Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven
> As her prime teacher, intercourse with man
> Established by the Sovereign Intellect,
> Who through that bodily image hath diffused
> A soul divine which we participate,
> A deathless spirit. (Book V: 11-17)

In these terms, poetic language consisting of "forms and images" as such spurs the mind to cognise the bodily forms and brings thoughts into existence. I hence maintain that while writing *The Prelude* in the late 1790s and early 1800s, Wordsworth's faith in language was relatively more straightforward than, as we will see later, his relationship with language and its immediate presence in thought while writing *The Excursion* (1814).

One of the elements that impressed Coleridge when he heard *The Prelude* in 1807 was the individuality of autobiographical narrative voice, with "high theme…sung aright" by Wordsworth for the first time (*PW* II.II, p. 1029). Wordsworth in his self-biography expresses the most intense moments of his childhood and youth through words solidly capable of conveying individual and authentic voice and thoughts. We can trace this idea in *The Prelude* in the lines, "A Traveller I am, / And all my Tale is of myself" (Book III: 196-197). Perry (2014) agrees that "The power of Wordsworth's autobiographical poetry lay partly in his ability to capture an experience that was generational, true; but it stemmed, too, from an audacious originality of purpose that was Wordsworth's and no-one else's" (p. 147). It was in this individual genius that Coleridge found himself and his own aspirations of a grand philosophical poem. This is confirmed by Wordsworth in the following lines:

> …and thou, O honoured friend,
> Who in my thoughts art ever at my side,
> Uphold as heretofore my fainting steps.
> It hath been told already how my sight
> Was dazzled by the novel show, and how
> Erelong, I did into myself return. (Book III: 199-204)

It was this aspect of his poem, on the other hand, that gave Wordsworth concerns about talking too much about himself: He wrote to Sir George Beaumont on 1 May 1805 that it was "a thing unprecedented in literary history that a man should talk so much about himself" (*WL* I, pp. 586-87). However, for Coleridge, individuality was inextricably connected with the "genius" of Wordsworth because, as he believed, only Wordsworth possessed the poetic genius to compose this philosophical poem. We can sense that language for Wordsworth especially when he is in an intimate dialogue with Coleridge in the poem emerges as capable of expressing his authenticity: It is not "unknown to thee",

Wordsworth addresses Coleridge in Book XII, that although he may have composed "some imperfect verse…/ Upon the vulgar forms of present things" Coleridge kept reminding him "A higher power" that found out of those forms " a tone, / An image, and a character, by books / Not hitherto reflected" (Book XII: 357-366). Such was the power of words for Coleridge (and for Wordsworth, for that matter): Originality could be achieved by assuming the narrative voice and language that was thoroughly generative, hence uniquely untrodden.

In *The Prelude* we can trace the reflections of the Coleridgean imagination, so much so that some parts seem as if written by Coleridge himself. As Paul Magnuson (2002) puts it:

> Wordsworth is a friend, a 'comforter and guide', yet the voice of *The Prelude* is, in part, Coleridge's creation, since its blank verse and theme of imagination's growth through memory originated in Coleridge's earlier 'Conversation' poems. *The Prelude* is ample evidence of Coleridge's claim of originality for creating the 'blank verse poem' not in the sense that his poetry is unique and or inimitable…but that it was generative. What Coleridge heard in December 1806 was Wordsworth's individual voice, yet that voice was an echo of his own. (p. 43)

Therefore, Coleridgean idea of imagination springing forth out of the infinite power of God and "lifting up itself / Before the eye and progress of my song" (Book VI: 528-29) has a solid presence in *The Prelude*. The poet testifies that "here that power, / In all the might of its endowments, came / Athwart me" (Book VI: 530-32). Just as Coleridge saw and as Wordsworth understood it, this regenerative power partakes in the divine, the transcendent God:[70]

> I was lost as in a cloud,
> Halted without a struggle to break through,
> And now, recovering, to my soul I say

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[70] In a 1807 letter, Wordsworth also invites such religious connotations when he tells Lady Beaumont that "to be incapable of a feeling of Poetry in my sense of the word is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God." (*WL* II, p. 146)

> 'I recognise thy glory'. In such strength
> Of usurpation, in such visitings
> Of awful promise, when the light of sense
> Goes out in flashes that have shewn to us
> The invisible world, doth greatness make abode,
> There harbours whether we be young or old.
> Our destiny, our nature, and our home,
> Is with infinitude—and only there;
> With hope it is, hope that can never die (Book VI: 532-43)

Imagination here, through its productive power, is able to transcend what is given by nature and transform it in order to see into the origin of things: The Absolute, divine existence. In addition, before the tripartite separation of Sense, Understanding and Reason in 1809, as discussed earlier in this chapter, Coleridge held that Reason was the primary divine force that has constitutive function in terms of attaining knowledge. Therefore, in *The Prelude*, imagination emerged as "another name for absolute strength / And clearest insight, amplitude of mind, / And reason in her most exalted mood" (Book XIII: 166-170). Wordsworth's reference to imagination as the highest rank of Reason coincides with Coleridge's evolving views of correspondence between Reason and imagination from 1806 to 1809-10.

The epistemic status of imagination is also affirmed and foregrounded in *The Prelude*, which perfectly coincides with Coleridge's conception of the mind as a response to the epistemological predicament that disturbed him most in Kant's philosophy: The ruling out of "thing in itself", *noumena*, from the sphere in question. On the other hand, Reason (and hence imagination) is in the centre of Coleridge's epistemological query established on the parameters of philosophy and theology. In Wordsworth's poem, imagination is repeatedly associated with such productive and recreative terms as "conception" and "pregnancy" vis-à-vis knowledge. Consider the following lines:

> Thus here imagination also found

> An element that pleased her, tried her strength
> Among new objects, simplified, arranged,
> Impregnated my knowledge, made it live—
> And the result was elevating thoughts
> Of human nature. Neither guilt nor vice,
> Debasement of the body or the mind,
> Nor all the misery forced upon my sight (Book VIII: 803-810)

Here, imagination emerges as the regenerative power activating the thinking process in human mind. It is in this respect closely associated with the Truth arrived through the intellect, Reason, and as a poet, he is even more "pregnant with" the "absolute truth" (Book XI: (92).

As a result, *The Prelude* in thirteen books, as Coleridge heard it recited in 1807, met his expectations to a large extent: It was in this poem that Coleridge's idiosyncratic response to Kantian philosophy as well as his views on language and imagination was largely reciprocated in poetic form, mostly because the boundaries and themes of it had already been determined, as Wordsworth states at the end of the first book:

> One end hereby at least hath been attain'd,
> My mind hath been revived, and if this mood
> Desert me not, I will forthwith bring down,
> Through later years, the story of my life.
> The road lies plain before me; 'tis a theme
> Single and of determined bounds; and hence
> I chuse it rather at this time, than work
> Of ampler or more varied argument. (Book I, 669-676)

The Prelude therefore can be considered as the the most distinguished product of Coleridge speaking through Wordsworth, which fell into a relative decline afterwards. Richard Gravil (2015) proposes that it was in fact in *The Prelude* that Wordsworth and Coleridge's initial agenda for *The Recluse* (as outlined in the "Prospectus" which was composed in 1800 but not published until 1814, in the preface to *The Excursion*) came closest to fulfilment (p. 362). *The Prelude* (1807) was a demonstration on Wordsworth's part that he still largely

sought the themes and ideas Coleridge instructed him in the preceding decade, thereby

maintaining the symbiotic relationship, though in a slightly different way from the time of

annus mirabilis. I suggest that *The Prelude* and Coleridge's subsequent response, "To

William Wordsworth", marked the waning process of their symbiosis as their collaborative

interaction was visibly on the decline. From then on, Wordsworth was expected to finish

the bigger project, *The Recluse*, and unable to do so, he published a less appreciated and

highly criticized work[71], *The Excursion*, in 1814.

The Excursion (1814)

Coleridge's palpably self-deprecatory admiration for and investment in Wordsworth during

the *annus mirabilis* gradually and involuntarily began to shatter with their "radical

Difference" that emerged after the 1800 "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads*, and also

following his settling with the Wordsworths after his public service in Malta from 1804

to1806. In the seven-year gap between the *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, Coleridge and

Wordsworth's relationship and collaboration fairly transformed. Coleridge and

Wordsworth to a certain extent continued to co-produce and actively inspire each other up

until *The Friend* project came to an end in 1810 and Coleridge heard the disparaging

remarks of Wordsworth about himself. The breakup of their friendship in 1810 had led to

"no coolness in Coleridge's respect for Wordsworth as a poet" (Engell & Bate, 1983 , pp.

xlix-l) but definitely left him thoroughly resented.

Even though Wordsworth had recently recited *The Prelude* (1807) to Coleridge and

he most delightedly responded with the poem "To William Wordsworth", the publication

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[71] See: Jeffrey, Francis. "Review of *The Excursion, being a portion of the Recluse, a Poem*". *Edinburgh Review*, No.24 (November 1814). pp 1-30.
Also see: Milnes, *The Prelude* 2009. p. 14.

process of *The Friend* (1809-10), followed by the debacle of 1810, all contributed to Coleridge's gradual disillusionment with Wordsworth and partial disintegration of his faith in their joint *oeuvre* – with the consequence that Coleridge's faithful "hope" in his partner of such lifelong ambitions as *The Recluse* had lost its previous bearing on Coleridge.[72] As he wrote to Richard Sharp on 24 April 1812,

> I had scarcely arrived in London, last October twelvemonth, before the conviction was forced on me, say rather, pierced thro' my very soul with the suddenness of a Flash of Lightning, that [Wordsworth] had become my bitterest Calumniator whom to that very moment I had cherished in my Heart's Heart. – The benumbing Despondency relieved by no gleam of Hope, and only alternating with fits of (truly may I call it) mental agony, I even now scarcely dare look back on. (*CL* III, p. 389)

Coleridge also added that he was now able to obtain "the conquest over [his] own Feelings" and he could now "call [him]self a freeman".[73] Coleridge now visibly became intensely engaged with, as he wrote in a subsequent letter, "plans of more permanent literature" (*CL* III, p. 390). However, for Coleridge, the symbiosis did not, and could not, end there because Coleridge's hope for the philosophical poem did not take the same nosedive as their personal relationship at the time: whatever their professional disagreements and personal clashes were, Coleridge continued to cherish hopes for "speaking through" Wordsworth by means of his partner's impending great philosophical poem, *The Recluse*, which was to be the "litmus test" of their symbiotic collaboration and Coleridge's philosophical investment in Wordsworth's poetry.[74] I therefore hold that up until 1814 Coleridge compellingly continued to speak through Wordsworth or the Wordsworthian period of his life.

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[72] "Loss of Hope", Coleridge once noted in October 1803, is nothing but "castration of the self-generating Organ of the Soul." (*CN* I, §1552)

[73] Despite their reconciliation in the same year, neither their friendship nor collaboration could be recaptured – at least not until the late 1820s. (See: Bloom, 2010, p. 3).

[74] As Philip Aherne states, "Wordsworth was a primitive model for Coleridge's greater intellectual project" (2018, p. 96).

What eventually brought the *symbiosis* to a proper finale was not the end of *annus mirabilis*; we can safely assert this seeing that both *The Prelude* and "To William Wordsworth" (1807) were products of a sort of lingering symbiosis between Coleridge and Wordsworth.[75] Instead, I maintain that what enabled Coleridge to reclaim his separate identity in mid-1810s was his disillusionment with Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814) and with the "great philosophical poem" project of *The Recluse*.[76] For years deeply, though intermittently, occupying himself "in Wordsworth's aspiration towards great poetry" (McFarland, 2002, p. ccxxx), Coleridge then became firmly assured that it was no longer possible to speak through his symbiotic partner. According to Sally Bushell (2002), the stages both Coleridge and Wordsworth went through while *The Excursion* was being composed "run parallel to the shifting poetic relationship between Coleridge and Wordsworth until the poem itself, in its distance from the original conception, comes to represent the division between them" (p. 23). I contest Bushell's argument here with the proposition that after the era of symbiosis and "speaking through" came to an end, for Coleridge there remained yet another mode of relationship he could build with Wordsworth: "dialogue" and "speaking to".

In the context of this study, I totally align my argument with the idea that some deeply-entrenched anxieties both poets suffered from preceded the symbiosis of Coleridge and Wordsworth and, in a way, made it possible. As I will discuss and demonstrate in the following chapters, however, the symbiosis especially on Coleridge's part was anything but dialogical in the sense of listening and responding to a dialogue partner. In a dialogue,

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[75] A few years ago Wordsworth had recited to Coleridge his *Prelude* (1807), lifting Coleridge's spirits to respond with "To William Wordsworth", "Composed on the Night After His Recitation of a Poem on the Growth of an Individual Mind." (PW II.II, p. 1029)

[76] Planned as early as March 6th, 1804 (*PW* II, p. 368), *The Excursion* was published in 1814 and advertised as "A Portion of The Recluse" on its title page.

there must be two distinct voices, but in Coleridge's aspiration to "live and act in thee, &

be Thou" I cannot see a simultaneously separate self, although it must be noted that this

was not a total submission on Coleridge's part, neither did the symbiosis without a proper

dialogue make Coleridge less successful in his career.[77] The symbiosis in fact enabled

Coleridge to establish the philosophical agenda for *The Recluse* and adapt philosophical

views of others, especially the Kantian critical philosophy, largely in his own way in order

to, by implication, guide Wordsworth according to his own philosophical position.

In the absence of Wordsworth, for whose fame Coleridge, as he wrote in a letter of

February 1818, had "fought with an ardour that amounted to absolute Self-oblivion" (*CL*

IV, p. 839), Coleridge was compelled to build a dialogic relationship with his former

partner through what I want to call "revisionary reaction". In other words, it was time to

invest in his own reputation, especially after realizing the previous self-oblivion and "a

readiness to prefer him to myself, yea, even if Life & outward Reputation itself had been

the pledge required" (*CL* III, p. 396). Coleridge hence began to revise his works to re-

record the once-interdependent relationship with Wordsworth and to underscore his

distinct poetic and critical genius.[78]

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[77] McFarland makes it clear that "Coleridge's reliance on Wordsworth, though masochistic and psychically clinging, was not accompanied by reliance in the realm of thought. In that realm, indeed, the reliance was reversed. It is significant that Wordsworth never lost his enormous respect for his friend's mental powers, despite his growing disgust at Coleridge's weaknesses, despondency, and self-indulgence. If Coleridge was overwhelmed by Wordsworth, Wordsworth, in another way, was no less impressed by Coleridge." (*Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin*, 1981, p. 94).

[78] As Class also outlines the source of Coleridge's uneasiness in the face of Wordsworth's genial writing: "Wordsworth's aspiration to match Milton with his own verse epic and his image of himself as a prodigal son are well known…Wordsworth's poetry and prose, particularly when concerned with himself and his vocation as a poet, convey at times striking parallels with Kant's concept of genius as delineated in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*…Kant was also a great admirer of Milton….After the return from Germany in 1799, Wordsworth was the only person besides Poole with whom Coleridge shared his Kantian studies…In 1805, when Wordsworth read out *The Prelude*…[Coleridge] was struck by despondency as he felt that Wordsworth's great philosophic long poem had anticipated his future work. The desire to compete with Wordsworth slowly began to grow in Coleridge. So far the poets had worked together on fairly equal grounds, as Coleridge had been solely able to claim the role as the philosophical thinker and literary critic.

Coleridge, ever since he met Wordsworth, in a way besieged Wordsworth on all sides: As early as 13 May 1796 he referred to Wordsworth as "the best poet of the age," (*CL* I 215) and with this entitlement, McFarland argues, "he gained an enormous and on the whole salubrious purchase on Wordsworth's subsequent career" (2002, p. ccxxx). I wholly subscribe to this view; however, my argument differs from the rest of McFarland's discussion when he adds, "But this influence, so benign and so important, became alien when it led him to demand of the by then wholly acquiescent Wordsworth, 'a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature and Society'." As I have attempted to demonstrate so far, what made their intellectual break, in the context of their joint project of *The Recluse*, was not because Coleridge entrusted Wordsworth with a project as grand as this, but because (on Coleridge's part) Wordsworth failed to follow his advice and began to form his own path.

Sally Bushell in *Re-Reading The Excursion* (2002) suggests that the reason for unfavourable critical judgment towards *The Excursion* throughout the twentieth century was the dominating critical remarks of Coleridge, through which Wordsworth's second longest poem was assessed (pp. 13-14). And I assert that the primary ground for Coleridge's adverse criticism was that Wordsworth diverged from Coleridge's philosophical guidance on language and imagination, depending on his poetic "genius". That is, as Class maintains, he "endorsed the concept that nature gave rules to poetry through the genial poet: so much so that the poet claimed he could not explain his own inspiration" and, as a claim, it was palpably strategic as "The sense of condescension to knowledge acquired from books, study or other conscious efforts" was always present in

Philosophy was the area in which he could shine when he compared himself to Wordsworth. Yet *The Prelude* in addition to the Prefaces to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800 and 1802) began to threaten Coleridge's niche…" (2012, p. 162)

Wordsworth's writing, which is also in line with the Kantian conception of "genius" (p. 165). The process, I assert, eventually and inevitably brought Wordsworth to a realm where the ideas conveyed by his verse echoed the transcendental philosophy of Kant.

Although, following Modiano (1985), it admittedly seems "rather indecorous" to make a connection between "the poet who made no secret of his distaste for books and formal training and who often criticized Coleridge for his devotion to metaphysics in lieu of nature" and such a "radical a thinker as Kant", we surely know that "Wordsworth frequently discussed the subject of the sublime with Coleridge" who was very "well versed in Kantian philosophy" (pp.128-129). As Nicola Trott (1998) holds, "Just how much Wordsworth picked up from Coleridge", we cannot know, but we can see that something of the Kantian philosophy is "continuously present in Wordsworth" (p. 90). Modiano also controversially asserts that "If Coleridge was in fact Wordsworth's instructor in transcendental philosophy, he managed to turn Wordsworth into a far more faithful disciple of Kant than he was himself" (129).

This is why Coleridge remonstrated with Wordsworth in the letter of 30 May 1815 because of the adherence in *The Excursion* to Kantian understanding of the mind and the senses, hinting at his friend's leanings towards a non-transcendent conception of the mind:

> I supposed you first to have meditated the faculties of Man in the abstract, in their correspondence with his Sphere of action, and first, in the Feeling, Touch, and Taste, then in the Eye, & last in the Ear, to have laid a solid and immoveable foundation for the Edifice by removing the sandy Sophisms of Locke, and the Mechanic Dogmatists, and demonstrating that the Senses were living growths and developements of the Mind & Spirit in a much juster as well as higher sense, than the mind can be said to be formed by the Senses...Such or something like this was the Plan, I had supposed that you were engaged on. (*CL* IV 574-575)

Philosophically speaking, Coleridge thought that in the 1814 poem, the components of which were meant to constitute "one compleat Whole" (*CL* IV, p. 573), Wordsworth

treated senses and elements of Understanding (not the "Reason") as constitutive agents in

knowledge-formation. As he talked in 1832 about his frustration with the latest-published

part of *The Recluse* project, *The Excursion* of 1814, he retrospectively disclosed the

justifications for his dispraise of the poem:

> Wordsworth should have first published his thirteen books on the growth of
> an individual mind, far superior to any part of the Excursion: then the plan
> suggested and laid out by me was – that he should assume the station of a
> man in repose, whose mind was made up, and so prepared to deliver upon
> authority a system of philosophy. He was to treat man as man – subject of
> eye, ear, touch, taste, in contact with external nature – informing the senses
> from the mind and not compounding a mind out of the senses – then the
> pastoral and other states – assuming a satiric or Juvenalian spirit as he
> approached the high civilization of cities and towns, and then opening a
> melancholy picture of the present state of degeneracy and vice –thence
> revealing the necessity for and proof of the whole state of man and society
> being subject to and illustrative of a redemptive process in operation-
> showing how this Idea reconciled all the anomalies, and how it promised
> future glory and restoration. Something of this sort I suggested-and it was
> agreed on. It is, in substance, what I have been all my life doing in my
> system of philosophy. (*Table Talk* I, pp. 307-308)[79]

With regard to my overall investigation, it can be asserted that Kant's resonances in *The*

Excursion (1814) contradict with Coleridge's expectations from Wordsworth and their

joint *oeuvre*. Back in 1807, Coleridge wrote "To William Wordsworth" as a response to

Wordsworth's *The Prelude* because, I argue, he found the poem largely promising in terms

of reflecting his own metaphysical and philosophical views vis-à-vis language and

imagination. However Wordsworth, not through a studious opposition but through his

poetic practice, eventually fell at stark odds with Coleridge's expectations with *The*

Excursion of 1814 and came to depart from the Coleridgean philosophy, at times applying

his theory of "ordinary language", and at times even ending up inadvertently reflecting a

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[79] A year earlier, Coleridge had proudly told H.N. Coleridge that "My system is the only attempt that I know of ever made to reduce all knowledges into harmony" because "it opposes no other system, but shows what was true in each, and how that which was true in the particular in each of them became error because it was only half the truth. I have endeavoured to unite the insulated fragments of truth and frame a perfect mirror" (*Table Talk* I, p. 248).

Kantian strain in terms of language and imagination, which came to be the source of Coleridge's eventual dismay, frustration and termination of symbiosis in his mind. After all Coleridge believed, as Hamilton (1983) also states, in the unique power of poetry, and his "quarrel with Wordsworth in *Biographia* mostly arises from the fear that Wordsworth was doing away with the devices and conventions which signal this awareness" (p. 4).

According to Perry (2014), among the factors contributing to Coleridge's disappointment with *The Excursion* was decidedly "Wordsworth's piety", looming large especially "in the latter parts of the poem":

> In a long career of admiring Wordsworth, Coleridge never thought much of the quality of Wordsworth's Christianity, which had an unscrutinised ecumenical ease naturally irritating to someone who had wrestled with the Trinity on innumerable dark nights. As far as Wordsworth was concerned, Coleridge evidently shared with his theologically savvy son Hartley a distaste for 'the odd occasional introduction of the popular, almost the vulgar, Religion in his later publications'…and at one point even admitted 'the painful suspicion of worldly prudence'… (p. 147)

The lines Wordsworth used to depict nature in *The Excursion* turned out so disturbing for Coleridge's profound religious pursuits in poetry that, as he would later put it in a letter of 1820, they simply remained "the vague misty, rather than mystic, Confusion of God with the World & the accompanying Nature-worship" which for Coleridge was "the trait of Wordsworth's poetic Works that I most dislike as unhealthful, & denounce as contagious" (*CL* V, p. 95). In the poem, the "heart" is the locus "Where Fear sate" but it is "wanting" a "cherished visitant", and in the "the universal face / Of earth and sky" one can only feel "the power / Of Nature" and it is through this powerful agent that one can also be "taught / To feel intensely" (Book I: 204-214). We can therefore no longer feel the blissful adherence to religious and divine elements in the poetry, but we see that the previous faith

has been shattered. Having served "Nature" and "Truth", the narrator confirms that "their

DIVINITY"did nothing but "offended the ways of men" through employment of

> Philosophers, who, though the human soul /
> Be of a thousand faculties composed,
> And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
> This soul, and the transcendent universe,
> No more than as a mirror that reflects
> To proud Self-love her own intelligence;
> That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss
> Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly! (Book IV: 870-881)!

Human beings or those preoccupied with philosophical inquisitions seem no longer

partaking the divine creativity, they emerge as as restless, finite beings lost in the

overwhelming infinitude of the divine Being in the universe of *The Excursion.*

The point Coleridge insisted on in the extended comments on *The Recluse* project

in general was the idea that mind is not a regulative medium processing the empirical data

into knowledge (as Kant propounded it was) but it actively produces, through Reason and

Understanding, new meanings and recreates unique works of art. As Coleridge made it

clear in a letter of April 3rd, 1815 to Lady Beaumont:

> Of the Excursion, excluding the tale of the ruined Cottage…I do not think, I
> did not feel, it equal to the Work on the Growth of [Wordsworth's] own
> spirit. As proofs meet me in every part of the Excursion, that the poet's
> genius has not flagged, I have sometimes fancied, that having by the
> conjoint operation of his own experiences, feelings and reason *himself*
> convinced *himself* of Truths, which the generality of persons have either
> taken for granted from their Infancy, or at least adopted in early life, he has
> attached all their own depth and weight to doctrines and words, which come
> almost as Truisms or Common-place to others. (*CL* IV, p. 564)

On the other hand, Stephen M. Parrish (1958) suggests about the Wordsworth-Coleridge

controversy that "what was clearly on the surface a disagreement about poetic diction may,

underneath, have been a disagreement about dramatic method" (p. 367). In *The Excursion*,

Wordsworth seems to be looking at the importance, as Bushell puts it,

of mental activity in the non-poetic mind, as a record of the 'more lowly matter" of ordinary lives. The effect of this is that [*The Excursion*] is concerned with the operations of the receptive mind which is acted *upon* as much as the mind which acts. This apparent shift towards passivity underlies much of the critical dissatisfaction with *The Excursion* in comparison with *The Prelude*. (2002, p. 231)

Whereas in *The Prelude* Wordsworth indeed actively generates the recollections regarding his poetic genius on the individual - authentic level and retrospectively narrated them, *The Excursion* predominantly deals with the "wisdom" in personal and ordinary lives of his dramatic characters:

> From his native hills
> He wandered far; much did he see of men,
> Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,
> Their passions and their feelings; chiefly those
> Essential and eternal in the heart,
> That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,
> Exist more simple in their elements,
> And speak a plainer language. In the woods,
> A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,
> Itinerant in this labour, he had passed
> The better portion of his time… (Book I: 369-379)

Coleridge does not like the matter-of-factness exalted in the poem because it is not the growth of the poet's mind any more, neither is it the creative story of his friend's physical as well as spiritual growth: Sally Bushell's assessment is relevant here:

> Attempts to involve the reader in the third person narratives of *The Prelude* are limited by an autobiographical control of narrative presentation which is essential to the kind of poetic act that the poet performs in this work, and to his addressing of a particular readership. *The Excursion* is able to undertake a completely different approach to the relationship between poet and ordinary man. The stories of others do not have to be validated as suitable subjects for poetry because of their part in the development of the 'higher' imaginative powers of the poet, but can be valued instead in their own right. (2002, p. 232)[80]

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[80] Bushell also compares the two poems and the narrative voice in them: "…in the earlier poem, such tales [of others] are not intended to have any particular significance beyond their personal importance for the poet and within the autobiographical structure of the poem. They are not required to be operative. It is only in the later text that the sharing of narratives comes to be seen as a means of communicating ideas and values

Instead of the poetic mind, language and divine power of imagination, *The Excursion* dwells on the appraisal of mundane exchanges and power of the ordinary – which for Coleridge fails to lead to universal Truths and merely presents "accidents" of life. In a letter of May 22nd, 1815, Wordsworth asked Coleridge what exactly he did not like about *The Excursion*, and Coleridge's reply of May 30, 1815 casually presents the reasons for his "Dispraise" by outlining the expectations of the great philosophical epic poem of *The Recluse* he had entertained up to then: "It is for the Biographer, not the Poet," wrote Coleridge, "to give the *accidents* of *individual* Life. Whatever is not representative, generic, may indeed be most poetically exprest, but it is not Poetry" (*CL* IV, p. 572).

In such a case, we end up with the finite conception of the outside world and there are pluralities of which the mind cannot properly make sense. Whereas it was the idea of "Multeity in Unity" that was celebrated and made possible in *The Prelude*, *The Excursion* emerges as endorsing the idea of divergences and dissipations without the strong and necessary presence of a unifying principle: Even if human beings "Enquire of ancient Wisdom" and "demand…/ if 'twas ever meant / That we should pry far off yet be unraised; / That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore", they end up

> Viewing all objects unremittingly
> In disconnection dead and spiritless;
> And still dividing, and dividing still,
> Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
> With the perverse attempt, while littleness
> May yet become more little; waging thus
> An impious warfare with the very life
> Of our own souls! (Book IV: 802-813)

directly to the reader. In such a work these tales function poetically in a very different way. In *The Prelude* the poem is concerned with self-education, in *The Excursion* with how we can educate each other and with the structures through which to communicate such teaching." (2002, p. 231)

Eventually, as Perry suggests, "A work that sets out to confirm the merits of some metaphysical unity to everything is, at several points, strikingly drawn by the thought of things being plural" (2014, p. 149). Through the dramatic voices in *The Excursion*, hence, we get a glimpse of the world shattered, fractured and gloomy.

According to Coleridge, because *The Excursion* narrates the stories and growth of others' minds as well, the characters and descriptions Wordsworth "renders", as he put in the *Biographia* are "specific and individual, even to a degree of portraiture", hence the result is that "he is comparatively careless" with "his diction and metre" as well (*BL* II, p. 29). Coleridge then thought that the language in *The Excursion* is therefore largely mundane, and unable to convey that special and unfamiliar "prophetic lay" any longer:

> The measure is either constructed on no previous system, and acknowledges no justifying principle but that of the writer's convenience; or else some mechanical movement is adopted, of which one couplet or stanza is so far an adequate specimen, as that the occasional differences appear evidently to arise from accident, or the qualities of the language itself, not from meditation and an intelligent purpose. (*BL* V.II, p. 29)

Coleridge's reaction to the ordinary and even mechanical language of Wordsworth has its origin in the idea of the intellectual transformative power of words, and Wordsworth's approach leads one to underestimate the dependability of linguistic tools, giving way in *The Excursion* to ideas that "cannot be reviewed in thought; / Much less, retraced in words" (Book III: 689-690). Indeed, the following lines demonstrate Wordsworth's sway (vis-à-vis *The Prelude* as Coleridge heard it in 1807) after being preoccupied with the ordinary language:

> The intellectual power, through words and things,
> Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way!
> And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,
> Some trace am I enabled to retain
> Of time, else lost; – existing unto me
> Only by records in myself not found. (Book III: 709-714)

Wordsworth is obviously not sure whether words will be able to communicate his thoughts when he says "I will here record in verse" observations and thoughts the mind deals with, but the poet is not sure whether his words will "correspond" with "truth".[81]

Contrary to *The Prelude*, the poem of 1814 failed to reflect "imagination" as a faculty that not only re-creates and transforms the elements in nature but has the capacity to transcend the empirical observations altogether. Instead, the narrator in Book III "languidly" turns towards "this visible fabric of the world" (Book III: 970) and the "imaginative faculty" is held as the "lord / Of observations natural" (Book IV: 693-94). Hence, the faculty so extolled by Coleridge is almost reduced to fancy:

> …and, thus
> Led on, those shepherds made report of stars
> In set rotation passing to and fro,
> Between the orbs of our apparent sphere
> And its invisible counterpart, adorned
> With answering constellations, under earth,
> Removed from all approach of living sight
> But present to the dead; who, so they deemed,
> Like those celestial messengers beheld
> All accidents, and judges were of all. (Book IV: 695-703)

Whereas Coleridge had found in *The Prelude* not only the poetical but also the spiritual and philosophical arguments he had been looking for in their joint project, *The Excursion*

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[81] And some small portion of his eloquent speech,
And something that may serve to set in view
The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,
His observations, and the thoughts his mind
Had dealt with – I will here record in verse;
Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink
Or rise as venerable Nature leads,
The high and tender Muses shall accept
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,
And listening Time reward with sacred praise. (Book I: 94-103)

was largely about the pedantic way of talking about mundane "truisms" in verse, mostly with limited or reduced recourse to imagination.[82]

Having presented in this part the grounds for Coleridge's favourable approach to *The Prelude* in 1807 and later discontent with *The Excursion* in 1814, and noted that publication of the latter marked the beginning of a "dialogic process" in the relationship of Coleridge and Wordsworth, I will now draw on the post-*Excursion* revisionary period of Coleridge's life: 1814-1818.

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[82] See: Bushell, 2002, Chapter 7.

CHAPTER TWO – ON COLERIDGE'S REVISIONS IN GENERAL

> My heart plays an incessant music, for which I need an outward
> Interpreter / -words halt over & over again! - and each time - I feel
> differently, tho' / children of one family.
> Coleridge, *Notebooks* II, p. 2035 (19-20 April 1804)

Having established in the previous chapter the philosophical and professional entanglements as well as the ensuing faultlines between Coleridge and Wordsworth especially after *The Excursion* (1814), which ultimately made the former realise that it was high time he invested in his discrete *oeuvre*, in this chapter I aim to deal with the grounds for Coleridge's revisionary and dialogic reaction from 1814 up until the year 1818 to Wordsworth and their previous collaboration.

Considering my overall argument that Coleridge in this process had transitioned from "speaking through" a symbiotic partner to "speaking to" his friend on personal and professional level, it is now time to demonstrate the revisionary repercussions of the failure of Coleridge's joint project with Wordsworth, *The Recluse.* Following the radical differences and Wordsworth's failure to bring *The Recluse* into completion as Coleridge designed and expected it, the latter became thoroughly convinced that his aspirations and plans for a "great" philosophical poem would not be realised by Wordsworth on his own terms. Between the years 1814 and 1818, I argue, Coleridge therefore was able to revive and revise his life and opinions (in the *Biographia Literaria*, 1817), his poetical works (in the *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817) and his periodical of 1809-10 (in the *rifacciamento* of *The Friend*, 1818).

My main objective in this part is to demonstrate the way Coleridge's revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818 enabled him to foreground his own theory of language as well as literary persona, the way his idiosyncratic definition of the Kantian concepts such as

Sense, Understanding and Reason helped him relate his linguistic pursuits to the theory of imagination, and how revisions contributed to his conception of a separately unified self, whereas simultaneously and inadvertently revealing what Seamus Perry calls the "Coleridgean muddle". Perry, referring to Coleridge's writings up to 1818, argues that rather than "any abiding unity it synthesises out of its recalcitrant elements", the claim of Coleridge's mind lay in "the scrupulous energy of its inconsequence" (1999, p. 2). Here, Perry does not clearly explain what these scruples are in the service of. In this chapter, I aim to show that it was Coleridge's muddled revisionary activity that made this process unique and noteworthy. Therefore, following Perry, instead of looking for "a systematic and orderly intellectual structure lurking within only *apparently* erratic writing," I aim to inquire "a genuine pattern of oppositions, a consistent double-mindedness ('division', fancifully, as 'di-vision', 'twofold vision'), the effects of which extend from Shandyesque comedy to self-alienating angst, and which create a kind of enabling inconsistency" (p. 3). The investigation here aims to present an exploration of how such a muddled mind could have guided Coleridge's revisions from 1814 to 1818, largely determining the Coleridgean canon still appreciated today.

The aim here is not to introduce any of the revised works in this period as part of a continuous literary undertaking. Neither do I think Coleridge had some kind of a grand project in mind when he embarked on his revisionary activity after 1814. I argue that Coleridge in this process of rewriting himself and his works presented himself in such a way that his revisionary activity could be seen as a long-delayed reconsideration of his engagement with Wordsworth and investment in his reputation for years.

To this end, in what follows, I will be first presenting a short review of the recent critical trends in Romanticism, the place of revisions in the scholarship and, particularly, in

Coleridge studies. Then I will elaborate on my own position and my contribution to the critical debate concerning Coleridge's motivations while carrying out his revisions from 1814 to 1818. The following literature review is hence the foundation and the frame to confirm and demonstrate my own critical intervention in the field.

Romanticism and Revision: Literature Review

Beginning from the 1980s, a series of critical changes took place in Romantic scholarship so as to redefine Romanticism in less conventional terms. Repercussions of the Marxist-inflected New Historicism in the 1980s was promising in terms of recapturing forgotten identities, suppressed voices, banished texts, as well as neglected aspects of literary compositions so that their historical moments could also be recaptured. This shift of perspective entailed turning the gaze from the conventional to the marginal; i.e. the marginalised populations, identities, aspects, and practices of the Romantic era. The new-historicist handling of the Romantic age hence transformed the previous commonplace terms greatly. Such works as Tilottama Rajan's *Dark Interpreter* (1980), Marilyn Butler's *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries* (1981), and Jerome McGann's *The Romantic Ideology* (1983) consolidated the canon reform initiated by such movements as feminism, Marxist historical materialism, and theory-based analyses of literary texts. Especially Jerome McGann's trilogy, *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation* (1983), *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (1983) and *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in Historical Method and Theory* (1985) can be considered as one of the most influential prime-movers of a new critical approach to Romanticism. For example, pointing out that the Romantic writing and scholarship at the time were "dominated by an uncritical absorption in Romanticism's own self-representations" (1983, p. 137), Jerome

McGann proposed a reading of the Romantics that was suspicious of how they described themselves, the compositional history of their works, and the ways they defined their own era. This is a position Clifford Siskin (1988) later named as the "lyric turn",[83] and Paul Hamilton more recently (2013) argued that this outlook resulted in a refutation of Romanticism on its own terms, "calling the bluff of its ideal authority" in order to "upset the hierarchy on which it seemed to depend" (p. 8). This is the time when, for example, Hamilton elsewhere aimed to "point up the importance of [Coleridge's] lines of thought which subverted his stated intentions" (1983, p. 1).[84]

After the 1980s, therefore, it was no longer fashionable to lump the actors of the Romantic Movement into a single category in which their particularities largely went under erasure and looked as if their reactions to the era they lived in were synchronious and homogenous. Much recent commentary on Romantic Literary Criticism has enabled us to consider the writers, thinkers and population of the era with a refreshed outlook and awareness of their political, cultural, social and historical contexts. As a result, the myth of "solitary" Romantic genius of ephemeral sensations and once-and-for-all literary compositions was largely obliterated, hence enabling a move away from the oversimplified representation of complex historical processes that are inclined to construct a stabilised and identifiable Romantic literary tradition.

Revision as a fundamental preoccupation of the Romantic era had also been simultaneously marginalized, even exiled, because of the period-specific exaltation of "spontaneity". The dominant definition and so-called basic tenets of Romanticism through

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[83] It is "that feature by which creative and critical narratives, from the past and from the present, veer from the generic and the historical to the natural and the transcendent, metamorphosing all analysis into claims of Imaginative vision" (Siskin, 1983, p. 19). "Present and Past: The Lyric Turn", pp. 3-63.
[84] Coleridge had, as Rosemary Ashton (1996) argued, an "uncanny talent for being beforehand with his critics in analysing himself" which, inevitably, "has important implications for any consideration of his influence." (p. 274)

which, Siskin maintains, "creative and critical narratives, from the past and from the present, veer from the generic and historical to the natural and transcendent, metamorphosing all analysis into claims for Imaginative vision" (1988, p. 12) were shattered in the 1980s. Re-writing as a reality of Romantic texts was henceforward no longer to be banished or deplored. In other words, once it was recognised that critics were erroneously subscribing to such mythical and idealised self-descriptions of the Romantics as spontaneity, unity and "tales of lyrical development" (p. 170), the determining elements of the Romantic Movement including spontaneity and unity came to be seen as products of revisions themselves (pp. 27-29).

The scholarly debate on the concept of "Romantic revision", on the other hand, is wide-ranging: It has been described as deliberate "misreading" of one's precursors and "rewriting" (Bloom, 1973, 1975 and 1976), "secondariness" and "belatedness" as the writer himself is preempted by his predecessors (Mileur, 1982), "self-criticism" (McGann, 1983), "change" and "difference" presented as "development" (Siskin, 1988), dialogue between the poet's early and later self (Galperin 1989), textual "instability" (Stillinger, 1994), "improvement" and "clarification" (Leader, 1996) or "re-reading" (Bushell, 2014). Mileur (1982) regards revisions as "*sécondarité*," and "belatedness" vis-à-vis the writer's feeling of being usurped or diminished by his forerunners (pp. vii-ix). Previously, Harold Bloom had a palpable impact on the body of literature regarding the Romantic re-reading and revision. He held that in the post-Milton era, no poet could be exempt from the "anxiety of influence", hence he characterized revision as reading by "misprision, or strong misreading" (*A Map of Misreading*, 1975, p. 6), leading up to "indeliberate and almost unconscious" misinterpretation of previous texts by poets (*The Anxiety of Influence*, 1973, p. 30). Accordingly, every poem is a remake, or "misprision", of a precursor's work in a

way that they are constituted as misreadings: "Poetic influence - when it involves two strong, authentic poets - always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation. The history of fruitful poetic influence, which is to say the main tradition of Western poetry since the Renaissance, is a history of anxiety and self-saving caricature, of distortion, of perverse, wilful revisionism without which modern poetry as such could not exist" (p. 30). Hence they cannot be considered as isolated products of a poet's mind but are formulated as the main agents of a relation to another poem as "Any poem is an inter-poem, and…a poem is not writing, but *rewriting*" (Bloom, *Poetry and Repression*, 1976, p. 3). Revision in this regard is a medium to enable relationship between respective writers and their works because "…poetic language, is always and necessarily a revision of previous language" (p.4). Likewise, writing itself is also considered as a revisionary activity in that it enables intentional misinterpretation of the writers of the past ages. William H. Galperin's approach in *Revision and Authority in Wordsworth* (1989) differs from Bloom as he takes revision as a bridge between the early and later poetry of the poet, namely Wordsworth. Galperin persistently argues for "the validity of demarcating Wordsworth's career" (p. 2), and he assigns the later poetry the "function" of "writ[ing] over so as to displace the poet's earlier achievement" (p. 218). Galperin also reads Wordsworth as a poet "moving in two directions at once: forward toward the fulfilment of an intentional structure, and backward toward an exposure of that structure's intentionality" (p. 24). In this respect, the early work is destabilized and dethroned by the later one, at once undermining textual authority of the writer. Accordingly, the later Wordsworth writes over the poetic ambitions of his younger self and undermines his predecessor's authority.

Ever since the concern for authorial intention was substantially replaced by an emphasis on the historicity of textual production - that is, over the past forty years – there has been an increasing preoccupation with textual "instability" and multiple versions of texts. Jack Stillinger has a strong presence here in terms of focusing in *Coleridge and Textual Instability* (1994) on the Romantic revisions. That multiple texts and inveterate revisions conducted on a text create instability, notably giving way to the elusion of a stable meaning, constitute Stillinger's elemental argument in the book. Zachary Leader's *Revision and Romantic Authorship* (1996), on the other hand, presents revisionary activity as a means for clarification of meaning and improvement of texts that need to be ready for publication (pp. 35, 37-8). Leader illustrates his point by arguing, for example, that Wordsworth's desire was to be "judged by his accomplishments - final authorized versions - of his lifetime" (p. 38) as they are the improved, hence more valid, versions. For Leader, revision does not necessarily serve to modify or repudiate ideas of the past but rather has the purpose of clarifying the original meaning and intent of the author. In this respect, Leader contradicts Galperin in that revision for him is a clarification rather than writing over the past self, "for the most part the revisions respect original meanings and effects even when they seem to be serving new ones" (p. 42). In the particular context of Coleridge's revisionary activity in his middle years, a short preview of these scholarly positions is required so that the controversy and contesting positions in literature can be delineated.

Coleridge had always been an "inveterate reviser" (Stillinger, 1994, 104). At the beginning of the *Biographia,* he provided an account of the publication process of his small volume of juvenile poems and the period in which he wrote and subsequently revised "Religious Musings" (1794-1796). He confessed that, at the urging of friends and critics,

he "pruned" the poems "with no sparing hand" in order to "tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction" and to get rid of the "parasite plants of youthful poetry" (*BL* I, p. 7).[85] Mentioning a twenty-year plan for a poem in April 1797, Coleridge wrote to Cottle that he was bound to devote "Ten to collect materials, & warm my mind with universal Science…the next five in the composition of the poem - & the five last in the correction of it" (*CL* I, pp. 320-321). Later, in a letter of 28 February 1804, he was complaining about "think[ing] meanly of what I have written, almost immediately after the hot fit of composition", which he thought was "ever a disease of my mind" (*CL* II, p. 1075). J.C.C. Mays (2001) also observes that even though Coleridge "took most care" with his poetic collections of 1797 or 1817, he grew "dissatisfied with both collections even before they were published" and at best, his satisfaction "often mingled with anxiety" usually lasted for "a few months or years", after which "his interest and sense of achievement appear in every case to have waned" (p. cxvii). This was mainly the case, Mays states, between not only "one version and another, or between several versions, but between several versions none of which is complete" (p. cxii). He was therefore seldom content with what he produced, as he wrote in a letter of December 1816, "...every year I compose more slowly and with greater effort, not from any decrease in the steam of my Thoughts – for the contrary is the case; but from the increasing difficulty of satisfying myself, and the increasing Self-teizing when I let a sentence go off that I know to be faulty" (*CL* IV, p. 692). Coleridge must hence have feared that a finished work, as Zachary Leader (1996) argues, would have a self-contained, and hence falsifying, character – like all things

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[85] "In the after editions, I pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand, and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction; though in truth, these parasite plants of youthful poetry had insinuated themselves into my longer poems with such intricacy of union, that I was often obliged to omit disentangling the weed, from the fear of snapping the flower." (*BL* I, p. 7)

written (p. 134). This is why Coleridge, once written, could not let go of his works, unlike Keats for example.[86] As he conceded in another letter of 29 April 1817, such was his *nature* that "the pangs which self-dissatisfaction inflict[ed]" were too "poignant", and he disclosed what I regard as a dictum he already followed throughout his revisionary activities: "Find out the best, and turn it to the best purposes..." (*CL* IV, p. 728).

Coleridge's motivations, Stillinger claims, while making changes to his poems were "uncertain" and "the most obvious explanations seem to conflict with one another" but, he adds, "there is a good chance that all the explanations, even the ones seemingly in conflict, are valid" (1994, p. 100). As outlined above, the body of literature on revisionary activity in the Romantic period mainly dwells on such revisionary intentions as deliberate misreading, denial, concealment, clarification, improvement and instability, and Stillinger (1994) also uses the words "correction" and "revision" interchangibly (p. 104). Surely for Coleridge, revisions *also* had the function of correcting, as he wrote in a letter of February 1797 to Cottle referring to his contribution to *The Destiny of Nations*, "I torture the poem, and myself, with corrections; and what I write in an hour, I sometimes take two or three days in correcting…" (*CL* I, p. 309). With regards to Coleridge's inveterate revisions, scholarship mainly lays the stress on two functions: Non-additive alterations that aim to dig out and discover what is already in the text and clarify the meaning, and additive revisionary activity aimed at bringing in novel interpretations and insertions to an earlier text.

Coleridge did revise to clarify his texts without necessarily adding new ideas into the text. Consider Coleridge's revisions of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" before the

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[86] "Coleridge is an epitomizing example of the poet who revises; Keats is an epitomizing example of the poet who, for both theoretical and practical reasons, does not revise." (Stillinger, 1994, p. 101)

publication of the second volume of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800): McGann (1985) shows,

for instance, that whereas the 1798 version adhered "closely to the conventions of ancient

balladry", hence having a "status as an imitation or literary ballad", its revised version of

the 1800 version of *Lyrical Ballads* turned out to be "a conscious attempt…to make the

'Rime' appear less a literary ballad and more a lyrical ballad" (p. 141). Additionally,

Coleridge eliminated the obscure parts as well as "the most conspicuous archaisms in

diction and spelling and tone[d] down some of the Gothicism" (Stillinger, 1994, p. 15).

Leader (1996) also holds that whereas Coleridge's revisions were carried out towards

clarification of original meaning, revisionary activity does not require addition and even

constitution of new meanings, as the meaning is embedded in the work at its inception: It is

"perfectly sensible to see almost all the alterations…as working towards intentions –

thematic and formal – present from the poem's inception" (p. 131). On the other hand,

critics such as William Empson and David Pirie (1972) argue that Coleridge's revisions

served to suppress and compromise the otherwise "ideological embarrassment" caused by

his revolutionary views in his youth (p. 250). Norman Fruman (1992) asserts that

Coleridge revised his poems such as "The Ancient Mariner" to address his "*insistent* need"

for concealment (p. 155). Stillinger also holds that Coleridge in the subsequent stages of

re-working on his texts "*added authorial intention* that was not consciously present in the

original composition" (1994, p. 107).

A consideration of Coleridge's revisions in their totality is barely exhaustive

without a discussion of his personal and professional exchanges with Wordsworth. Harold

Bloom's (1973) assessment that Coleridge refused to assert a strong poetic identity in the

face of the "grandeur" of Wordsworth's literary output (p. 38) coincides with Mileur's

(1982) account of Coleridge's exaltation of Wordsworth as a far superior poet (p. 12).

According to Bloom and Mileur, Coleridge's desperate crisis of poetic identity vis-à-vis Wordsworth led him either to remove himself (Bloom, 1973, pp. 263-4) or to exorcise Wordsworth (Mileur, 1982, p. ix) out of his own poems. In my treatment of Coleridge's revisions from 1814 to 1818, the aspect I find the most fundamental to Coleridge's revisionary activity is the role Wordsworth previously played in constitution of his *oeuvre*, and the way Coleridge dealt with the issue of re-building friendship based on dialogue through revisions. Coleridge surely was overwhelmed by the poetic genius of Wordsworth at almost every stage of their relationship. However, this does not amount to saying that this feeling made him revise his works to keep up with his partner; instead I hold that Coleridge's personal and professional investment in Wordsworth's reputation was due to his psychologically-compelling feeling of subscription to a joint corpus of works. I argue that this plan had to be reversed after *The Excursion* as it marked for Coleridge the beginning of a discrete *oeuvre*, hence revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818.

Stillinger's argument that Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814) and his collected poems of 1815, both of which respectively contained a "Preface" outlining the unity of all the poet's works and presenting the rationale behind the classification of his poems, constituted an impetus for Coleridge's considerable revisionary activity around 1815 coincides with mine (1994, p. 110). However, he adds that Coleridge's purpose during his revisions was "to achieve in his own work the same kind of unity of effect that Wordsworth was in the process of accomplishing in his" (p. 110). Here, I swerve away from Stillinger when he draws on Coleridge's contingency, overlooking his struggle to give up the habit of speaking through Wordsworth (or his works, for that matter) so that he could come up with an idiosyncratic, philosophically-informed authorship independently.

Nonetheless, critics writing on the Coleridgean *oeuvre* and revisions predominantly seem to highlight and problematise the hermeneutic gap[87] between *themselves* and Coleridge's historical condition. They hence either attempt to overcome the gap by trying to re-evaluate the work in its unique historical circumstances, or try to appreciate Coleridge from their own current positions. A noteworthy example is provided by Matthew Vanwinkle (2004) when he discusses how Coleridge's relocation of his "Frost at Midnight" in the *Sibylline Leaves* of 1817 among his meditative poems (even though the poem itself responded to "the repressive political climate that emerged in the wake of the French Revolution") was re-considered and re-contextualized in the early 1990s by critics as "a text intricately engaged with the broad social and cultural questions of its day" (pp. 583-584). However, Vanwinkle asserts, such a "revaluation" has led to "some unfortunate consequences, not the least of which is the occlusion of Coleridge's own conversation with his earlier self in the process of revising one of his signature texts" (p. 584). Mays (2001) also argues that once an editor – or a critic, for that matter – "works to exclude the assumptions of a particular time, and to subordinate temperamental preferences to the author-artist he is attempting to serve, his efforts show up as limiting and intrusive, and thereby increasingly a distraction", and he also warns against "presenting an author on his or her own terms" as "the result will hardly survive a generation" (p. lxxxii). However, this approach misses the opportunity to deal with what Coleridge thought he was doing at the time he was revising his *oeuvre*.

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[87] Characteristically, the term means lack of information. Karl F. Morrison (1988) defines the term as summing up "the negative content of an inquiry into understanding" resorted by those who are deprived of "information needed to complete the pattern" emerging before them, and end up becoming "a co-creator of the text in the process of reading". They hence "enter into the text, and into the author's mind, trying repeatedly to fill in the gap." (p. 34)

Joseph A. Appleyard (1965) once deplored the lack in Coleridge scholarship of "a full-scale study of the development of his philosophy which will consider him on his own terms and not as a representative of something else, whether it be German idealism, English Platonism, pantheistic mysticism…so as to see what that thought is and not merely what it is like or unlike" (p. ix). I think this statement simultaneously pinpoints what also made Coleridge grow discontent with others' philosophical views: He did not want to follow any single person; he aspired to be followed by others (especially Wordsworth as his showcase) in his eclectic handling of philosophical and literary issues. I also concur with Stillinger's (1994) view that when it comes to Coleridge's revisionary engagements and the "surplus of materials", it is of utmost importance to consider "what [Coleridge] thought he was doing in writing and (continually, obsessively) revising"; otherwise, a critical position inevitably raises "serious philosophical questions about the basic nature (ontology) of a Coleridge poem and the constitution of the Coleridge canon" (p. 25). In other words, the question "what Coleridge thought" becomes fundamentally central to the discussion of Coleridge's textual and contextual modifications.

Having hence outlined the body of criticism that has profoundly informed my point of view and enabled me to formulate my contributory argument on Coleridge's revisions from 1814 to 1818, the following part is aimed to clearly demonstrate my unique intervention to the field.

The Main Contribution of This Study

Coleridge's revisions cannot be merely confined to misreading of precursors, concealment of previous personal or professional entanglements, correction and clarification of original meaning, or an interpretation of it – although I agree that his revisionary activity in one

way or another potentially and usefully served these purposes. Although Coleridge himself would surely subscribe to the idea that revision is merely a tool for clarifying his original intention, and would love people to adopt this opinion, in fact Coleridge the writer and Coleridge the inveterate reviser are by no means mutually exclusive; rather, they both act concertedly and simultaneously. Hence revision for Coleridge is not only interpretive and clarifying but also additive and even generative. This is critically important when we handle the Coleridgean *oeuvre* because in the name of of clarification and explanation, Coleridge substantially changed the content of his previous works, or retrospectively interpreted them in such a way that the original context of the work was either lost or nebulized. I hold that the Coleridgean awareness of split between what he actually experienced and what he thought and knew equipped him with a consciousness that whereas he actually aimed for building an identity and creation of a public persona, Coleridge at the same time wished to reflect his revisionary activity as nothing more than clarification and correction of an otherwise misunderstood position.

I think in Coleridge's case of revisiting his life, opinions and poems in the aftermath of *The Excursion*, revision turned into a tool of revelation, detachment, recognition of his muddles and reconstruction of his own discrete *oeuvre*. More specifically, during his revisions from 1814 to 1818, Coleridge not only had to deal with his "precursors" as suggested by Bloom, he also dealt with Wordsworth and their personal and professional entanglements. I would therefore contest the idea that at the high watermark of their collaboration Coleridge suffered a peculiar version of the anxiety of influence, rooted in the fact that it was not always clear how influence would be nurtured and measured. As the philosopher and critic in the relationship, Coleridge knew that his role was to be the influencer. But he could not wield his influence without deep

engagement with his friend's work and he often doubted his initial misgivings about it. After the publication of *The Excursion,* on the other hand, this anxiety assumed a subtly different form. He had to give up the idea that he was the influencer in order to rescue the integrity of his own work and that part of Wordsworth's *oeuvre* with which he felt most identified. This second version could at best be an "anxiety" of disentanglement. In other words, contrary to Galperin's idea of "writing over" one's previous works, Coleridge was aiming to re-record his own works in their individual existence. However, far from exorcising Wordsworth from his life or works, he was rather recognising his own path to secure proper friendship by abandoning the habit of speaking through his partner. The aim of revision was hence to enable dialogue with Wordsworth.

In addition, I would like to expound on the dates, 1814-1818, which I take to be a significant timespan for Coleridge's separation from Wordsworth and for constitution of his own discrete *oeuvre*. It must be noted that Coleridge revising himself was surely not a new phenomenon in the specific dates from 1814 to 1818, as discussed above. There were surely a myriad of intellectual and revisionary activities before 1814 and after 1818. In this study, however, I aim to demonstrate the faultlines instigating Coleridge's "reactionary" revisions and their long-lasting results because I assert that those revisions largely laid the groundwork for the Coleridgean *oeuvre* as we know it today. Critics including Magnuson (1974), Mileur (1982), Stillinger (1994), and Leader (1996) have already noted that Coleridge carried out the most famous revisions in and around 1815-1817, taking the writing process and publication of the *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves* as the preambles and terminal dates to revisionary activity. However, these critics and their dating miss out on two important milestones in Coleridge's revisions around these dates: The role of Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814) in initiating Coleridge's revisions, and the

importance of Coleridge's revisions of the periodical *Friend* in 1818. My dates are therefore intentionally more comprehensive. My emphasis is on Coleridge's loss of heart in the grand project of *The Recluse* upon the publication of Wordsworth's *The Excursion* in 1814, and on the publication in 1818 of the revised version of *The Friend* as the terminal dates for Coleridge's revisionary reaction.

With this dissertation, I therefore hope to make contribution to our developing understanding of Coleridge's revisions, which have so far been inspiringly examined by the leading scholars, as outlined above. However, the works I have so far engaged with and those treating Coleridge directly or in passing do not deal in a sustained way with the intersections between Coleridge's discrete revisionary journey in the *Biographia Literaria*, *Sibylline Leaves*, and *The Friend* and his idiosyncratic responses to Kant beginning from the early 1800s, his joint project – *The Recluse* – with Wordsworth, and his theory of language and imagination. Considering the extent to which Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and *The Excursion* accorded with Coleridge's theory of language and imagination vis-à-vis the corresponding concepts in Kant's critical philosophy discussed in the previous chapter, my distinct and main critical intervention in the critical debate about Coleridge's revisions is the assertion that once Coleridge was frustrated by Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, he found that it was high time he resorted to his own resources, rather than the remains of his symbiotic relationship with Wordsworth, to revise his past and rewrite his life, opinions and poetical works in order to lay claims on his discrete *oeuvre*. It was in this way that he could not only dig out his own unique voice, but also build a proper dialogue and friendship with Wordsworth.

Taking the overall argument of my thesis into consideration, it must be noted that this particular study is especially relevant today because it is important to pinpoint the

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strongest impetus behind Coleridge's self-refashioning in the relatively later period of his career, and his motivations considering the intersections between Coleridge's idiosyncratic intellectual pursuits, his investment in Wordsworth and his poetic genius, and his later personal and professional frustration and his revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818- which has not been the subject of close scrutiny in Coleridge studies so far.

Coleridge's Revisions: 1814-1818

Coleridge between 1814 and 1818 was committed to redesign his life, opinion and affiliations in the *Biographia* (1817), re-record his poetical works in the *Sibylline Leaves* and enact his fixed principles in *The Friend* (1818). The first reason for Coleridge's revisionary activity in this timespan was to firmly underscore his philosophical and religious faith in linguistic signification. Considering language for Coleridge was capable of creating thoughts, hence constituting the layers of human understanding, and bearing the essential nature of things in its capacity of expression, we can hold that his revisions were surely guided by his faith in communicability of thoughts through language. Language, hence, emerges as the immediate embodiment of an inseparable bond with the phenomenal objects to which the linguistics signs point. On the other hand, Wordsworth's views on rustic language and half-hearted faith in linguistic signs to convey his thoughts through language – which for Coleridge was similar to Kantian neglect towards the power of words – constituted one of the most important departures for Coleridge while revising himself.

I find Coleridge's description of "desynonymy" useful here as the concept helps us gain deeper understanding of Coleridge's dissociation from Wordsworth in terms of language. It is a method he conceptualised in 1803 (*CN* I, §1336) to differentiate between the standard synonyms unanimously adopted and interchangeably used. Likewise,

following Galperin (1987), the termination of the joint *oeuvre* process after 1814 can also be named as Coleridge's "desynonymization" from Wordsworth. In addition, Coleridge's quest for the absolute Oneness but his simultaneous recognition of multiplicities also had its bearing on his conception of language.

Early in his youth Coleridge endorsed the view of "Unity Entire", which can be very broadly described as deduction of the inherent connectedness, wholeness and "holiness of earth and sky" alike. In the early years of his career, this view had roots in his Unitarianism and pantheistic views, as Coleridge vividly described in a letter of October 1797 his attraction to unity, "My mind feels as if it ached to behold & know something great, something one & indivisible-and it is only in the faith of this that rocks or waterfalls, mountains or caverns give me the sense of sublimity or majesty" (*CL* I, p. 349). Strengthened by his early contacts with "the monistic philosophies of Plotinus, Boehme, Berkeley and Spinoza", as Raimonda Modiano explains (1985, p. 20), Coleridge's espousal of the idea reflects his preliminary quest to grasp the existence of "*oneness*, there being infinite Perceptions", and his resolution that "there must be a *one*ness, not an intense Union but an Absolute Unity" (*CN* I, §556). According to this early view, then, diversity and multiplicity stemming from infinite numbers of perceptions get inextricably interwoven in the supposedly harmonious melting pot of the Absolute Unity. Morton D. Paley argues that in the years following his return from Malta, it turned out that the wholeness of Coleridge's vision regarding the harmoniously interrelated order of things was already lost (1996, p. 37). I contest this view and assert that the vision was not completely lost, but rather retained partially and reformulated as "Multeity in Unity" - a term was first presented in the Malta notebooks (*CN* II, p. 2344), and later became

Coleridge's preferred word for the diversity or plurality ever-present in the unified whole: "the Revelation of the Finite, of the *Multeity* in the Unity" (*Fragments*, II: 1320).

Upon his return from the Mediterranean in 1806, Coleridge separated from his wife, Sara Coleridge, and moved in with Wordsworths at Grasmere. He spent his time both lecturing and writing articles for journals, which gave him the opportunity to address a bigger audience, enabling him to formulate his ideas on literary criticism as well as the notion of Multeity in Unity. During his lectures in early 1810s, he praised Shakespeare and Milton, whose "myriad-mindedness" he admired, aspired and in a sense followed since by altering words as well as images they brought about unique works that would not only "hover between images", but also "reconcile opposites and qualify contradictions" by leaving them "unfixed and wavering" between images, "attaching [themselves] permanently to none" (*Lectures* II, p. 496; *Lectures* I, p. 311). This is surely what Lucy Newlyn means when she identifies this myriad-mindedness with "the interdisciplinary nature of Coleridge's thinking" (2002, p. 2). It was this mindset, I hold, that enabled Coleridge to bring together the metaphysical significance of language and the manifold relations between words, object and the mind. As Coleridge states in a notebook jotting of March-April 1811:

> We must therefore minutely examine, each in all its manifestations, as far as we can…for ever be this my Motto/ 'When I *worship,* let me unify…To be wise I must know all things as *One*; to be knowing I must perceive the absolutely indivisible as infinitely distinguishable. And this holds from the Universe to a Grape-cluster / even as the human Intellect in the infinite divisibility of matter attributes the same infinity of component parts to a Grain of Sand as to a System of Worlds.. (*CN* III, §4058)

Differing from the Unity Entire, this new vision denotes an acknowledgment of the multiple forms of existence as they are, without necessarily trying to impose an "absolute unity" upon divergent components. It was thanks to this understanding of multeity in unity

that Coleridge was able to accommodate the incongruous and even contradicting ideas both in his mind, in his works and revisions.

The second reason this thesis will focus on for Coleridge's revisionary activity between 1814 and 1818 is his theory of imagination and Wordsworth's misunderstanding of the concept, even "synonymizing" it with fancy. Coleridge's frustration with the lack of imaginative-"recreative" power in *The Excursion* (1814) was even more intensified by Wordsworth's description of imagination and fancy in the "Preface" his *Poems* (1815). Coleridge hence was resolved in the *Biographia* to "add the Trunk, and even the Roots" to Wordsworth's "sketch of the Branches with their poetic Fruitage" (*BL* I, p. 88). Just as the concept of "muddle" helps us recognise the peculiarities of Coleridge's active-constitutive mind imbued with the idea of "Multeity in Unity" and its reflections on language, Coleridge needed an understanding of imagination which not only unifies but also "dissipates" and "dissociates" at once (*BL* I, p. 304) so that it recreates the images anew.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have outlined Coleridge's motivations for revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818, and what makes these refashionings unprecedented in the course of Coleridge's personal and professional history. According to this investigation, Coleridge emerges not merely as the composer of a handful of brilliant poems in the *annus mirabilis* during his symbiotic partnership with Wordsworth, but most importantly as an important figure of the Romantic movement with his definitive and idiosyncratic philosophical ideas and revisionary activity informed by his views on language and imagination, reaching its peak after he embarked on his discrete *oeuvre*, this time in dialogue with Wordsworth, especially after *The Excursion* (1814). According to my approach, Coleridge's literary

criticism, his muddles, and reactionary revisions in the aftermath of *The Excursion* up until *The Friend* of 1818 have eventually set the terms for, though not fully anticipated, his awareness of an *oeuvre* desynonymised from that of Wordsworth in a distinctive way.

The following chapters will focus on providing more detailed analyses of Coleridge's revisionary practice between 1814 and 1818. By means of extensive references to Coleridge's marginalia, letters and notebooks made available by the Bollingen edition of the *Collected Coleridge*, the chapters to come account for how Coleridge revised his life and opinions in his autobiographical work the *Biographia Literaria* (1817), his poetical works in collected form named *Sibylline Leaves* (both written in 1815, but not published until 1817), and his *The Friend* (composed and issued weekly in 1809-10, and published as a three-volume *rifacciamento* in 1818).

CHAPTER THREE – REVISING LIFE AND OPINIONS: *BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA* (1817)

> I regard, and ever have regarded the obligations of intellect among the most sacred of the claims of gratitude. (*BL* I, p. 15)

First conceived as a few-page-long autobiographical preface to the *Sibylline Leaves* but later transformed into a separate work in two volumes,[88] the *Biographia Literaria* as an eclectic potpourri (not merely as "Biographical Sketches") became Coleridge's autobiographical attempt to rehearse his theoretical and practical criticism and dig out the most presentable version of himself to "turn it to the best purposes" (*CL* IV, p. 728). More specifically, it was an interpretive attempt to present a revision of his life and opinions, in addition to offering a revised context with critical tools according to which his poetic collection *Sibylline Leaves* and Wordsworth's works (including his Prefaces of 1800 and 1815) would be dealt with.[89] This chapter hence aims to investigate the way Coleridge, through his novelistic literary criticism combined with self-narration, took the chance to re-shape his past, opinions and affiliations; how he retrospectively confronted Wordsworth and their joint projects of *Lyrical Ballads* and especially *The Recluse*. Considering the emotional and professional turmoil he went through ever since he left Allan Bank in 1810, his disappointment with Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814) and his increasingly mixed

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[88] As James Engell (2002) explains it, "Coleridge envisioned a short preface to a projected book of poems, *Sibylline Leaves*. Mary Lamb understood it would be five or six pages. But as early as 1811 Coleridge contemplated a 'Preface of 30 pages, relative to the principles of Poetry, which I have ever held, and in reference to myself, Mr Southey, and Mr Wordsworth'. On 30 March 1815, Coleridge wrote to Byron, awkwardly asking the younger man to read his poems and, if he judged them worthy, recommend them 'to some respectable Publisher'. Coleridge added, 'A general Preface will be pre-fixed, on the principles of philosophic and genial [having to do with genius] criticism relatively to the Fine Arts in general; but especially to Poetry' (*CL* iv, 561; see *BL* i, 264)." (pp. 59-60)

[89] In a letter of July 1816 to John Hookham Frere, he says "...the accompanying Sheets – which consist of a 1st Volume and a part of a Second of my literary Life...in which my chief purposes were, 1. to defend myself (not indeed to my own Conscience; but) as far as others are concerned, from the often and public denunciation of having wasted my time in idleness – in short, of having done nothing – 2. not merely to state my own principles of Taste, but to settle, if possible, and to put to rest with all men of sense the controversy concerning the nature and claims of poetic Diction…" (*CL* IV, p. 646)

and idiosyncratic responses to the Kantian critical philosophy ever since he became familiar with it as early as 1790s, I will also analyse how Coleridge's poetics in the *Biographia* underpinned his linguistic concerns in literary works and his theory of imagination, and how the revisionary approach he presented ultimately enabled him to speak to Wordsworth.[90]

A Brief Background to the *Biographia Literaria*

The *Biographia* was conceived almost two decades earlier than it was published in 1817. Initially, Coleridge during his German tour of 1798-99 had planned to write a biography of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729 – 1781), a German dramatist and critic.[91] The project by October, 1800 transformed into another project to be titled an "Essay on the Elements of Poetry" (*CL* I, 632) and, as John Spencer Hill (1983) demonstrates, "the essay - at least in its aesthetic aspect - was eventually written, not by Coleridge, but by Wordsworth, who published it as the Preface to the second edition (1800) of *Lyrical Ballads*" (p. 207).[92] However, the Preface of 1800 gave way to "a *radical* Difference" concerning poetic diction between the two poets,[93] and in September-October 1803 Coleridge wrote down the

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[90] The Preface, as it was initially called, was the chance Coleridge took, as Engell states, "to dissociate himself from Wordsworth [and] to elucidate his philosophical inquiries into language, the language of poetry, and the proper distinction between fancy and imagination" (Engell, 2002, p. 60).

[91] The first time Coleridge mentions the project was in a letter of January 1799 to Poole, in which he mentioned his plans to write "a Life of Lessing — & interweaved with it a true state of German Literature, in its rise & present state" (*CL* I, p. 455). Four months later, he wrote in another letter of May 1799 to Josiah Wedgwood that such an undertaking would give him "an opportunity of conveying under a better name, than my own ever will be, opinions, which I deem of the highest importance." (*CL* I, p. 519).

[92] As Coleridge confirms this in a letter of July 1802: "It is most certain, that that Preface arose from the heads of our mutual Conversations &c - & the first passages were indeed partly taken from notes of mine / for it was at first intended, that the Preface should be written by me." (*CL* II, p. 811)

[93] Two years after stating that "The Preface contains our joint opinions on Poetry" (*CL* I, p. 627), in 1802, after Wordsworth's revision of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Coleridge revealed in a letter to Southey on 29 July that "altho' Wordsworth's Preface is half a child of my own Brain . . . yet I am far from going all lengths with Wordsworth . . . I rather suspect that some where or other there is a radical Difference in our theoretical opinions respecting Poetry." (*CL* II, p. 830)

following resolution to his notebook: "Seem to have made up my mind to write my metaphysical works, as *my Life, & in* my Life – intermixed with all the other events / or history of the mind & fortunes of S. T. Coleridge" (*CN* I, §1515). Coleridge was obviously aiming towards an autobiography, but he was to wait for another twelve years to write one.[94]

The *Biographia* for Coleridge was a promise for "a solid foundation" to permanently ground his opinions (*BL* I, p. 22). Having Wordsworth's Prefaces[95] in mind, it was only in May 1815 that Coleridge began his own Preface to the collection of poems (*CL* IV, p. 576). Working with John Morgan as his amanuensis, Coleridge around July-September 1815 extended the Preface into "an Autobiographia literaria, or Sketches of my literary Life & opinions, as far as Poetry and poetical Criticism is concerned" (*CL* IV, pp. 578-79). Coleridge's post-*Excursion* endeavours to revise himself and his *oeuvre* so that he could establish principles in literary criticism and present an integrated narrative of both himself and his relationship with Wordsworth ultimately gained momentum with the publication of his *Biographia* in 1817, two years after he had finished writing it.

Previous Scholarship

The literature on the *Biographia Literaria* is massive, and rightly so: Even though the nineteenth-century commentators generally ignored it, today it is one of the most iconic and important prose texts of the Romantic period.[96] The work itself has long been

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[94] In the meantime, *The Friend* of 1809 can be considered as a preliminary work for Coleridge to pour down the history of his mind: "…I have been giving the History of my own mind." (*TF* II, p. 277)

[95] That is, Wordsworth's 1815 "Preface" to *Poems* with another piece titled "Essay, Supplementary to the Preface", as well as a reprint of the "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*" followed by an Appendix on "poetic diction", published in the 1815 poetic collection.

[96] The *Biographia* languished in relative obscurity until I.A. Richards resurrected it in the 1920s. Its posthumous reception has been very bound up with the creation of literary study as a university discipline.

characterised as a curious compilation. For example, in an attempt to provide an answer to "what kind of work the *Biographia* is", H. J. Jackson (1997) called it a "conundrum" (p. 55), and Gary Dorrien (2012) characterised it as a "a massive, sprawling, profuse two-volume stemwinder defying categorization" (p. 129). After all, Coleridge himself named it "so immethodical a miscellany" and does not seem to have regarded *Biographia* as his best work (*BL* I, p. 88). However, some critics chose not to take Coleridge entirely at his word, but aimed to look for the elaborate unity and extensive structures embedded within Coleridge's thought, and the outcome in the *Biographia*. Kathleen M. Wheeler's *Sources, Processes and Methods in Coleridge's 'Biographia Literaria'* (1980), for instance, sought to trace the gradual proliferation and maturation of the *Biographia* in Coleridge's mind over a period of fifteen years by providing historical context (including his *Notebooks* and *Letters*). Wheeler used the idea of unity to defend Coleridge against the charge of lacking a method (p. 11), just as McGann later characterised the "accusations of incoherence and disorganization" as misguided (1989, p. 237). Similarly, having previously seen the *Biographia* as one of Coleridge's "rubble-heap works" (1981, p. 21), Thomas McFarland in an article of 1986 suggested that in the *Biographia*, Coleridge "fructified seeds that had been planted as early as 1800" (p. 406).

Other critics rather focused on Coleridge's plagiarisms. Subtantially initiated by Thomas de Quincey[97] after the death of Coleridge, followed by the 1840-article by James Ferrier[98], the critical debate lingered up to the twentieth century. Coleridge was especially attacked by Norman Fruman (1971) and Rene Wellek (1981) who drew on Coleridge's

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The key person in the rehabiliation of *Biographia* was I.A. Richards, one of the most important figures of Cambridge English in the early 20th century.

[97] See: Daniel Sanjiv Roberts. *Revisionary Gleam: De Quincey, Coleridge and the High Romantic Argument*. 2000.

[98] "Plagiarisms of S.T. Coleridge", was published in March 1840 in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*.

lavish "borrowings". However, as Modiano (2009) states, "it is not just plagiarism, a natural subject of controversy, that has polarized critics, but virtually anything having to do with the *Biographia*" (p. 205). Eugene Stelzig in "Coleridge's Failed Quest" (1980) criticised Coleridge's literary theory in the *Biographia* by holding that it is not a work to be taken "all too seriously" (83), and the parts that modern scholars extravagantly praise are nothing other than a "failed epiphany" (93-94). Hamilton, similarly, in *Coleridge's Poetics* (1983) devoted a chapter to the investigation of the reasons for "Coleridge's failure in the *Biographia* to achieve what he set out to do" (p.5). The bulky controversy over the glorious achievements or disreputable defects of the *Biographia* have more recently transitioned into exploring the foundational aspects of the work: How the work led to Coleridge's productivity afterwards (Engell, 2002)[99], how the writing process helped Coleridge develop a more philosophical and relatively systematic approach to literary criticism (Modiano, 2009)[100], how through his autobiographical work Coleridge sought to universalize his individual experience (Hamilton, 2007)[101] and the way it influenced the future generation of writers (Perry, 2009).[102]

The view that the *Biographia* is a product of Coleridge's revisionary activity has been subject to scholarly scrutiny that primarily takes its genre into account. According to

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[99] As Engell notes, "in many respects, the whole of *Biographia Literaria* opened gates in Coleridge's psyche. Shortly after he began actively to write and dictate it, a series of remarkable publications in prose and verse flowed from him until his death in 1834. If, as with many great works in philosophy, criticism, religion and autobiography, *Biographia Literaria* remains a source of unending discussion and even disagreement, this is because it generates endless fascination and insight." (pp. 73-74)

[100] Modiano (2009) notes that "Coleridge's conception of the enterprise of literary criticism in the *Biographia*" is related with "what he elusively called 'genial criticism' in his 1814 *Essays on the Principles of Genial Criticism*." (p. 206)

[101] Hamilton (2007) maintains that "Coleridge's free and easy attitude towards the writing of his autobiography evinces both confidence and trepidation. Coleridge's autobiography is, by turns, droll, pompous and strategic. It toys with the varieties of inwardness at its disposal in a knowing, sometimes arch manner. It is evidendy acquainted with post-Kantian attempts, following from Kant's third *Critique*, to universalize the individual experience without using scientific concepts." (p. 79)

[102] "Coleridge's Literary Influence" (2009) in *The Oxford Handbook of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*.

this, as Paul Hamilton's (2007) chapter "Coleridge's Coleridge" extensively discusses, any attempt at writing biography or autobiography is invariably bound to consist, among many others, of the writer's distortions, wishful thinking, corrective accounts, and misleading judgements in retrospect (pp. 69-88). In this vein, finding out the "real" Coleridge through his autobiography is as doomed as finding "the real language of men" – they both infinitely exert their sway (p. 71). Monika Class (2012) also argues that whereas Coleridge in the *Biographia* presented his radical politics in the past as motivated by disinterestedness, he was in fact revising his current reputation as the fact was that he did pursue an "interested" agenda.[103] In addition, Class underscores the discrepancy between Coleridge's deliberate and repressive (mis)presentation of Kantian terms and historical facts in the *Biographia*. That is, Coleridge severed the ties between the Kantian philosophy and its political implications, consciously revising image of Kant that complied with his political expedience (Class, p. 151), and relegating the Kantian principles laden with political undertones such as categorical imperative to a purely theoretical realm (p. 118). Coleridge

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[103] Coleridge's review of his life and opinions definitely involved retrospective corrections and at times concealment through elaborate diction and digressive explanation. The most well-known aspect of his revisions in the *Biographia* is the fact that Coleridge aimed to convert his relatively radical reputation of the past into a disinterested zeal adopted at the time to attain higher truths (Tee, 2009, pp. 74-75). Reminiscing of the *Watchman* years of 1795-1796, he wrote "O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested! My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of (what I believed to be) the truth, and the will of my maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm I did not think of *myself* at all (*BL* I, pp. 179-80). He surely did, in a cynical way. Class argues that Coleridge was unable to describe "disinterestedness" without thinking about the outcomes of it. Class refers to a notebook entry dated to late 1795 and early 1796, in which Coleridge (informed by Nitsch) expressed his views on the Kantian categorical imperative with the following words: "By obliging every one always to do that which to him shall seem in the then present time and circumstances conducive to the public good: or by enjoining the observation of some determinate Laws, which if universally obeyed would produce universal happiness" (*CN* I, §249). Here, Coleridge cannot but deviate "slightly" from a sheer disinterested approach as the phrases such as "public good" and "universal happiness" makes us think of the outcome rather than, as Kant would have it, sole motivation (Class 83). Over a decade later, in *The Friend* of 1809-10 (*TF* II, p. 128), Coleridge presented categorical imperative without its political content and potential activism – which also bears testimony to the idea that Coleridge even while talking about disinterestedness ingenuously got rid of the content he found unfavourable at the time.

also contravened the charges of Jacobinism (Alan D. Vardy, 2010, pp. 10-25) and his

radical youth[104] by means of his revisionary account in his autobiography. In other words,

according to scholars, Coleridge in the *Biographia* reshaped his past by drawing attention

to his disinterested and almost naïve motivations, but he actually procured those proofs

through half-truths with the aid of his autobiographical "semi-narrative" (*BL* I, p. 175).[105]

   The reputation of Coleridge has almost always been associated with plagiarism,

and this was the case as well when he was writing the *Biographia*.[106] Coleridge therefore

presented a defence for his unacknowledged borrowings to euphemistically justify them on

the grounds of undeliberate coincidence. Christoph Bode (2009) notes that in his attempt to

change this perception, Coleridge distorted the truth:

> Samuel Taylor Coleridge himself is not a very reliable witness regarding the
> evolution of his own religious, political and philosophical thinking. For
> example, with some impudence he…claimed to have developed the same
> ideas as Friedrich Schelling before Schelling even published them (between
> 1797 and 1800), though there is absolutely no evidence for this in
> Coleridge's writing and, what is more, what Coleridge did write during this
> period (and before) stands in marked opposition to Schelling's
> Transendental- and Naturphilosophie and to other forms of German

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[104] In the *Biographia* he claims, for example, that through his "constitutional indolence" Coleridge was able to keep his "enthusiasm in check" even throughout "the very hey-day of hope" (*BL* I, p. 199)

[105] By publicly confronting his earlier views again years later in the *Biographia* and demonstrating his unselfish and *bona-fide* objectives at the time, Coleridge in 1815 rather pragmatically trimmed the undesired parts of his life and pruned the sharp ideas of his youthful zeal to be able to embrace his earlier self, and rewrite his religious and political background at his own will. An example to this is, as Class argues, his support for expedience, half-truths and half-contradictions in *Biographia*: "'half-contradiction' consisted in Coleridge's use of the…strategy of divorcing metaphysics and morals from politics in *Biographia Literaria*. It has often been commented that Coleridge's narrative structure resembles *Tristram Shandy*….[as] fiction is an essential part of *Biographia Literaria*. What gives us historical insights are the discrepancies between Coleridge's narrative self-construction and historical evidence; his departures and omissions are revealing and help us to understand his intellectual development…" (Class, p. 148)

[106] It must be noted here that for Coleridge, the concept of intellectual property did not have the same meaning as we understand it today. Tilar J. Mazzeo in *Plagiarism and Literary Property in the Romantic Period* (2007) explains why we should not take the word in modern sense "without historical interrogation into what might have constituted plagiarism in another century" (pp. 46-47). For example, Mazzeo describes how Norman Fruman condemned Coleridge "through assiduous research", judging Coleridge according to "standards that his contemporaries never would have thought to apply to his borrowings. In the end, the critical tradition surrounding Coleridge tells us more about the ways in which the category of literary property has evolved and about our own relations to it than it tells us about the poet or the stakes being contested when charges of plagiarism were made in early nineteenth century Britain." (p. 47)

> Idealism as well. He also lied about his acquaintance with August Wilhelm Schlegel's *Vienna Lectures* and about the extent of his familiarity with Schelling's post-1800 writings, from which he helped himself copiously, either totally without or with misleading acknowledgments. (p. 591)

Similar to his practice of marginalia, it seems that Coleridge found it more secure and preferable to develop his own idiosyncratic system by means of adapting the philosophy of others, and synthesising and disciplining his own views and comments out of their wisdom. Therefore, after translating extensively from Schelling in the *Biographia*, Coleridge claimed that "I might have transcribed the substance from memoranda of my own, which were written many years before his pamphlet was given to the world", and added that he preferred "another's words to my own, partly as a tribute due to priority of publication; but still more from the pleasure of sympathy in a case where coincidence only was possible" (*BL* I, p. 147). After all, he regarded "truth as a divine ventriloquist": He did not care "from whose mouth the sounds are supposed to proceed" as long as "the words are audible and intelligible" (*BL* I, p. 164). This was his strategy for arguing against the accusations of intellectual theft and countering his current and prospective notoriety as a perpetrator of plagiarism through modifications of the past in an autobiographical narrative.

Gap in Scholarship

Scholarship on the *Biographia* falls short of offering an exhaustive investigation of Coleridge's revisionary approach to his life and opinions vis-à-vis his response to Kantian critical philosophy and his earlier conception of joint *oeuvre* with Wordsworth. To address this gap, I would like to consider the wider implications of the self-willed alterations of Coleridge while writing the *Biographia*. I hold that Coleridge in 1815 thought he was on

the verge of building dialogue with Wordsworth by rediscovering the value of his discrete *oeuvre*, reshaping his poetic identity, and laying weight on his poetics and practical criticism. As he announced in the *Biographia*, due to the "frequent conjunction" of his name with Wordsworth's, he declared it "expedient to declare once for all" in what points he coincided with Wordsworth's opinions and in what points he altogether differed (*BL* II, p. 8).With this in mind, I aim to discuss how Coleridge's muddled approach helped him change his past and design future reception through the *Biographia* by specifically elaborating on the second volume in which he described an unprecedented method of practical criticism merged with his poetics. I also aim to delineate the philosophical and religious aspects of his opposition to Wordsworth's notion that his poems exemplified the language of men speaking to men, to put Coleridge into dialogue with Wordsworth in his revisionary account of their joint projects, to discuss Coleridge's Aristotelianism in criticism, and to examine his resistance to Kantian transcendental deduction as well as distinction between the mind and the outside world vis-à-vis his theory of imagination. With this proposition, I contravene Hamilton's (1983) argument that Coleridge failed to "achieve the transcendental deduction" in the *Biographia* (p. 5), and argue instead that Coleridge's engagement with transcendence in philosophical investigation would never yield such results at all.

By means of the extended quasi-fictional prospective autobiography promised, Coleridge in the *Biographia* aimed to draw attention to his inner thoughts, not precisely as he experienced but as he wanted to present them. Here, his faith in the constitutive aspect of the mind played an important role. For instance, although it was Coleridge who designed the main content of the "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), he later became discontented with it and in the *Biographia*, he criticised the Preface as if he was not

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involved in its constitution process. This is because in order to dissociate himself from Wordsworth, his account had to recreate the past in line with his current needs and purposes. In this respect, although I agree with Joseph Appleyard (1965) when he states that the *Biographia* is "primarily a record, not of Coleridge's youthful search for a literary theory, but of the state of mind in the summer of 1815" (p. 170), I would like to accentuate the integral role of *The Excursion* and the overall collapse of his joint project of *The Recluse* with Wordsworth on his revisionary activity.

Although I am well aware of the fact that Coleridge in retrospect did not seem to be overly proud of his autobiographical work, I do not see the *Biographia* as either trivial or a failure. Neither do I consider it as an embodiment of a larger developmental process, nor a work that has intrinsic unity as it was a product of a perfect plan. Rather than solely reaping the fruits of hard labour, Coleridge was revising his debt to Kant, his affiliation with Wordsworth, and distangling himself from the remnants of their symbiosis, struggling to exist on his own and speak for himself, not through others. With people such as Hazlitt publicly reproaching his "hypocrisy" at every turn, and seeing that a real historical account of his mind would fall short of an enabling a change of public opinion, Coleridge surely had an interest in (as he saw it) setting the record straight in the *Biographia* through recirculation of the past thoughts to yield the "intellectual offspring" of today.

Until the *Biographia*, Coleridge had published very little literary criticism: There was a book review in the 1790s[107], he had delivered two or three series of lectures on Shakespeare and Milton but he had never, for example, published his detailed views of Wordsworth as such. The *Biographia* has already been commonly and rightly described as

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[107] See: Roper, Derek (1960). "Coleridge and the 'Critical Review'". *The Modern Language Review*, 55(1), 11-16.

a response to Wordsworth's two Prefaces - 1800 and 1815 (Milnes, 1999, p. 127; Engell, 2002, p. 61).[108] However, laying too much emphasis on the Prefaces crucially misses what I hold to be the most definitive aspect of the composition process of the *Biographia* – Coleridge's frustration with what would, if accomplished, be the first philosophical poem by Wordsworth.

For Coleridge the *Biographia* was a strategic work so that he could present his praise as well as distaste for not only Wordsworth's works and Prefaces, but also his commentary on *The Excursion*. A letter of May 30, 1815 to Wordsworth demonstrates the importance Coleridge attributes to his own "Preface" where he was to outline the reasons for his disappointment. He wrote:

> I have only to finish a preface, which I shall have done in two, or, at farthest, three days; and I will then, dismissing all comparison either with the poem on the growth of your own support, or with the imagined plan of "The Recluse," state fairly my main objections to "The Excursion" as it is. But it would have been alike unjust both to you and to myself, if I had led you to suppose that any disappointment I may have felt arose wholly or chiefly from the passages I do not like, or from the poem considered irrelatively. (*CL* IV, 576)

That he does not elaborate on his views in the letter but postpones them until the *Biographia* has been written shows that he was intent on disentangling his reputation from that of Wordsworth's and only after that could he present a more thorough analysis of *The Excursion*. More precisely, the *Biographia* was a notable step towards speaking to Wordsworth, so he could establish friendship as well as dialogue with his former symbiotic partner. After all, Coleridge ruefully stated that from 1794 when he "published a small volume of juvenile poems" to the publication date of the *Biographia Literaria* he had

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[108] Tim Milnes argues that the *Biographia* first emerged as "a reply to and a rebuttal of Wordsworth's empirical and associative definition of imagination as set out in the Preface to his *Poems* (1815)" (1999, p. 127). Engell similarly argues that the "*Biographia Literaria* creates an extended dialogue with – and answers – Wordsworth's two Prefaces (1800 and 1815); it then criticises Wordsworth's poetry." (2002, p. 61)

published nothing with his own name (*BL* I, pp. 5, 7).[109] His relationship with Wordsworth

and their joint venture of writing a philosophical poem, he thought, had almost removed

him from view as an author in his own right, largely undermining his own capability as

well as name in front of the public, and we can see his frustration when Coleridge referred

to the *Lyrical Ballads* as "Mr. WORDSWORTH's" (*BL* I, p. 69). The *Biographia*, along

with the accompanying poetic collection, gave Coleridge the chance to reclaim his own

works and name. Therefore, he had taken time until his own perception of his *oeuvre* as a

thing in its own right grew into relative maturity, enabling him to present his revisionary

reaction to Wordsworth.

Coleridge's Revisions in the *Biographia Literaria*

Coleridge's devotion to present in the *Biographia* "a total and undivided philosophy"

which would be intertwined with religion so that, reversibly, "religion [could] become

inclusive of philosophy" resulted in the extended line of argument laying the grounds for

Coleridge's conception of language (*BL* II, p. 282).[110] That he agreed to prepare a

dictionary of English language, *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*, the following year

demonstrates his preoccupation not only with language but also with its origins.[111] The

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[109] With "nothing, with my name" Coleridge exaggerates the situation because the fact is that he had a translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein* (1800), *The Friend* (1809-10), and *Remorse* (1813) and some other poems written in this period and published with his own name.

[110] Charging the dictionary of Samuel Johnson with being inccurate and incomplete (*BL* I, 237 n.), Coleridge advanced on his own proposal as follows: "Were I asked, what I deemed the greatest and most unmixt benefit, which a wealthy individual, or an association of wealthy individuals could bestow on their country and on mankind, I should not hesitate to answer, 'a philosophical English dictionary; with the Greek, Latin, German, French, Spanish and Italian synonimes, and with correspondent indexes'." (*BL* I, 239 n.)

[111] "In the following year, Coleridge entered into a contractual agreement with the publishers of the *Encyclopedia Metropolitana* to prepare an etymological dictionary of the English language. Coleridge described the plan for this new 'Philosophical and Etymological LEXICON of the English Language' in terms that strikingly foreshadow the plan that was later devised for the Oxford English Dictionary (OED): each word would be accompanied by illustrative citations in chronological order, with 'every attention to the independent beauty or value of the sentences chosen ... consistent with the higher ends of a clear insight into

Biographia is therefore a project of Coleridge's ambitions to elaborate on his theory of language and his practical criticism in line with his theologically-informed philosophical arguments.

Revisions and the Controversy over Language

Coleridge in 1815 was aware that Wordsworth might not have become the poet he was had he not collaborated with him; Wordsworth's greatness was in this sense part of Coleridge's achievement (Perry, 2003, p. 161). However, back in December 1800, Coleridge wrote to Francis Wrangham noting that Wordsworth was a true poet while he was only a kind of *metaphysician*.[112] I interpret this statement as a "division of labour" planned by Coleridge early in their collaboration in order not only to draw attention to his extra-curricular engagements, but also to paradoxically accentuate his own poetic productions. Morton D. Paley in *Coleridge's Later Poetry* (1996) presents a similar strategy Coleridge adopted: Lamenting his failing creative powers and classifying his later productions as something other than poetry (pp. 2-3). A striking example to this is the letter of March 1801 addressed to William Godwin, in which Coleridge beautifully and most poetically explains that "The Poet is dead in me - my imagination...lies, like a Cold Snuff on the circular Rim of a Brass Candle-stick, without even a stink of Tallow to remind you that it was once cloathed & mitred with Flame" (*CL* II, p. 714). The imagery he used to endorse his assertion that he can no longer compose poetry is indeed solidly and ironically poetic, and as a simultaneous refutation of his own argument, Coleridge here is writing his "most celebrated valedictory"

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the original and acquired meaning of every word' ('Treatise on Method', *Shorter Works and Fragments*, 687)." (McKusick, 2009, p. 583)

[112] In a letter to Francis Wrangham on December 19, 1800 he said, "Wordsworth & I have never resided together…As to our literary occupations they are still more distant than our residences – He is a great, true poet – I am only a kind of Metaphysician." (*CL* I, p. 658)

by using "poetically charged imagery to deny his own poetic impulse" (Paley, 1996, pp. 3, 4). Coleridge apparently could not let go of the poet inside, neither did he give up his ambitions of endowing his creative powers with metaphysics and philosophy. Nevertheless, because in the 1800s Wordsworth and Coleridge were still collaborating on their grand project of *The Recluse*, Coleridge put the poet inside into the relative background because he felt overshadowed by Wordsworth in this domain. Despite their differences respecting poetry, which for him emerged after Wordsworth's "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800, I hold that Coleridge still cherished hopes for completion of a great philosophical poem, which – if completed – would be the ultimate epitome of his philosophical pursuits and Wordsworth's poetic competence.

An autobiography penned by Coleridge would therefore be impossible without the inclusion of Wordsworth and their collaborative work, the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), since he had for a long time been the other half of Coleridge ever since their literary collaboration in *annus mirabilis*, and continued to arouse deep respect despite the ruptures, resentments and misunderstandings afterwards. As Coleridge explicitly stated at the beginning of the *Biographia*, he aimed for "a settlement of the long continued controversy concerning the true nature of poetic diction; and at the same time to define with the utmost impartiality the real poetic character of the poet, by whose writings this controversy was first kindled, and has been since fuelled and fanned" (*BL* I, p. 5). However, Coleridge up until 1815 does not seem to have properly and publicly defended his position in constitution of this joint project. In the *Biographia*, he took opportunity to change the perception of irrelevancy of his poems in the *Lyrical Ballads* and explicate his philosophical, poetic and linguistic views distinct from those of Wordsworth's at the time. This entailed a simultaneous reassessment of Wordsworth's poems and his literary theory, reconsideration of their

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literary partnership, and dissociation from him. The *Biographia* in this respect enabled Coleridge to clarify his initial mindset while planning the work and outline the reasons for his distaste afterwards.

When the plan for the *Lyrical Ballads* was materialised, Coleridge narrated, "it was agreed" that a reconciliation of the ordinary and supernatural would have been presented throughout the work. Hence, what would make the *Lyrical Ballads* unprecedented and truly a ground-breaking experiment was the initial and essential agreement of both Wordsworth and Coleridge to present the ordinary in order "to give the charm of novelty to things of every day" and supernatural so as "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith" (*BL* II, pp. 7, 6). Wordsworth would therefore direct his creative skills towards accomplishing the former "to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us…" (*BL* II, p. 7), whereas Coleridge's "endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic" (*BL* II, p. 6). It was with this agenda in mind that Coleridge wrote such poems as "The Ancient Mariner" and "Christabel". However, Wordsworth's "industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater," that Coleridge's final compositions, "instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter" (*BL* II, p. 8). And the *Lyrical Ballads* was published in this form and presented by Wordsworth as an "experiment" (*LB*, p. 47).

Publication of the 1800 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* with a "Preface" by Wordsworth had further considerable impact on Coleridge's consideration of their literary

partnership. Although Coleridge in a letter of September 1800 had claimed that "The Preface contains our joint opinions on Poetry" (*CL* I, p. 627), Wordsworth's theory of poetic diction seemed to Coleridge more concerned with a defence of his own theoretical views on poetry, almost discarding the poetry Coleridge wrote for the collection (and overlooking their initial plan, for that matter). Indeed, Coleridge's contribution both in terms of poetic style (supernatural) and actual poems themselves ("Christabel" [113]) was banished from the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, culminating in "Wordsworth asking the printer to omit the poem and to cancel a crucial passage of the Preface that spoke of the essential agreement of the two men and turn it into a mere list of the poems included from Coleridge" (Engell, 1983, p. xlvii). When Wordsworth with his 1815 *Poems* reprinted the 1800 "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* this, as Engell (2002) puts it, "revived ghosts" for Coleridge (p. 59). He remonstrated in the *Biographia* with his friend, who "notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import", paradoxically aimed for the extension of his own argument "to poetry of all kinds" by rejecting "as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of speech that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of *real* life" (*BL* II, p. 8).[114]

In addition to the exclusion of his poem "Christabel" from the collection and relegation of "The Ancient Mariner" from its initial position in the collection to the end of

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[113] "Christabel" was initially intended to be placed at the end of Volume 2, but Wordsworth suddenly came to the resolution to omit the poem, as he wrote to Longman on 18 December 1800, "I found that the Style of this Poem was so discordant from my own that it could not be printed along with my poems with any propriety" (*WL* I, p. 309). It was subsequently replaced by Wordsworth's *Michael*.

[114] Coleridge regarded this an unfortunate step and objected to it firstly on the grounds that "in *any* sense this rule is applicable only to *certain* classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense, as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read,) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is *practicable*, it is yet as a *rule* useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised." (*BL* II, p. 42)

Volume 1, Wordsworth outlined the "great defects" of the latter at the end of Volume 1 of the 1800 edition,[115] and the second edition appeared with only Wordsworth's name as the author. Most importantly, with its emphasis on the ordinary, "real language of men" (*LB*, p. 171), the "Preface" simultaneously made the poems of Coleridge in the collection seem even more eccentric at best and defective at worst, if not thoroughly irrelevant. Coleridge in the *Biographia* detailed his criticism of Wordsworth's controversial "Preface" (1800) to the second edition and did not fail to present his own counter argument on Wordsworth's theory of the "real language of men"[116] – which Coleridge thought was rooted in misunderstandings of the ideas he first expressed to Wordsworth in the 1790s.

In the second volume of the *Biographia*, Coleridge presented not only corrective accounts of his collaboration with Wordsworth, but also a critical reading of Wordsworth's poetic compositions by taking his theory of ordinary language into consideration. Against Wordsworth's assertion that in his imitation of the very language of common man he deliberately avoided poetic diction[117] as much as possible for "the human mind is capable of excitement without the application of gross and violent stimulants" (*LB*, p. 176), Coleridge replied that "Now it is clear to me, that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic…the persons introduced are by no means taken

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[115] "The Poem of my Friend has indeed great defects…" (p. 289). *Lyrical Ballads 1798 and 1800: William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Ed. Michael Gamer and Dahlia Porter. Peterborough: Broadview, 2008.

[116] "I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use." (*BL* II, p. 55)

[117] "There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; I have taken as much pains to avoid it as others ordinarily take to produce it; this I have done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men, and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry." (*LB*, p. 178)

from *low or rustic life* in the common acceptation of those words…" (*BL* II, p. 43).[118]

Wordsworth, Coleridge suggested, in fact had many common threads with those who took

much pains to produce stylistic features in their poetry, and his "Preface" was a failed

attempt at rhetorical manoeuvring to justify a position he did not adhere to in the first

place.

After all, Coleridge added, the concept of "ordinary language" spoken by "common

man" is an idealized denomination.[119] McKusick rightly explains the reason for

Coleridge's unfavourable reaction to "ordinary language" as follows,

> Throughout his career as a poet and philosopher, Coleridge's quest for
> linguistic naturalness is fundamentally motivated by a pervasive nostalgia
> for the alleged transparency of primitive language, the immediacy of
> relation between the linguistic sign and its referent. Coleridge's distaste for
> ordinary language is motivated by a corresponding reaction against the
> defacement of words in the tawdry transactions of everyday life. (2009, p.
> 579)

Therefore for Coleridge, as Engell and Bate state, "the essential flaw in Wordsworth's

theory" was the misconception that poetic language was a mere *copy*, "and a reproduction

of ordinary speech" (1983 , pp. cv-cvi), whereas in fact it was a form of *imitation* in

Aristotelian sense, according to which clear wording "consists of prevalent words, but it is

flat" whereas "the use of unfamiliar words lends dignity and departs from the local idiom"

(*Poetics*, p. 54). According to Coleridge, his partner's theory potentially gave rise to a

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[118] Wordsworth also argued that "...a language arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings is a more permanent and a far more philosophical language than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation" (*LB,* p. 174-75). The poet here aims to theoretically establish the merits of the actual, the ordinary, the familiar, mainly proposing to "imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men" (p. 177).

[119] As Coleridge explains, "the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciteman, publican, and barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper pro bono publico" (*BL* II, p. 56).

rupture between words and thought, due to its emphasis on the rural, ordinary language consisting of arbitrary signs of language.

Against Wordsworth's contention that ordinary men "hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived" and that "being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions" (*LB*, p. 174), Coleridge's reply therefore shows how distinct their views were, when he says:

> … a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far reconstructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar— (which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials)—will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more indiscriminate. (*BL* II, p. 52)

Coleridge clearly outlined the demarcation lines between his "poetic creed" and "the doctrines promulgated in this preface" by pointing out his adoption "with full faith" of the principle of Aristotle, "that poetry, as poetry, is essentially ideal, that it avoids and excludes all accident; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes…" (*BL* II, p. 45). Against Wordsworth's proposition that sporadic language of the common man is more preferable (and should be regarded as "more permanent and a far more philosophical") vis-à-vis the systematic design of literary texts and poetic diction, Coleridge firmly argued as follows: "The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man..." (*BL* II, p. 54). In order for language to create thoughts worthy of poetic output, the

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man articulating the symbols must have reflected on the machinations of the mind. In this case, whereas Coleridge's conception of language was largely inspired by its "divine" thought-making potential, the uneducated man speaking ordinary language cannot go beyond expressing the mundane states of everyday existence.

In the *Biographia* Coleridge strongly contested Wordsworth's theory because it was vital to clearly delineate the peculiar characteristics of language in *any* literary work, not just the poems of Wordsworth. "Be it observed," exclaimed Coleridge, "that I include in the meaning of a word not only its correspondent object, but likewise all the associations which it recalls. For language is framed to convey not the object alone but likewise the character, mood and intentions of the person who is representing it" (*BL* II, p. 104). This is the reason why Coleridge in the *Biographia* accentuated - in a moment of exaltation of Wordsworth's poetry - his friend's capacity "to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances, which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar" (*BL* I, p. 81). Stylistic devices hence are not simply meant to convey meaning as in simple everyday communication, but they in fact work towards disrupting the mundane nature of the actual, hence making the outright perception difficult to prolong the aesthetic experience. Deautomatization of perception and defamiliarization are the tools that distinguish between artistic language and everyday communication, and the poetry of Wordsworth, for Coleridge, in this respect contradicted greatly even with his own theory, and rightfully so because, supposing that Wordsworth had happened to fully apply his theory on his compositions, considered from Coleridge's critical position, his work would not have attained the level of literary production at all.

Wordsworth in the *Biographia* was portrayed as the poet with an indisputable poetic genius whose "fame belongs to another age, and can neither be accelerated nor

retarded"; and albeit the small proportion of "the defects" vis-à-vis "the beauties" of his poems, Coleridge "repeatedly declared" that none of them "originates in deficiency of poetic genius" (*BL* II, p. 158). However, he thought, Wordsworth was not at all meant to be a man seeking or establishing "fixed principles"; he was a man of unbounded genius. The experiment, Coleridge supposed, had failed because "Mr. Wordsworth have set forth principles of poetry which his arguments are insufficient to support", and it was Coleridge's target in the *Biographia* to set "him and those who have adopted his sentiments" right through "the confutation of those arguments, and by the substitution of more philosophical principles" (*BL* II, p. 119). It is therefore noteworthy that "Coleridge's systematic self-construction as a philosopher of genius" (Class, 2012, p. 151) in the *Biographia* is most visibly foregrounded in the second volume, where he dealt with the poetic genius of Wordsworth and the wasted possibility of fully collaborating on an experiment that could have enabled a balanced multiplicity of poetic styles in the *Lyrical Ballads*.

The mid-1815 publication of Wordsworth's two-volume collected *Poems, including Lyrical Ballads and the Miscellaneous Pieces of the Author* with a new "Preface" and a supplementary essay also put pressure on Coleridge during the composition of the *Biographia* in the same year. This is because Wordsworth had "transferred" the "Preface" to the end of the second volume, "to be attended to, or not, at the pleasure of the Reader" (*The Major Works*, p. 626). After all, Wordsworth in 1815 had a new "Preface" as well as a supplementary essay to his larger collection of poems, in which he was concerned with the task of "creating the taste by which he is to be enjoyed" rather than drawing on propositions of fifteen years earlier (p. 657). However, Coleridge begged to differ with Wordsworth on this.

In the process of revising his collaboration with Wordsworth and bringing out his own distinct *oeuvre*, Coleridge in 1815 must have been alarmed by the realisation that the latter had already "degraded" the "prefatory disquisition" of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) "to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice" (*BL* II, p. 10) for two significant reasons: First, it was Coleridge's aim in 1815 to retrospectively criticise Wordsworth's prescriptions on language in the Preface of 1800, but when it is banished as such, his criticism would seem outdated and irrelevant. There would be no room for his response to Wordsworth's views of poetic diction. Secondly, Wordsworth was on the verge of forming his own taste-forming argument with the new Preface in 1815. To address these concerns, Coleridge had to prove the relevance of Wordsworth's views in the Preface of 1800 to his current collection. This is why, for instance, Coleridge presented his criticism and objection in the *Biographia* to Wordsworth's famous "Preface" of 1800 by drawing on the poems from the latest collection. This is why, for another example, against Wordsworth's assertion in his new "Preface" of 1815 that the collection recorded how his thoughts and poetic attitude had changed over time, Coleridge aimed to foreground that

> With many parts of this preface…I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater number of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection…has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. (*BL* II, p. 10)

After all, this conviction had already been confirmed one year earlier, when Wordsworth published *The Excursion*: Coleridge was immensely frustrated by the language and dramatic technique Wordsworth used in the narrative as his friend seemed to have lost his individual and unique vocabulary that had so exquisitely adorned his poetry while writing

The Prelude. One year forward, as Coleridge saw it, Wordsworth's collection and "Preface" were not making any substantial progress, either.

Throughout the revisionary activity of Coleridge from 1814 to 1818, I maintain, "desynonymy" as a Coleridgean term came to denote two interrelated but distinct activities: First, the act of advancing knowledge through language; and two, the act of ensuring dissociation of self through revisions. In the former, desynonymization is in the service of the transcendent linguistic conception of Coleridge; in the latter, it refers to Coleridge's design of his own corpus of works.[120]

In the opening sentences of Chapter 13 of the *Biographia*, Coleridge deals with the philosophical positions of "Des Cartes, speaking as a naturalist" and Kant, speaking as "the transcendental philosopher": Whereas the former "said, give me matter and motion and I will construct you the universe" (meaning "I will render the construction of the universe intelligible"), the latter said "grant me a nature having two contrary forces, the one of which tends to expand infinitely, while the other strives to apprehend or find itself in this infinity, and I will cause the world of intelligences with the whole system of their representations to rise up before you" (*BL* I, p. 297). Both positions and the linguistic implications of these arguments posed fundamental problems for Coleridge. Against the "naturalistic" matter-based conception of the cosmos and yet against the "transcendental" system presenting representations of the natural objects, Coleridge deductively prioritized his theological concerns. He therefore maintained in the *Biographia* that "TRUTH, NATURE, LOGIC, and the LAWS OF UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR" are "actuated too by my former passion for metaphysical investigations; I laboured at a solid foundation, on

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[120] See: Galperin (1987), "'Desynonymizing' the Self in Wordsworth and Coleridge", *Studies in Romanticism*. pp. 513-526

which permanently to ground my opinions, in the component faculties of the human mind itself, and their comparative dignity and importance" (*BL* I, p. 22). Coleridge's quest for the transcendent origin of language required that language does not consist of non-teleological elements, instead, his faith in language stemmed from the conviction for a consistent coaction of the mind, linguistic sign and the objects of the consciousness.

On the other hand, when Coleridge first became "acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publication entitled Descriptive Sketches" in 1794 (*BL* I, p. 77), prior to any personal contact with Wordsworth, the language he found in this piece was fundamentally different from the normative language prescribed in the Preface:

> In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is a harshness and acerbity connected and combined with words and images all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of a hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit is elaborating. The language is not only peculiar and strong, but at times knotty and contorted, as by its own impatient strength; while the novelty and struggling crowd of images, acting in conjunction with the difficulties of the style, demands always a greater closeness of attention, than poetry,--at all events, than descriptive poetry--has a right to claim. (p. 77)

The descriptive vocabulary Coleridge uses to delineate Wordsworth's early language is poles apart from Wordsworth's language of the rustic, ordinary man. It is "knotty and contorted" with "crowd of images" presented through "the difficulties of the style" – not plain and simple at all. Later in *The Prelude* of 1807, as elaborated in the first chapter of this study, Wordsworth offered two alternating positions vis-à-vis language: At times he focused on language as the impotent medium to express his thoughts,[121] and later language

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[121] Consider the following lines and Wordsworth's only flickering faith in linguistic capacity of man:
Oh mystery of man, from what a depth
Proceed thy honours! I am lost, but see
In simple childhood something of the base
On which thy greatness stands…
(…)

emerged as the productive source of all thinking.[122] I interpret this as the lingering

influence of his symbiosis with Coleridge: Just as *The Prelude* as part of the larger joint

oeuvre was to be informed by the philosophical insights of Coleridge, it can be expected

that the poem would by extension reflect the Coleridgean devotion to language. However,

after *The Excursion* (1814) and publication of the 1815 Preface with poems, Coleridge's

criticism in the *Biographia* became less appreciative, conducted with "parental partiality"

and he now sought fixed principles in criticism and poetry, hence he had to resort to

dialogue vis-à-vis Wordsworth. Coleridge therefore expressed his long-sought wish as

such:

> Long have I wished to see a fair and philosophical inquisition into the
> character of Wordsworth, as a poet, on the evidence of his published works;
> and a positive, not a comparative, appreciation of their *characteristic*
> excellencies, deficiencies, and defects. I know no claim that the mere
> *opinion* of any individual can have to weigh down the *opinion* of the author
> himself; against the probability of whose parental partiality we ought to set
> that of his having thought longer and more deeply on the subject. But I
> should call that investigation fair and philosophical in which the critic
> announces and endeavours to establish the principles, which he holds for
> the foundation of poetry in general, with the specification of these in their
> application to the different *classes* of poetry. (*BL* II, p. 107)

Just as Coleridge, rather than responding Wordsworth's letter in private, preferred to

expound on his dissatisfaction with *The Excursion* in the *Biographia*, he again reserved his

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I see by glimpses now, when age comes on
May scarcely see at all; and I would give
While yet we may, as far as words can give,
A substance and a life to what I feel (Book XI: 330-344)
[122] Elsewhere in *The Prelude*, Wordsworth shows faithful adherence to language in general and poetry in
particular as the intermediary channel to make him gain recognition of the language in the phenomenal
reality "abroad":
…through this verse my mind hath looked
Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven
As her prime teacher, intercourse with man
Established by the Sovereign Intellect,
Who through that bodily image hath diffused
A soul divine which we participate,
A deathless spirit. (Book V: 11-17)

criticism on Wordsworth's poetical works to the same work. In this respect, the *Biographia* is not only a showcase for his critical approach applied on the poetry of Wordsworth, it is also a medium to ensure dialogue through desynonymizing his own opinions from Wordsworth. Desynonymy as a critical method of differentiation hence played a significant role in his disentanglement from Wordsworth in the *Biographia*.

Coleridge's views on language and generation of new concepts to distinguish his arguments from others in the *Biographia* benefited considerably from an idiosyncratic linguistic technique, called "desynonymization". Giving the credit to himself that he was "the first of [his] countrymen" to point out "the diverse meaning of which the two terms were capable" and to analyse "the faculties to which they should be appropriated" (*BL* I, pp. 85-86), Coleridge argued that the act of desynonymizing played a substantial role in the historical progress of all languages, because "in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective, unconscious good sense working progressively to desynonymize those words originally of the same meaning" (*BL* I, p. 82). McKusick follows a similar line of thought when he argues that

> In the *Biographia*…He suggests that this gradual process of differentiation can account for the entire formation of a lexicon, from a few simple sounds to an immense nomenclature. Coleridge's critical and philosophical vocabulary derives largely from his own frequent habit of desynonymizing. Several of his most crucial distinctions—between fancy and imagination, genius and talent, symbol and allegory, copy and imitation—result from this technique of linguistic analysis. Coleridge's practice of desynonymization can be observed throughout the *Biographia*, the *Notebooks*, and *The Friend*. The distinctions created by means of desynonymization play a major role in the formation of Coleridge's critical and philosophical discourse. (2009, p. 580)

This technique hence enabled Coleridge to generate a refreshed discourse on concepts and philosophical terms and bring them into circulation by disrupting the automatized and ordinary perception attributed to them: "The first and most important point to be proved",

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as suggested in the *Biographia*, is "that two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word…to appropriate that word exclusively to the one meaning, and the synonyme (should there be one) to the other" (p. 82). It is therefore not befitting the poet to merely copy "the sort and order of words which he hears in the market, wake, high-road, or plough-field" (*BL* II, p. 81); he must instead resort to his creativity to invent new vocabulary or concepts so that he can circumvent the habitual misuse of the words or their ancient usages.

Desynonymy simultaneously supplied Coleridge with a pragmatic ground to make use of when he differed from the general use of ideas and concepts, even from those originally devised or endorsed by himself. Coleridge employed desynonymization to claim, for example, that Wordsworth's argument on imagination and fancy rested on a misunderstanding of their shared thinking on poetry and philosophy, and that he had missed an essential distinguishing feature in his definition in the 1815 Preface.[123]

Since the *Biographia* was largely a revisionary and dialogic reaction to Wordsworth's poems and prefaces (1800 and 1815), Coleridge had to "desynonymize" his own poetry, poetics and philosophy from those of Wordsworth- for quite a number of which he also claimed "semi-paternity" (Perry, 1999, p. 247). Initially, the symbiotic relationship between Coleridge and Wordsworth was integral to the former's conception of self and formulation of his role with respect to the latter. Even on first meeting Wordsworth in September 1795, Coleridge knew found a partner who possessed what he then thought he was missing. As he expressed it in the *Biographia*:

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[123] Wordsworth once mentioned that Coleridge "never did *converse* in the common sense of the word; he would lay hold of another person's suggestion, & then refine upon it, divide & subtilize it till he had made it entirely his own." (*TT* I, p. 546)

> I was in my twenty-fourth year, when I had the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth personally, and while memory lasts, I shall hardly forget the sudden effect produced on my mind, by his recitation of a manuscript poem, which still remains unpublished, but of which the stanza, and tone of style, were the same as those of the "Female Vagrant" as originally printed in the first volume of the "Lyrical Ballads." There was here, no mark of strained thought, or forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery... (*BL* I, pp. 78-79)

Unlike his own juvenile poems, having "an EXCESS OF ORNAMENT, in addition to STRAINED AND ELABORATE DICTION" (*BL* I, p. 8), Wordsworth's poems largely seemed to possess a natural flow and eloquence, hence for Coleridge potentially indicating his natural and unmediated genius. Coleridge's initial attraction towards Wordsworth was therefore on grounds of a "lacking" that he thought could only be filled and compensated by the genius of Wordsworth.[124]

Considering Coleridge's self-confessed constitutional dependence on others,[125] there is no wonder that he has been considered to be the submissive and "masochistic" side of the relationship. However, although he is said to have "an almost chameleonlike ability to alter his own tone to conform to that of his friend", in fact Coleridge's need to speak through Wordsworth until the end of their symbiotic relationship can be characterised as an attempt to "project his psyche into" Wordsworth "to an almost unique extent" (McFarland, 1981, p. 59). This gave Coleridge the prospect that he could speak through Wordsworth by merging his own philosophical speculations with the natural poetic genius of Wordsworth in the joint project of *The Recluse*. Both in terms of content and in terms of the role Coleridge would play in composition of it, *The Recluse* was an excessively ambitious project. For Wordsworth it turned out to be a project of lifelong strife and disapprobation

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[124] McFarland (1981) links this aspect of Coleridge's mind to Freud's theory of the castration anxiety. (p. 114)

[125] As Coleridge makes it clear in a notebook entry of late 1803: "My nature requires another Nature for its support, & reposes only in another from the necessary Indigence of its Being." (*CN* I, §1679)

as he was too overwhelmed by Coleridge's expectations and design to meet them. Indeed,

it is surely admissible that *The Recluse* was too much of a burden that Wordsworth's

unphilosophical mind could not handle the task in its full. As he wrote on June 3, 1805,

> I was dejected on many accounts; when I looked back upon the
> performance it seemed to have a dead weight about it, the reality so far
> short of the expectation ... the doubt whether I should ever live to write the
> Recluse and the sense which I had of this Poem being so far below what I
> seem'd capable of executing, depressed me much. (*WL* I, p. 594)

He was right, because Coleridge's preliminary expectations as he referred to them later in

1815 suffice to show how overwhelmed Wordsworth must have been: "Whatever in

Lucretius is Poetry is not philosophical, whatever is philosophical is not Poetry: and in the

very Pride of confident Hope I looked forward to the Recluse, as the *first* and *only* true

Phil[osophical] Poem in existence" (*CL* IV, p. 574). In a sense, therefore, the *Biographia* is

a prosaic illustration of what Coleridge had expected from Wordsworth in *The Recluse*.

For Coleridge, Wordsworth's distinctively authentic voice in such poems as *The

Prelude* owed much to his detour vis-a-vis the theory of simple language proposed in the

Preface of 1800. Just as "A person of any taste, who had but studied three or four of

Shakespeare's principal plays, would without the name affixed scarcely fail to recognise as

Shakespeare's a quotation from any other play", Wordsworth's language, "though in a less

degree" can be accorded with such peculiarity, so long as "he speaks in his own person"

(*BL* II, p. 100). This characteristic of Wordsworth's poetic style distinguished him in a way

that he was unexcelled by his contemporaries, because from none of them "could so many

lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are found, for their own

independent weight or beauty" (*BL* II, p. 106). Even while "under a feigned name" of "the

different dramatis personae" of *The Excursion* (1814), Wordsworth's voice is clear and

distinguished. However, what raised some serious issues with the language in *The*

Excursion for Coleridge was just a different aspect to it from Wordsworth's prominent style. This must be why in the *Biographia,* Coleridge's argument on the defects of Wordsworth's poetry in Chapter 22 includes frequent references to *The Excursion*.

After all, because Coleridge thought Wordsworth's "principles of poetry" in the "mistaken theory" were not grounded by philosophical precepts, "the effects" were full of flaws, and Coleridge aimed to confute "those arguments" and set them right (*BL* II, p. 119). The "defects" Coleridge presented stem largely from Wordsworth's theory of language: That his style was inconstant; that the "matter-of-factness" Wordsworth aimed at ruled the imagination out; that "the choice of his characters" and minute details about them thwarted his poetic genius in building up refined and authentic characters; that the "undue predilection for the dramatic form" at times undermined his authentic voice; that the dramatic voice caused "occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying, in lieu of progression, of thought"; and that the subject chosen hence does not accord with "thoughts and images", causing "disproportion of thoughts to the circumstance and occasion" (*BL* II, p. 135).

On the other hand, after elaborating the defects, Coleridge expressed "with the liveliest convictions" that Wordsworth still is "capable of producing… the FIRST GENUINE PHILOSOPHIC POEM" (*BL* II, p. 156). Considering the larger argument of this thesis, it can be held that Coleridge's reaffirmation in the *Biographia* of his hope for completion of *The Recluse* must be read reversely: After *The Excursion* his hopeful expectations were replaced by frustration and his wish to achieve the project, to a large extent, himself through the *Sibylline Leaves* and the *Biographia* together. In this respect I concur with Sally Bushell, who states that "To the rest of the world this may sound like a praise, appearing to be a grand statement of belief in Wordsworth, but...it stands as a denial

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of *The Excursion* which has failed to *be* that philosophic poem" and Bushell describes the statement as a "very hollow praise indeed", obvious to Coleridge and Wordsworth at the time it was written (2002, p. 68).

Coleridge's extended argument in his comprehensive intellectual autobiography was largely motivated by the termination of his symbiotic relationship with Wordsworth. I agree with Modiano when she says,

> Every move Wordsworth makes in the 1815 Preface is counteracted by Coleridge with a strategic countermove. While Wordsworth retired the 1800 Preface to the end of the second volume, Coleridge makes it the very centerpiece of his critique in the *Biographia,* using it to undo Wordsworth's self-flattering presentation in the 1815 Preface as a dedicated philosopher, all clad in Kantian garb with a coherent system of classification. To Wordsworth's 'slim' performance in his 1815 Preface, Coleridge counterposes his own, conspicuously lengthy intellectual biography, which occupies the bulk of volume one of the *Biographia* and features Coleridge's arduous journey through the entire history of philosophy, from classical to contemporary; from empiricist, to rationalist, to transcendentalist; from British to continental. To Wordsworth's meandering theory of the imagination and his emphasis on imagination's capacity of 'consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number', Coleridge responds by outlining a much more complex dual structure at the heart of the imagination, as represented by the primary and secondary imagination, focusing on the connection of the former with the I AM, in a concise formula whose triumph is achieved in no mean measure through the simplicity and conciseness with which it distills dense philosophic material from numerous sources. (2009, p. 214)

Contrary to the view that the *Biographia* is a response to Wordsworth's *The Prelude*,[126] I hold that he had already responded to the latter with his poem "To William Wordsworth" (1807), and the *Biographia* is rather a response to *The Excursion* (1814), as well as to the 1815 "Preface" of Wordsworth. Whereas "To William Wordsworth" can be characterized by Coleridge's extravagant praise for Wordsworth and his almost masochistic demise of

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[126] William Christie (2006), *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: A Literary Life*, p. 10. Raimonda Modiano (2009), "Coleridge as Literary Critic" (pp. 204-234)

himself (Paley, 1996),[127] the *Biographia* is a work through which Coleridge elaborated his "comparative censure" of *The Excursion* and his frustration with the poem as well as their grand project of *The Recluse* as a means, I hold, to dissociate himself from Wordsworth as his once symbiotic partner failed to live up to his expectations.

Coleridge's revision of his past in the *Biographia* is, then, fundamentally dialogical. First of all, it is a conversation with his past and current self simultaneously, where Coleridge brings out multiple voices at once. Coleridge claimed in Chapter 13 that while his autobiography was being "transcribed for the press", he received a "letter from a friend…whose practical judgment I have had ample reason to estimate and revere, and whose taste and sensibility preclude all the excuses which my self-love might possibly have prompted me to set up in plea against the decision of advisers of equal good sense, but with less tact and feeling" (*BL* I, 300). The friend writing the letter was none other than Coleridge himself[128], and this demonstrates Coleridge's dialogue with himself even within the *Biographia*. Secondly, the dialogue in the process of composing the *Biographia* also involved the poetical works of Wordsworth. In the *Biographia,* Coleridge hence aimed to revise his works, life and opinions to separate himself from Wordsworth as much as he could in order to come up with a separate *oeuvre* of his own. He simultaneously aimed at revising his past collaboration with Wordsworth and producing counter-arguments to Wordsworth's two prefaces, 1800 and 1815, in order to distinguish his intellectual

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[127] According to this view, Coleridge undermined his own poetic persona by writing this poem, as Adam Sisman puts it: "Coleridge retired to his room and stayed up most of the night composing lines in which he attempted to express his response — seemingly the only poem he would write that troubled year, and arguably his last poem of any substance." (Sisman, 2006, p. 388)

[128] In a letter to Thomas Curtis on 29 April 1817, Coleridge wrote that the "letter addressed to myself as from a friend, at the close of the first volume of the Literary Life…was written without taking my pen off the paper except to dip it in the inkstand." (*CL* IV, p. 728)

offspring that once helped cultivate Wordsworth's philosophical understanding, and foreground his own idiosyncratic critical and poetic genius at the time.

Revisions and the Misunderstanding over Imagination

Investigating Coleridge's criticism of Wordsworth in the *Biographia*, Nigel Leask (1993) maintains that Coleridge's critique of Wordsworth was "not motivated simply by aesthetic preferences" (p. 54), and I would like to elaborate on my own insights into Coleridge's main motivations. Wordsworth's 1815 Preface, probably slightly more than the 1800 Preface,[129] caused an important concern for Coleridge, bringing about the "intemperate" and "vituperative attack" on Wordsworth, as Modiano (2009) observes, because of "Wordsworth's self-representation in the 1815 Preface not only as a literary giant in the distinguished lineage of Shakespeare and Milton, but, more ominously for Coleridge at that time, as an able philosopher, engaging fundamental concepts from Coleridge's own arsenal, such as the prized distinction between fancy and imagination…without acknowledgement" (pp. 212-213). Moreover, rather than simply appropriating the terms belonging to Coleridge in the first place, Wordsworth ended up distorting them. Having seen in *The Excursion* that Wordsworth failed to bring the philosophical agenda into execution in his poem, Coleridge in 1815 must have come to another realization that the joint *oeuvre* he had willingly subscribed to in the past now ran the danger of undermining his new idiosyncratic philosophical arguments, and it was time to desynonymize his works from those of Wordsworth because if he did not, Coleridge must have thought,

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[129] Modiano maintains that "The main provocation for Coleridge was by no means the audacity…of Wordsworth's argument in the 1800 Preface that there was no 'essential' difference between the language of poetry and prose" which was, after all, "an idea which at the time could have been prompted by Coleridge himself" (2009, p. 212)

Wordsworth would supplant his once symbiotic partner and claim the ownership of Coleridge's own views by overshadowing his contribution completely, as he did in the 1800 "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*.

The only reference Wordsworth gives to Coleridge was in a corrective statement concerning Coleridge's definition of fancy and imagination. As Wordsworth put it,

> To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterized as the Power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, 'the aggregative and associative Power,' my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. (*The Major Works*, p. 613)

Wordsworth in the introductory essay bluntly blurred the distinction between fancy and imagination, as the phrase goes, by "trespassing into Coleridgean territory" (Modiano, 2009, p. 214). Fancy and imagination, for Wordsworth, do not seem fundamentally different in terms of their basic functions. The main difference between the two agents for Wordsworth, on the other hand, is related to the materials they deal with and their respective purposes:

> Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these, are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from every thing but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. (*The Major Works*, p. 613)

Wordsworth's distinction here focuses on the extent of either concept's capacity to modify the material at hand: Whereas fancy has a relatively passive role, imagination emerges as an active process able to alter the existing sensory data so that it can produce new ones. In this respect, as Schlutz (2015) states, "Imagination, as Wordsworth conceives the term in the 1815 *Preface*, is not a mental faculty producing images or copies of previously

received sensory data" (p.505). But still, Wordsworth seems to endorse the view that the ability to change in this sense is also able to carry one from the earthly to the permanent: "Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our Nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal" (*The Major Works*, p. 614). Taking this into consideration, Schlutz argues that Wordsworth's conception of imagination, by "appropriating the intellectual capital of his 'philosophical friend' Coleridge",

> provides the mind with a form of religious inspiration. In this conception, which has its roots in Platonic and Neoplatonic views of the faculty, as well as in their post-Kantian transformations in the discourse of German Idealism, imagination gives the mind access to a super-sensible realm not usually available to conscious experience. Such moments of inspiration may be brief, but their effect is lasting, Wordsworth asserts, and they serve as a reminder that our existence is not merely temporal. The poet thus appropriates the qualities of the prophet and the religious visionary, while reference to 'imagination' can underwrite the myth of the poet's election. (2015, pp.505-506)

Wordsworth here seems to be inciting in Coleridge a spark for further distinction or specification, and his distinction serves to highlight some basic divergences between the two terms, but it is not as penetrating as Coleridge's own conception since Wordsworth misses out imagination's holistically regenerative potentiality *vis-à-vis* fancy's associative function.

As Coleridge clearly puts it in the *Biographia* "…it was Mr. Wordsworth's purpose to consider the influences of fancy and imagination as they are manifested in poetry, and from the different effects to conclude their diversity in kind; while it is my object to investigate the seminal principle, and then from the kind to deduce the degree. My friend has drawn a masterly sketch of the branches with their poetic fruitage. I wish to add the trunk, and even the roots..." (*BL* II, p. 88). Coleridge sought to establish the distinction of his own theory from not only associationism but also transcendentalism in the *Biographia*.

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He aimed to counter Wordsworth's "Theory, in which my name has been so constantly included", adding that in the Preface he elaborated on "the powers of association …and on the generic difference between the faculties of Fancy and Imagination…as laying the foundation Stones of the Constructive or Dynamic Philosophy in opposition to the merely mechanic" (*CL* IV, pp. 578–9). Coleridge's subtle distinction surely took its source from his philosophical investments, and Wordsworth's objection in the "Preface" to his own theory of fancy and imagination which, for Coleridge, "distorted a vital particularity and caused a fundamental confusion" (Engell, 2002, pp. 59-60). It was therefore of utmost importance that a response was given and a base was provided for Coleridge's own theory of imagination and fancy in the *Biographia*.

"I shall now proceed to the nature and genesis of the Imagination", Coleridge announced in Chapter 12, and added, "but I must first take leave to notice, that after a more accurate perusal of Mr. Wordsworth's remarks on the Imagination, in his preface to the new edition of his poems, I find that my conclusions are not so consentient with his as, I confess, I had taken for granted" (*BL* I, p. 294). As a response to Wordsworth's objection and explanation in his Preface of 1815 concerning fancy and imagination, Coleridge wrote in the *Biographia* that their arguments are at odds "chiefly, perhaps as our objects are different" (*BL* II, p. 87). Coleridge elaborates as follows:

> if, by the power of evoking and combining, Mr. Wordsworth means the same as, and no more than, I meant by the aggregative and associative, I continue to deny, that it belongs at all to the Imagination; and I am disposed to conjecture, that he has mistaken the copresence of Fancy with Imagination for the operation of the latter singly…deeming it necessary to go back much further than Mr. Wordsworth's subject required or permitted, I have attached a meaning to both Fancy and Imagination, which he had not in view, at least while he was writing that preface. (*BL* I, p. 294)

Here Coleridge is aiming towards realization of the "Dynamic Philosophy" by renouncing what he took to be Wordsworth's faulty judgments that could subversively lead to "despotism of the eye" (*BL* I, p. 107) and levelling up of fancy and imagination.

Coleridge had to provide his own definitions of fancy and imagination so he could distinguish his own line of thought and use of concepts from others. Early in the *Biographia*, in Chapter 4, Coleridge announced that thanks to "Repeated meditations" he came to the "full conviction" that "fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power" (*BL* I, p. 82). In Chapter 10, he revisited his argument by presenting a word he himself coined from Greek roots – "ESEMPLASTIC", which means "to shape into one; because, having to convey a new sense, I thought that a new term would both aid the recollection of my meaning, and prevent its being confounded with the usual import of the word, imagination" (*BL* I, p. 170). Coleridge was constantly seeking to desynonymize the concept from the ordinary use. Hence, after the long chapter of philosophical *tour de force* full of "requests and premonitions", preparing the reader for elucidation of the famous distinction between the two imaginations and fancy, Coleridge in Chapter 13 theorised about their complex and interwoven definitions by getting rid of some long established misconceptions about the terms. He hence provided his most well-known, though for some notoriously brief, distinction as follows:

> The IMAGINATION, then, I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create;

or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (*as* objects) are essentially fixed and dead. (*BL* I, p. 304)

He makes further distinction of fancy from imagination, either primary or secondary, with the following words:

> FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The fancy is, indeed, no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space, and blended with, and modified by, that empirical phenomenon of the will which we express by the word CHOICE. But, equally with the ordinary memory, it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association. (*BL* I, p. 305)

Coleridge's definition of two imaginations and their distinction from fancy is closely related to his conception of mind and the senses. In the *Biographia,* we can see the illustrations of the aforementioned correspondence between Coleridge's own deployment of Kantian tripartite division of Reason, Understanding, Senses and his trilateral conception of secondary imagination, primary imagination and fancy. For Coleridge, the mind is activated not necessarily through the objects of the senses but "by thoughts", and it "only then feels the requisite interest even for the most important events and accidents, when by means of meditation they have passed into *thoughts*" (*BL* I, p. 31). He later emphasized his point by suggesting observation of "a small water-insect on the surface of rivulets" and

> how the little animal wins its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resisting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary fulcrum for a further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking. There are evidently two powers at work, which relatively to each other are active and passive; and this is not possible without an intermediate faculty, which is at once both active and passive. In philosophical language, we must denominate this intermediate faculty in all its degrees and determinations, the IMAGINATION. (*BL* I, p. 124-25)

Watching the background states of mind unfolds the way it gathers strength in the face of the passivity of the senses, and enables the mind to keep itself active. Coleridge's

conception of imagination at this point diverges from Kant and Wordsworth[130] since he spares imagination from being connected to the senses in their rawest form.

The momentous definition of imagination Coleridge provided in the *Biographia*, as Alexander Schlutz (2015) puts it, "gathers its resonances from the textual echo-chamber of philosophy" (p. 508). Navigating through the multifarious philosophical thoughts, Coleridge eventually came up with the idiosyncratic "muddle" and his theory of imagination in the *Biographia* is the product of such a synthesis. He was especially concerned with the Kantian perspective on imagination, and its function on the empirical and transcendental level, and how far it accorded with his own muddle. As Schlutz explains:

> For Kant, the synthesis of imagination, the way it combines various sense impressions into a unity that can then be taken up by the faculty of understanding in the processes of rational thought, is only in its empirical incarnation bound by the laws of association and the principles of resemblance, contiguity and cause and effect central to the empiricist philosophical approaches of John Locke, David Hume, David Hartley, and others. On the transcendental level, however, on which the a priori conditions of experience as such are at stake, the imagination's synthesis provides the conditions of possibility for the laws of association and grounds the unity of all our judgements in consciousness. It is this fundamental moment of freedom in the act of cognition itself, not bound by the empirical laws of cause and effect, in which the mind actively shapes the empirical data it receives, that opened the door to the idealist systems of

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[130] It must be noted at this point that other than Kant (and Wordsworth), Coleridge's systematic exegesis of the philosophical movement pioneered by Kant and later represented notably by Fichte and Schelling aided him to formulate the idiosyncratic deduction of two imaginations and the "infinite I AM" in the *Biographia*. Within the scope of this study, only Kantian critical philosophy is the subject of my consideration since Kant devised the system of the pure (original) apperception of the "I think" (*CPR*, B 132) as "the transcendental unity of self-consciousness" (B 133) and the grounding principle of German transcendentalist philosophy. Although the commonly accepted sources of influence for Coleridge's "infinite I AM" such as Schelling or Fichte are not hereby the subject of my consideration, they can be found in scholarly works treating the *Biographia*. See: "Editor's Introduction" to *Biographia Literaria* in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Volume 7 (Part I)* (1983), eds. J. Engell, &W. J. Bate, pp. cxiv- cxxvii; *Coleridge's Poetry and Prose* (2004) eds. Halmi, Magnuson and Modiano, p. 488, fn. 7, and p. 475, fn. 4-6. Also see: Seamus Perry's *Coleridge's Notebooks: A Selection* (2002), p. 211, commentary no. 379 and p. 223, commentary no. 416.

Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, and that so profoundly affected Coleridge. (2015, p. 502)

For Coleridge, Kant's argument on imagination was rather cursory and the latter's conception at best attributed the "productive" imagination a role similar to "understanding", through its "reproductive" counterpart, due to its connection with the laws of association and passive reception of the material at hand, which is accorded with the senses. In this respect, I assert, Coleridge's theory of imagination in 1817 corresponds to that of Kant at a preliminary level: Kant's productive imagination is an approximate equivalent to Coleridgean "primary imagination", but what Kant names "reproductive imagination" is, through desynonymy, to be called "fancy" by Coleridge in the *Biographia*. Considering the elevation of the "understanding" after *The Friend* (1809-10) in Coleridge's philosophy, we can hold that primary imagination as the "prime Agent of all human Perception" and as the repetition of "the eternal act of creation" in our finite minds is a majestic act in itself.

So far, Coleridge and Kant's definitions of imagination seem to overlap to a certain extent. Nonetheless, a careful consideration of the Coleridgean preoccupation with the divinely-inspired creative powers of mind, i.e. secondary imagination, is required to fully understand the transcendent landscape Coleridge aimed to picture vis-à-vis Kant's transcendental deduction. Coleridge's secondary imagination is fundamentally distinct from Kant's references to imagination due to the incongruous roles they each ascribed to Reason and, specifically, as a result of their contesting conceptions of the *noumena*. Perry (1999) observes that

> Kant regards the objective reality of trees and stones themselves as unknowable....so his system secures the unity of the self and its experience at a cost: moving beyond nature...is one thing, but never having had real knowledge of it in the first place is quite another…But Coleridge could

'never believe'…that all the shaping was done by the mind on incoherent sense-stuff, and none *on the mind* by the influence of things themselves... (p. 133)

Coleridge's transcendent conception of the constitutive Reason is inextricably interconnected with the *noumena*, and it is also actively in exchange with the external things as well as the inner workings of the mind. Yet the way Kant conceptualizes Reason, whether practical or speculative, precludes the possibility of attaining the knowledge of things in themselves, hence for Coleridge missing the imaginative power that is able to "diffuse" or "dissipate" in order to "re-create".

The point Coleridge diverges from Wordsworth's conception of imagination is similar: What Wordsworth calls "imagination" in the 1815 Preface to *Poems* seems to corresponds to Coleridge's primary imagination, hence imagination in Wordsworth's theory lacks that "vital" secondary function and instrinsic connection with the constitutive Reason, hence being closer to Kant's reproductive imagination. Coleridge's description of the poet who "brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity", who "diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination" (*BL* II, pp. 15-16) does not therefore wholly apply to Wordsworth.

For Coleridge, creation of a poem requires the poet to be actively involved in the process of poetic production, which distinguishes imitation from "a mere copy" (*BL* II, p. 43). According to Coleridge's theory of literary criticism, then, rather than being a passive imitation of the raw reality (i.e. *mimesis*), hence being twice removed from the Truth (*The Republic*, p. 317), literary or art work adds upon the actual by interpreting and recreating the ordinary in a peculiar way that has its own reality and beauty. This is what makes a

piece of art or literature actively and distinctively appealing to the feelings of its perceiver – just as Aristotle considered two poems with "the same iambic line", and he held that whereas the one with unfamiliar wording "appears beautiful", the other is merely "of a dime-a-dozen sort" (*Poetics*, p. 56). Hence the poet, for Coleridge, while mimetically[131] reproducing the elements in the world ("the composition of a poem is among the *imitative* arts" (*BL* II, p. 217)), recreates them through imagination and puts them down with the help of stylistic features and variations, i.e. "foregrounding".[132] It is mainly this aspect that makes literary works quintessentially different from everyday language spoken by "ordinary man".

Howard H. Creed in "Coleridge's Metacriticism" (1954) also agrees that Coleridge adopts the Aristotelian approach to imitation, and "a great part of the metaphysics introduced in the *Biographia* as an explanation of the faculty of imagination can be read as an attempt to develop a psychology for the special kind of imitation that is poetry" (p. 1164). Coleridge's definition of imagination is therefore inextricably related with pleasure and feeling, "a pleasure from internal relationships within a poem, and a more permanent pleasure that results from transferring the nature of poetry to the reader himself" (p. 1169). The stylistic features of a literary text thus evoke feelings of the reader, as Miall and Kuiken (1994) also discuss,

> in a way that makes it not merely incidental but actually a constructive part of the reading process. When perception has been deautomatized, a reader employs the feelings that have been evoked to find or to create a context in

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[131] For a recent study on this topic, see: Frederick Burwick, *Mimesis and Its Romantic Reflections* (2001).
[132] As David S. Miall and Don Kuiken discuss, "foregrounding enables literature to present meanings with an intricacy and complexity that ordinary language does not normally allow." (1994, p. 390). Referring to the theories of the Russian Formalist critic Viktor Shklovsky and Czech theorist Jan Mukařovský, Miall and Kuiken (1994) emphasize that although "foregrounding may occur in normal, everyday language" the occurrence is sporadic and "without systematic design"; on the other hand, foregrounding in literary texts is "structured: it tends to be both systematic and hierarchical", hence deautomatizing perception, rendering ordinary objects unfamiliar, and creating a special effect. (pp. 390-391)

which the defamiliarized aspects of the story can be located. This is a
central part of the constructive work required of the reader of a literary text.
(p. 392)

This is an approach that not only distinguishes a literary work from ordinary conversation, but also addresses the reader's feelings. And for Coleridge this is thanks to one of the distinctive features of poetry: creating an impact of novelty in the ordinary through imaginative power, i.e. defamiliarization, to use the Russian Formalist term.[133]

Rather than presenting a mere replica of the phenomenal world, literature is hence a recreation of the reality and the familiar, through which "the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images" (*BL* II, p. 40). The "two cardinal points of poetry" Coleridge said, are "the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of the imagination" (*BL* II, p. 5). The notion of "defamiliarization" can therefore help us understand Coleridge's initial approach to a joint poetic collection, the *Lyrical Ballads*, and can also shed light onto his revisionary activity and disentanglement with Wordsworth in the *Biographia*. Looking at the world through the spectacles of a poet, critic and a philosopher, Coleridge fully beheld the "inexhaustible treasure" for which, he also lamented, "we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand" due to "the film of familiarity" (*BL* II, p. 7). Defamiliarization hence gives the literary work its distinguishing feature, since "imitation, as opposed to copying, consists either in the interfusion of the SAME throughout the radically DIFFERENT, or of the different throughout a base radically the same" (*BL* II, p. 217). Defamiliarization as a literary tool hence renders the

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[133] i.e. making strange; transforming the ordinary into the unfamiliar through art and poetry. See: Shklovsky, Viktor. "Art as Technique." *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. Eds. Rivkin, Julie and Ryan, Michael. New York: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. pp. 15-21. Although Coleridge does not use the term itself, but I aim to demonstrate here that his definition of poetry encapsulates the concept as used by the Russian Formalists.

ordinary and familiar objects strange and unfamiliar, making a literary piece different from everyday language, evoking feeling[134] and enhancing readers' perception of the ordinary. According to Coleridge, what gives a literary work its idiosyncratic feature is that it deautomatizes perception through foregrounding[135] (though Coleridge never used these terms *per se*), hence both producing "the strongest impressions of novelty", and rescuing "the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstances of their universal admission" (*BL* I, p. 82). With these words, Coleridge stresses the unique nature of poetic diction previously described by Aristotle as "the adornment of the spectacle" through "unfamiliar words" (*Poetics*, pp. 27, 54).

In addition, Coleridge in the *Biographia* emphasized the crucial role "multeity in unity" played in imagination when he wrote "We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD" (*BL* I, p. 283). Here, the emphasis on the significance of beginning with individual consciousness in all its multiplicity and diversity in order to attain a unified awareness of the self and the *noumena* points to tensions between (and co-existence of) unity and multeity. The conglomeration of seemingly irreconcilable concepts is further enabled through Coleridge's definition of primary and secondary imagination in the *Biographia*. Although Owen Barfield (1971) asserts that both imaginative faculties

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[134] As Miall and Kuiken indicate, "There seems little doubt that foregrounding, by creating complexity of various kinds, requires cognitive work on the part of the reader; but it is our suggestion that this work is initiated and in part directed by feeling" (1994, p. 392). They also point to "a relationship between the defamiliarizing effects of foregrounding and the emergence of feeling. If response to foregrounding is conceptualized as the reaction to an unexpected textual feature, evidence from studies of event-related potentials indicates that reading foregrounded text accentuates activity in cortical areas specialized for affect." (p. 393)

[135] As Czech theorist Jan Mukařovský pointed out, "Foregrounding is the opposite of automatization, that is, the deautomatization of an act; the more an act is automatized, the less it is consciously executed; the more it is foregrounded, the more completely conscious does it become. Objectively speaking: automatization schematizes an event; foregrounding means the violation of the scheme." (Mukařovský, 1964, p. 19)

inseparably point to a "unity in multeity" (p. 35), I would like to point to a distinction (though not a division) that actually enables the two imaginative departments to co-exist. Accordingly, whereas I hold the primary imagination implies "unity entire", its secondary counterpart points to an "essentially vital" secondary effect that "dissolves diffuses dissipates, in order to recreate" – reproducing and celebrating Multeity in Unity. This is totally different from a reduction of particulars into one unity, which would be –following Perry – "the work of Fancy" (1999, p. 33). In other words, reflecting the "hallmark Coleridgean quality of trying to have things both ways", the theory of imagination helped him revise a perception of linear development (or apostasy) in his career, showing rather an "erratic progress" (Perry, p. 34) of accommodating multiplicity at once. This is a significant step for Coleridge towards the refinement to his opinions in the past and establishment of the validity of his current position because, for example, while the annoying pantheistic undertone of the definition for Coleridge is obvious, the conceptual adoption of Multeity in Unity could serve to balance and revise an otherwise precarious ramification.[136] In addition and most importantly, he differenciates between himself and Wordsworth here: Whereas Wordsworth's definition of "imagination", Coleridge seems to suggest, in the 1815 Preface originates from his faith in the Unity Entire, what desynonymized Coleridge from his partner was the proposition that secondary imagination

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[136] Nevertheless, it is still disputable whether Coleridge managed to realise his aims here because he was not happy with *Biographia* later in his life due to the implicit pantheism in it. Perry (1999) also thinks one of the reasons Coleridge was never that keen on the *Biographia* was that it is a work haunted by the possibility of unity entire. His immediate annoyance is obvious as Coleridge crossed out the phrase "and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" in his own copy of the first edition of the *Biographia*: As Sara Coleridge appended the following note after these lines: "This last clause…I find stroked out in a copy of the B.L. containing a few MS. marginal notes of the author, which are printed in this edition. I think it best to preserve the sentence, while I mention the author's judgment upon it, especially as it has been quoted. S. C." (qtd.in Fruman, Norman. "Review Essay: Aids to Reflection on the New 'Biographia'". p. 146. Reviewed Work(s): *Biographia Literaria* by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate. *Studies in Romanticism*, Vol. 24, No. 1, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (Spring, 1985), pp. 141-173 Boston University)

accommodated plurality, fragments, instability and it was through this secondary quality of imagination that he hoped to be able to gain cognition of the *noumenal* world without having to be in touch with the world as we experience it.

CHAPTER FOUR – REVISING POETICAL WORKS: *SIBYLLINE LEAVES* (1817)

> Only trust not thy verses to leaves, lest they fly in disorder, the sport of rushing winds; chant them thyself, I pray.
> Aeneas's plea to the Sibyl of Cumae, *Aeneid*, vi, 74-76, trans. Fairclough. 1974.

Sibylline Leaves brought together almost the entire poetic *oeuvre* of Coleridge, from 1793 up to the date it was published in 1817.[137] It was over 300 pages long, preceded by a short "Preface".[138] Although the collection excluded such famous works by Coleridge as "Christabel", "Kubla Khan", and "The Pains of Sleep", it still consisted of Coleridge's major poems, which were more or less in the same form as we are familiar with today.[139] In a letter of July 1816 to John Hookham Frere, Coleridge mentioned his collection of poems as one he dared "consent to be known as of my own Will as well as Authorship" (*CL* IV, p. 646). Fearing that he would be accused of "a kind of *barrenness* on [his] faculties" (*CL* IV, p. 679), Coleridge therefore regarded, as Mileur (1982) suggests, both the *Biographia* and *Sibylline Leaves* as "summary statement on his twenty years as a poet and philosopher" (p. 2). Although the revisionary challenges of *Sibylline Leaves* are very different from those of *Biographia Literaria*, I contend that they were guided by a common underlying principle. In both cases, Coleridge needed to transform Wordsworth's status from his symbiotic other to that of a "friend" and a proper dialogue partner.

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[137] As Coleridge noted in his "Preface" to *Sibylline Leaves*, "It contains the whole of the author's poetical compositions, from 1793 to the present date, with the exception of a few works not yet finished, and those published in the first edition of his juvenile poems, over which he has no controul." (*PW* I. II, p. 1249)

[138] The previously unplanned list of errata revisions, including not only the addition of "One Life" line to "The Eolian Harp" but also the exclusion of an entire stanza from "The Rime of The Ancient Mariner", was inserted at the beginning of the collection afterwards.

[139] J.C.C. Mays (2001, *PW* I.II) states that "With a few obvious exceptions...and apart from a few other poems C continued to work on (e.g. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*), *SL* provides authoritative versions of texts which the late collections only contaminate." (pp. 1247-48)

Sibylline Leaves differs from the previous collections by Coleridge published under his name in the years 1796, 1797 and 1803.[140] It was, first and foremost, an invitation to the general literary reader to recognise his 'friendship' with Wordsworth, by drawing attention to their collaboration without allowing it to overshadow his own contribution. The matter was complicated considerably by the fact that in order to give himself his due as he saw it, Coleridge was obliged to acknowledge that he was source of certain tendencies in Wordsworth's verse that he now found dubious and even heretical.

A Brief Background to *Sibylline Leaves*

Coleridge's resolution to end the scattered state of his poems and collect them in a volume can be traced back to 1 May 1807,[141] when it was announced in Longman's journal *The Athenaeum: A Magazine of Literary and Miscellaneous Information* that Coleridge had sent two volumes of his poems to the press and they would be published soon. This, Mays (2001) states, indicates that Coleridge at this time "began to entertain hopes for a collection" that resembled Wordsworth's 1807 volumes (*PW* I.II, p. 1244). We see his ongoing enthusiasm in his letters of April 1809, just before publishing the periodical version of *The Friend*: "I am about to negotiate with Longman & Rees for 2 Volumes of Poems," he wrote, "which I shall prepare for the Press, the moment '*the friend*' is fairly under way" (*CL* III, p. 191). He started issuing *The Friend* in periodical form in 1809-10, and in the second number dated 8 June 1809, Coleridge announced the collection in such a way that accentuated the fragmented state his poems had remained: "I take the opportunity

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[140] J.C.C. Mays (2001, *PW* I.II,), pp. 1226-1240.
[141] Mays states that although "SL descends directly from C's earlier collections, despite the long interval and changed and changing circumstances, and its material beginnings may be traced to events which happened at least ten years before it appeared." (*PW* I.II, p. 1244)

of informing my known and unknown patrons, that I am about to put to the Press a collection of the Poems written by me since the year 1795, several of which, of those at least of smaller size, have appeared in different Newspapers &c. in an incorrect state…" (*The Friend* II, p. 36). However, I propose that he did not then intend a revisionary separation from his partner yet because this alluring plan to save his poems from the "incorrect state" could only turn into a workable reality once he had thoroughly resolved to invest in his discrete *oeuvre*.

The Friend project in periodical form was terminated in March 1810, and Coleridge soon found himself at odds with the Wordsworth household (Valerie Purton, 1993, p. 88). His disillusionment was intensified by a mutual friend's report of disparaging remarks by Wordsworth about him in October 1810, upon which Coleridge went to London, intermittently residing with the Morgans. The next year, he lectured from November 1811 until January 1812. Despite the withdrawal of half the Wedgwood annuity in November 1812[142] and in spite of his personal crises, Coleridge continued to produce quality work befitting the breadth of his actual intellectual reservoir: he wrote articles for newspapers, continued lecturing, and revised his dramatical work, *Osorio*, and successfully put it into production at *Drury Lane* in January 1813 under the new title, *Remorse*.

In August 1813, John Morgan who had always supported Coleridge was declared bankrupt and that, more than anything else, seems to have spurred him back to life (Purton, 1993, p. 99). Although Coleridge could not rouse himself for his own sake, he could for Morgan's. I think this is further evidence of the phenomenon McFarland (1981) relates to Coleridge's castration complex (p. 114) – he was never happier than when speaking or

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[142] As early as January 1798, Wedgwoods had offered Coleridge "£150 a year for life to devote himself to poetry and philosophy." (Purton, 1993, p. 32)

acting through another, and Coleridge was at his best when helping out to the Morgan family during those hard times. However, prior to pulling himself together to set out on a journey to realize his ambition to collect his poems, Coleridge had suffered from severe collapse and depression in the first half of 1814 (Purton, 1993, p. 101). As a matter of fact, he had gradually sunk towards this crisis since he left Grasmere in the autumn of 1810 but it had never been as severe as now because, postponed by the success of his lectures and play in *Drury Lane*, Coleridge was now obliged to confront the still largely unresolved contradictions in his life: his professional failures, opium addiction, Sara Hutchinson, his marriage, and abandoned children were gradually preying on his mind, seriously disrupting not only himself but also his capacity for work (Holmes, 1998, pp. 350-351). Moreover, he soon found in the summer of 1814 that, Southey's *Roderick, The Last of the Goths* and Wordsworth's *The Excursion* were both about to be published, and Coleridge's fame was obviously running the risk of publicly being shadowed by his former companions' productivity.

Money was a crucial factor leading up to Coleridge's eventual collapse in this period. Mays observes, for example, that Coleridge's enthusiasm as early as 1807 to collect his poems, taking Wordsworth's example, did not "last beyond the excitement of watching [Wordsworth]'s volumes appear and was soon overtaken by other, moneymaking commitments" (*PW* I.II, p. 1244). This must be the reason for a strange feeling of uselessness that haunted Coleridge at the time he embarked on writing the "Preface" to *Sibylline Leaves* in March 1815 (Purton, 1993, p. 103), as he then poured out his grief in a letter and complained:

> …but O me! what can I do, when I am so poor that in having to turn off
> every week from these to some mean Subject for the Newspapers I distress
> myself, & at last neglect the greater wholly to do *little* of the Less…I have

remained poor by always having been poor, and incapable of pursuing any one great work for want of a competence before hand. (*CL* IV, pp. 546-547)

He was thoroughly in need of money. As he wrote in a letter to John M. Gutch in early January 1817, prior to the publication of *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves*: "...the *new* Friend, in three volumes...I have been working like a Slave at these two *Books* (for such they are) called Lay-sermons – but I have not received a penny for them, or made any Bargain – & for the Biog. & Poems I do not expect to receive a farthing – well! if it do not leave me in debt" (*CL* IV, pp. 701-702).

It was not until the publication of Wordsworth's *The Excursion* in July, 1814 in quarto form – with a "Preface" outlining the poet's plan for the bigger project of *Recluse* and explaining his poetic practice – that there was resurgence not only in Coleridge's spirits but also in his literary pursuits.[143] By the beginning of 1815, Coleridge was living with the Morgans at Calne in Wiltshire, and enjoying the company of influential friends, who joined together "to lend STC £45 to help him publish two volumes of his poetry" - *Sibylline Leaves* (Purton, 1993, pp. 103-104). Here Coleridge began to reconsider publishing his collected poems. In the Easter Week of 1815, Coleridge wrote a petitionary letter to Byron in which he gave the full account of his planned poetic collection:

> …my circumstances now compel me to publish in two Volumes all the poems composed by me from the year 1795 to the present Date, that are sanctioned by my mature judgement, all that I would consent to have called mine…The whole have been corrected throughout, with very considerable alterations and additions, some indeed almost re-written. (*CL* IV, p. 560)

By 1817, Coleridge was also a widely known and highly controversial figure who, now residing at the Highgate house of James Gillman, "only the year before had published a volume containing 'Christabel', 'Kubla Khan', and 'The Pains of Sleep'" (Stillinger, 1994, p. 70). And ten years after the conception of a poetic collection and two years after it was

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[143] On June 29, 1814 Coleridge reported to Morgan that he was greatly improved. (Purton, 1993, p. 102)

sent to the press, due to delays over printing and publishers, *Sibylline Leaves* was finally published in July 1817. It was yet another accomplishment on Coleridge's side that the 1817 version of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", along with other anonymous poems, eventually emerged with Coleridge on the scene as the manifest author.[144] This was due to the fact that with the collection, Coleridge was about to emerge as the sole owner of his own poetic *oeuvre*.

Previous Scholarship

The Coleridge scholarship is usually and rightfully inclined to deal with *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) as an illustration of the poetics delivered in the widely-acclaimed *Biographia*. Mileur (1982), for instance, argues that the poetic collection of Coleridge, who aimed to integrate poetry with philosophy, can be read as the "prophetic fragments of the realized poet-philosopher of *Biographia*", and the context provided by the *Biographia* enabled "an interpretation of Coleridge and his concerns" through which his poems could be "read anew" and through which Coleridge could go beyond "the bounds of the conventionally poetic" (p. 2). According to this view, to which I also subscribe, what Coleridge designed was a constitutionally-integrated project (albeit a rather sprawling one): the poetical collection with a "Preface" (*Biographia*) that holistically laid out his philosophical and theological views, as well as practical criticism. On the other hand, there are views that suggest slightly otherwise: Ewan James Jones (2014) has recently argued that it was thanks to his verse that Coleridge's engagement with philosophy yielded a notable outcome, as he lacked the systematic speculation required for proper philosophical inquiry. Jones

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[144] For more information on the complicated publication history of the *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves*, refer to *Collected Letters*, III, pp. xlvii–lii and *Biographia Literaria*, I, pp. xlv–lxv. Also see: Stillinger, 1994, *Coleridge and Textual Instability* pp. 19-20 for further details.

discusses that "'formal' features such as metre, rhyme and stress" facilitated Coleridge's idiosyncratic thinking in a way systematic philosophy did not (p. 62). For Jones, then, Coleridge's philosophy could not be expressed but for his poetical output. However, I suggest, this is one-sided, for Jones is overlooking the holistic nature of Coleridge's collection and "Preface". As a matter of fact, when *Sibylline Leaves* was published, Coleridge's poetical and the ensuing revisionary activities were in a mutually binding interaction with his many-sided, muddled and theologically-attuned philosophical thinking.

Scholarship concerning *Sibylline Leaves* also draws on the idea that it was not a complete collection, but a selective specimen of Coleridge's canon. On the one hand Coleridge claimed that the collection would include all of his poetical compositions that were "worthy of publication since his first collection would be brought in, and that manuscript poems would make up a third of the whole" (Mays, 2001, *PW* I. II, p. 1245).[145] On the other hand, he failed to live up to this promise: As Mays (2001) states, "Besides including nine of the eleven poems added in 1797, it takes in *The Eolian Harp* from 1796; and besides thirty-eight poems from previously published sources, it takes in only ten hitherto unpublished ones" (*PW* I.II, p. 1245). As Mays elsewhere elaborates,

> He excluded several he wrote after his return from Malta from *Sibylline Leaves*…'Time Real and Imaginary', also dating from after the return from Malta, was included in *Sibylline Leaves* but only at the very last moment. Other poems remained uncollected – 'Farewell to Love' was published only in newspapers – and those which would have embarrassed family and friends were naturally withheld altogether. (2002, p. 97)

Ve-Yin Tee (2009) also emphasizes that Coleridge intentionally left the radical poems out: "In a collection that purports in the 'Preface' to contain 'the whole of the author's poetical compositions', including the 'Poems published . . . in various obscure or perishable

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[145] Also see: Coleridge's letters to John May on 27 September 1815 (*CL* IV, pp. 588-9) and Daniel Stuart on 17 September 1815. (*CL* IV, p. 591)

journals',"he questions, "where is the celebrated political satire that he contributed to the

Morning Post in 1799: 'The Devil's Walk'? Similarly, where are his celebratory sonnets

on the heroes of revolution – Erskine, La Fayette, Koskiusko, Godwin and Stanhope – that

he published in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1794 and 1795" (p. 75)? Indeed, when it came to

providing retrospective explanation to some of his politically-laden pieces, Coleridge was

rather embracing them through half-truths, selective accounts and expediency – a practice

that goes back to the time he published the periodical version of *The Friend* in 1809-

1810.[146] That is, just as he knew how to strip the Kantian categorical imperative of its

political connotations while adopting his philosophical views, Coleridge aimed to acquit

himself of the possible charges following the revelation of his authorship in 1817 (See:

"Fire, Famine and Slaughter" case study below).

Gap in Scholarship

In this chapter, I hope to make a contribution to our evolving understanding of Coleridge's

poetic collection, *Sibylline Leaves*, by considering it within the framework of his

revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818 and his adherence to language and imagination. In

the post-*Excursion* phase of Coleridge's revisions, it was primarily the fact that

Wordsworth had abandoned *The Recluse* that made it imperative for Coleridge to salvage

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[146] Class (2012) points out this aspect of Coleridge's rhetoric and selective accounts of his own canon as follows: "*The Friend* introduced the categorical imperative in such a way that it deprived it of any political potential: 'So act that thou mayest be able without involving any contradiction to will that the Maxim of thy Conduct should be the Law of all intelligent Beings' (*Friend* II, p. 128). Not only did Coleridge omit the Jacobin name Kant, he also made sure to tame the categorical imperative and to disconnect it explicitly from any form of political activism: the categorical imperative is 'the one universal and sufficient Principle and Guide of Morality. Any why? Because the object of Morality is not the outward act, but the internal Maxims of our Actions' (*Friend* II, p. 128). The stipulation of disinterestedness can be found in the Groundwork; however, the strict separation of morality from outward action in such vehement terms as 'And [only] so far it is infallible' (*Friend* II, p. 128) is Coleridge's addition. In comparison to Coleridge's first sketch of the categorical imperative in his notebook between late 1795 and early 1796, this version seems completely impotent." (p. 146)

what he could out of the joint *oeuvre* with his former companion, and to re-define his own *oeuvre*. The collection therefore would necessarily emerge as a vital demonstration of his self-reassurance.[147] I am hence a little bit uncomfortable with the idea, held by Raimonda Modiano (2009), that "without the appearance of Wordsworth's 1815 volume, Coleridge's own projected Preface may never have grown into 'an Autobiographia literaria'…but would have remained yet another item on a long list of unrealized works" (p. 212). I suggest that although Modiano's statement seems to be compatible with my contention, it nonetheless presents both *Sibylline Leaves* and the *Biographia* predominantly as exclusive reactions to Wordsworth's collection of 1815. However, as I will demonstrate in the following parts of this thesis, the story began a year earlier when *The Excursion* of 1814 propelled Coleridge's radical shift in his perception of an independent *oeuvre* and the importance of relying on his own intellectual reservoir.

In the following, I aim to support my assertion that the meticulous care Coleridge took with his collection of poems in 1815 largely stemmed from his disappointment with *The Recluse* project in general and *The Excursion* in particular. Coleridge hence named the collection after Virgil's *Cumaean Sibyl* in *Aeneid*,[148] the allusion to which points, as Coleridge mentions in the "Preface" to his poems, broadly to their "fragmentary and widely scattered state" (*PW* I.II, p. 1249). Whereas Chris Murray (2013) asserts that the

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[147] When it "eventually appeared" in 1817, as J.C.C. Mays (2001) informs, the poems in *Sibylline Leaves* (as well as the *Biographia*) "was attracting a good deal of notice [and he] was willy-nilly more aware of the poems as a statement of his achievement than he was in 1809, 1811, or originally in 1815, and he became more deeply involved in the book's fortunes after publication than with any of his earlier collections. He annotated copies over a number of years to an extent without precedent or parallel." (*PW* I.II, p. 1247)

[148] "...thou shalt look on an inspired prophetess, who deep in a rocky cave sings the Fates and entrusts to leaves signs and symbols. Whatever verses the maid has traced on leaves she arranges in order and stores away in the cave. These remain unmoved in their places and quit not their rank; but when at the turn of the hinge a light breeze has stirred them, and the open door scattered the tender foliage, never does she thereafter care to catch them, as they flutter in the rocky cave, nor to recover their places, nor to unite the verses; uncounselled, men depart, and loathe the Sibyl's seat." (*Aeneid,* Book III, pp. 377-379)

title "transforms the disorganized state of Coleridge's texts into a sort of success" (p. 80), Mays (2001) suggests that it refers to Wordsworth's subtitle "Miscellaneous Pieces", most probably with the intention of "raising to prominence" what Wordsworth in 1815 had relegated (*PW* I.II, p. 1248). In any case, it is significant to note that rather than trusting others to take care of his poems, Coleridge in *Sibylline Leaves* sought to "chant them" himself[149], so to say, in order to revise himself and re-define his symbiotic history with Wordsworth.

Revisionary Activity in *Sibylline Leaves*

In the aftermath of giving up on the joint *oeuvre* with Wordsworth,[150] Coleridge sought to ensure that his distinct authorship was recognized and appreciated in 1815. This was a strategic moment in Coleridge's career because his poems were recently omitted by Wordsworth from the reprint of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1815, finally reverting to the author. Coleridge therefore had to take prompt action regarding his anonymous and scattered works, as well as those published under his name in newspapers and private letters, and the poems he had to omit from his previous publications.[151] In addition, after Wordsworth's publication of his own collected poems in 1815, Coleridge felt he was now being completely airbrushed out of the picture. This, however, was not a total surprise for

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[149] From Aeneas's plea to the Sibyl of Cumae, *Aeneid*, vi, 74-76, trans. Fairclough. 1974.

[150] In a letter of September 1814 to Daniel Stuart, Coleridge both laments and affirms that he was "abused, & insolently reproved, as a man, with reference to my supposed private Habits, for *not publishing* …but I *could* rebut the charge, & not merely say but prove – that there is not a man in England, whose Thoughts, Images, Words, & Erudition have been published in larger quantities than *mine* – tho', I must admit, not *by* or *for* myself" (*CL* III, p. 532). This quotatiton is highly significant because it bears witness to Coleridge's investment in the reputation of others, or his practice of speaking through Wordsworth through his friend's publications as well as their plan to write a philosophical poem, *The Recluse*.

[151] For example, "The Foster Mother's Tale" (which was also included in the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798) published in the *Sibylline Leaves* in 1817 was recycled from *Osorio* of 1797 because in the revised version *Remorse* this part had to be omitted and he could not let go of the poem. The poem with its radical content was no longer appropriate for the new version of the play in 1813.

Coleridge since the process has already started back in 1798: although initially an anonymous publication was decided before printing the first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* ("Wordsworth's name is nothing," Coleridge wrote to Cottle, and added "to a large number of persons mine *stinks*" (*CL* I, p. 412)), only Wordsworth's name was printed on the title page of the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800. Therefore, Coleridge in 1817 was not in any straightforward sense making his "Collected Poems" public. He was in fact issuing a disguised poetic history of his collaboration with Wordsworth. The symbiotic nature of their relationship had long consigned Coleridge to the background (at least as a poet, and surely at Coleridge's own will)[152] in the eye of public, and this collection therefore was a belated attempt to lay claims on his own poetry and start dialogue with Wordsworth after years of collaboration with him. When we consider the sequencing of the volume and analyse what exactly Coleridge includes and what he excludes, we can see, for example, that he began the collection with the revised "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", thereby almost replicating the ordering of the original *Lyrical Ballads*. I therefore suggest that the reason for this was part of Coleridge's anxiety to reclaim his own *oeuvre* and authorship in the face of his disappointment with Wordsworth after *The Excursion*. Here, the discrepancy between Coleridge's and Wordsworth's conceptions of language and imagination had incontrovertible effects on the former's revisionary activity in compilation of *Sibylline Leaves*.

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[152] Paley (1996) agrees, borrowing from McFarland (1981), that this is also part of Coleridge's "masochistic" submission to Wordsworth. (p. 69)

Revisions and Language

Writing on Coleridge and his language theory, McKusick (2009) emphasizes that Coleridge's "distinctively Romantic conception of language" provided a "constantly evolving" axis to his discourse on "poetry, criticism, and philosophy" (p. 573). Indeed, Coleridge's adherence to the idea that language is the emblem of unification of the mind and God (Fulford, 1991, p. xvii), not merely consisting of arbitrary signs (*CL* I, pp. 625-26) but instead constituting the objects of thought surely emerged in *Sibylline Leaves*. Within the scope of this thesis, an analysis of the revisionary activity carried out in 1817 on two distinctive poems by Coleridge, "The Eolian Harp" and "Fire, Famine and Slaughter", will provide curious but concurring results.

According to Coleridge, language was able to communicate Truth because the linguistic signs had their origins in the divinity that necessarily ensured a constitutional correspondence between the mind, the word and the external objects.[153] Having founded this interplay on a transcendental ground and having conceived of linguistic signs as "living powers, not merely articulated air" (*Essays* II, p. 249), Coleridge took for granted that once the linguistic signs signify a thing, they necessarily point to its existence because language was bound to be the outlet through which our pre-existing knowledge was expressed by means of words, ultimately finding a correspondent idea or object.

A careful consideration of Coleridge's insistence on the transcendent power of language to ensure a coherent exchange between words and things and their coherent

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[153] Consider, for instance, Coleridge's note of April, 1805: "In looking at objects of Nature while I am thinking, as at yonder moon dim-glimmering thro' the dewy window-pane, I seem rather to be seeking, as it were *asking*, a symbolical language for something within me that already and forever exists , than observing any thing new. Even when that latter is the case, yet still I have always an obscure feeling as if that new phenomenon were the dim Awaking of a forgotten or hidden Truth of my inner Nature/ It is still interesting as a Word, a Symbol! It is…the Creator! [and the Evolver!]" (*CN* II, §2546)

relation to the human mind sheds light on the meaning and implications of "the one Life" passage in *Sibylline Leaves*:

> O! the one Life, within us and abroad,
> Which meets all Motion, and becomes its soul,
> A Light in Sound, a sound-like power in Light,
> Rhythm in all Thought, and Joyance every where — (*PW* I.I, p. 116)

The way Coleridge perceived how the elements of the interior world have instrinsic bonds with the external things, how they automatically combine with the one and the many (in line with the principle of Multeity in Unity) is a useful pointer to gauge the integral role of "the one Life, within us and abroad" in Coleridgean universe. In Coleridge's accounts especially in the *Biographia*, the idea of "one Life" often features, as Perry (1999) puts it, "as part of the parochial lumber that he shook off once he encountered Kant" (p. 68). The fact that the lines themselves stand physically apart from the rest of the poem in the erratum slips might as well indicate Coleridge's obvious ambivalence about the concept in 1817. However, I agree with Perry's argument that "for much of his intellectual life, the doctrine and its cognates are…centrally important, and even a key to the Coleridgean predicament, because so powerful an expression of his abiding muddle between unity and diversity" (pp. 68-69). Coleridgean conception of "the one Life" is indeed rather fluid and muddled: it welcomes "all Motion", evolves with the dynamic and manifold nature of external stimula but at once retains its fundamental core, resulting in "Rhythm in all Thought", hence sparking a ubiquitous bliss in those imbued with its awareness. I will read this aspect of the revised version of "The Eolian Harp" as an indicator of the persistence of Coleridge's language theory, his post-*Excursion* revisionary reaction to Wordsworth, and the way his own poem, "The Eolian Harp" of 1817, was affected by the dissolution of their symbiotic partnership.

The pantheistic overtone in "the one Life" lines is evident, but to me the crucial issue is not whether Coleridge was consolidating his pantheistic views; rather it must be noted that technically, Coleridge in these lines was quoting Wordsworth. Magnuson (1985) informs that "It was Wordsworth, after all, who first used the phrase the 'one life' in the Pedlar material of 1798" (p. 3),[154] referring to the Pedlar passages in the two-part *Prelude* of 1798-1799[155] (a revised and extended version of the poem was later re-published in part in Book I of *The Excursion*).[156] Consider the following lines from "Two-Part Prelude":

> …in all things
> I saw one life, and felt that it was joy.
> One song they sang, and it was audible,
> Most audible then when the fleshly ear,
> O'ercome by grosser prelude of that strain,
> Forgot its functions, and slept undisturbed.
> (*Wordsworth*, 2010, p. 186-87. Part II, Lines 459-464)

The way Wordsworth described "one life" is indeed quite similar to Coleridge's "one Life within us and abroad". Nonetheless, the matter is in fact even more complicated than Magnuson suggests because of Coleridge's role in the design of *The Recluse* since he may also have been quoting himself. The expression of "one Life" in the Pedlar material was more of the product of the two poet's symbiosis (and Coleridge's habit of speaking through Wordsworth) rather than Wordsworth's influence on Coleridge. However, Coleridge later realised, both in the 1800 "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* and in the 1814 *Excursion*, that Wordsworth was overtly preoccupied with "ordinary language" and was

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[154] "…if 'The Eolian Harp' is a seminal poem," Magnuson adds, "its influence must come from the earlier texts, not the later ones, and in its later versions the added lines might well be a result of Wordsworth's influence" (p. 3). Also see: James Butler (ed.) *The Ruined Cottage and The Pedlar* (1979) and Jonathan Wordsworth, *The Music of Humanity* (1969).

[155] In *The Prelude*, "passages on the Pedlar's education as a favoured child of Nature" were used to give an "account of [Wordsworth]'s own childhood…" (Stephen Gill (ed.) *Wordsworth*, 2010, p. 740). Also see: Jonathan Wordsworth and Stephen Gill (October 1973). "The Two-Part 'Prelude' of 1798-99". *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. Vol. 72, No. 4, pp. 503-525. Published by: University of Illinois Press.

[156] "With *The Ruined Cottage* the cadence of Wordsworth's most impressive medium from 'Tintern Abbey' to *The Prelude* and *The Excursion* emerged." (Stephen Gill (ed.) *Wordsworth*, 2010, p. 718)

ambivalent about whether language would be able to convey what Coleridge once characterised as "that prophetic Lay" (*PW* I.II, p. 816) at all.

It remains true that Coleridge's adherence to the concept of "one Life" persisted in the aftermath of his separation from Wordsworth, whereas in the latter's case, the "intellectual development center[ed] on his acceptance, revision, and eventual abandonment of Coleridge's notion" (William A. Ulmer, 1996, p. 304). I agree with Ulmer with the proposition that the inclusion of the concept in Wordsworth's poems did not necessarily entail his complete subscription to pantheism either during or after writing *The Ruined Cottage* and the Two-Part *Prelude*[157] because, Ulmer explains, "Wordsworth's few indisputable affirmations of the One Life…remain specific not to a developmental phase, in short, but to a particular poetic project" (p. 305). I would like to further this point through the assertion that his symbiotic relationship with Coleridge and the latter's fervour to speak through his friend's poetic genius resulted in Wordsworth's adoption of concepts and composition of lines owing to the influence Coleridge exerted upon his poetic career even at such an early stage. As a corollary of this, I suggest, Coleridge during his post-*Excursion* revisionary activity for *Sibylline Leaves* and with his insertion of the "one Life" passage did not only quote himself, he also aimed to merge his philosophical views on language with his poetical output.

Coleridge's solid investment in the power of language to convey meaning, to reflect what is in mind, and to constitute thoughts resulted in curious revisionary activity in

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[157] "Nowhere does Wordsworth's poetry display his sympathy with pantheism evolving into his own certain conviction of the truth of the One Life. In fact, Wordsworth's struggles with the ending of *The Ruined Cottage* indicate his humanistic awareness, even in 1798, that oneness with nature was no unequivocal good." (Ulmer, 1996, p. 331)

Sibylline Leaves during which he dealt with a poem of 1798[158] titled "Fire, Famine and Slaughter" in such a way that seemingly fell at odds with his faith in language. In the 1817 version of the poem, revisions and alterations enabled Coleridge to paradoxically defend his original position. While doing this, Coleridge's use of linguistic possibilities in the service of highlighting incongruity respecting what he wrote and what he had in mind is noteworthy.

"Fire, Famine and Slaughter" first appeared in 1798 in *The Morning Post* with a pseudonym, and re-emerged in *Sibylline Leaves* at the end of the section titled "Poems Occasioned by Political Events or Feelings Connected with them". It presents a hypothetical conversation among three entities, "Fire, Famine and Slaughter", in which they blame a person - whose name is formed by "Letters four" (*PW* I.I, p. 441), assumedly pointing to the coded name of the Prime Minister at the time, William Pitt - for the destruction brought by the war in France. The general tone of the poem is furious, even violent. At the end, the language goes so far as to imagine Pitt's own demise by hoping that "the multitude […] shall seize him and his brood –" (*PW* I.I, p. 443). It was not until Coleridge published *Sibylline Leaves* in 1817 that the poem was publicly acknowledged, with an attachment of a twenty-two page long apologetic prologue to the six-page long poem, which primarily concerns us here in terms of contributing to Coleridge's revisionary agenda at the time. More specifically, the apologetic "Preface" to the poem demonstrates the way Coleridge aimed both to reclaim authorship for his poem and, simultaneously, to reverse the political implications in the poem to his advantage.

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[158] "The poem was probably written in Dec 1797, even though C himself dated it 1796 in all his collections", but it was "published in *M[orning] Post* (8 Jan 1798) over a pseudonym" (Mays, 2001, *PW* I.I, p. 428)

In the "Preface", Coleridge recalls a conversation at a dinner table, during which this anonymous poem was mentioned. Unaware of the presence of its writer, people at the table said the style was admirable and eloquent, but the poem itself pointed to the writer's "malignity of heart." The "Preface" was hence reported to be written to defend the poem as well as the poet against this charge by suggesting that though it might seem vengeful and harsh, the poem actually reflected "mere bubbles, flashes and electrical apparitions from the magic cauldron of a fervid and ebullient fancy, constantly fuelled by an unexampled opulence of language..." (*PW* I.I, p. 433). It aimed to convey "deep feelings of revenge commonly expressed in a few words, ironically tame and mild" (p. 431). To prepare the way for this argument, the prologue opened with a quotation from the book of *Ecclesiasticus*: "THERE IS ONE THAT SLIPPETH IN HIS SPEECH, BUT NOT FROM HIS HEART; AND WHO IS HE THAT HATH NOT OFFENDED WITH HIS TONGUE?" (*PW* I.I, p. 429).

The Coleridge who wrote the first version of the poem wrote as a kind of prophet, whereas the author of *Sibylline Leaves* was more concerned with the meaning of the past and the way we interpret it. In contrast to the Kantian philosophical strain that presupposes the "regulative" function of the mind, the mature Coleridge seems to imply that reality can only be known (or constituted) retrospectively. In "Fire, Famine and Slaughter", Coleridge apparently felt compelled to use the poem to instantiate the distinction between the past as experienced (i.e. the past as he inwardly knew it) and the past as he now saw it. The poem was "sibylline" in its first version, but not in ways the young prophet could have discerned at the time. Coleridge's moment of confession at the dinner table to have authored the poem bears testimony to this:

> I must now confess, Sir! that I am the author of that Poem. It was written some years ago. I do not attempt to justify my past self, young as I then was; but as little as I would now write a similar poem, so far was I even then from imagining, that the lines would be taken as more or less than a sport of fancy. At all events, if I know my own heart, there was never a moment in my existence in which I should have been more ready, had Mr. Pitt's person been in hazard, to interpose my own body, and defend his life at the risque of my own. (*PW* I.I, p. 434)

Coleridge actually does not seem to be deflecting or diluting his radicalism into something he was ashamed of twenty years later, as we still can see him in 1818 proud of the work he had written: "I do not fear telling you," he wrote to Derwent Coleridge in November 1818, "the Apologetic Preface to the Fire, Famine, and Slaughter in Sibylline Leaves is my happiest performance in respect of *Style...*" (*CL* IV, pp. 885).[159]

The prologue to "Fire, Famine and Slaughter" was intended by Coleridge to create what Clifford Siskin (1988) terms as an "extratextual" revision on the poem:[160] through the apologetic "Preface" he underscored the discrepancy between what was written through words (i.e. in the poem) and what was actually intended, in order to discharge himself against accusations of apostasy and, ironically and simultaneously, continue to defend his previous line of thought by altering the way the poem itself is read. Therefore, against the critics holding that with the "Preface" Coleridge "had just excused the radicalism" of the poem[161], I would like to highlight the striking fact that the prologue opens with a quotation from the apology to Hadrianus by Claudian, who had imagined the prefect in an earlier

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[159] Mays (2001) also states that "C was particularly pleased with the style of the Preface, despite the fact that, even because, its magisterial and even tone is oblique to the poem." (*PW* I.I, p. 428)

[160] Clifford Siskin (1988) observes that the Romantics performed two forms of revision: "intratextual" and "extratextual." "Intratextual revision" is the "interpretive principle" that is at work even during the composition of a text, therefore whether revised or unrevised, all texts "exhibit revisionary behavior" (p. 109). According to Siskin, on the other hand, "extratextual revision" makes use of "prefaces and classificatory schemes" that do not modify the text itself but alters the way it is read.

[161] See, for example, Barrell, J. (2000). "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter." *Huntington Library Quarterly, 63*(3), 277-298. p. 287.

poem in a perpetual coma, "if not dead exactly".[162] This is a tricky allusion, which Ve-Yin

Tee (2009) finds truly problematic referring to the interpretation of Edward Gibbon (1776-

1788) in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, because "the Classical

poet was understood to be insincere" (p. 79). Gibbon explains this with the following

words: "He deplores, in mournful strains, the fatal indiscretion into which he had been

hurried by passion and folly…Yet, in some places, an air of irony and indignation betrays

his secret reluctance" (p. 188 and footnote). Here, the role Coleridge assigned to language

(which not only forms knowledge but also potentially contorts the sense of reality) enabled

him to manoeuvre the probable connotations of his verse. This is what Tim Fulford (1991)

explains with the "figurative" power of linguistic signs:[163] He holds that Coleridge

> remained a difficult but intriguing thinker, a challenge to critics precisely
> because his ideas remain powerful even though their expression is
> fragmentary and often convoluted. I attempt here to meet that challenge by
> revealing the exemplary nature of his understanding of figurative language,
> whilst showing that it arose from his participation as a speaker and author in
> discourses which, hard though he tried to reconcile them, conflicted with
> each other and with his own sense of identity. (p. xv)

This makes one think that the "Preface" in fact had an underlying irony and twist designed

both to look like an apology and to add an ironic undertone to it simultaneously. This can

be considered as the Coleridgean craft of prevaricating possible reactions against himself

by relying on language and its power of constituting thoughts while reclaiming the

authorship to the poem. Consequently, in the context of "Fire, Famine and Slaughter",

Coleridge seems to be depoliticizing highly-political and even radical content.

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[162] The epigraph from *Claudian* is taken from the "Apology to Hadrian". *Claudian*, ed. and trans. Marice Platnauer, 2 vols. London and Cambridge, Mass., 1963. 2, pp. 196-99.
[163] "By figurative language" Fulford clarifies, "I refer to a discourse which embraced conceits, allusions, puns and even verbal slips, as well as metaphor and symbol. These figures reshaped Coleridge's understanding of language's role in knowledge…" (1991, p. xv)

Nonetheless, I assert that the discrepancy between what he knew he had thought at the time of writing the poem and what he had to present in the face of historical circumstances in 1817 was deliberately to exist. Coleridge's witty eloquence and "strange power of speech" (*PW* I.I. p. 416) combined with his use of (and faith in) language empowered him to revise and occlude portions of his past views so he could mitigate the reactions to his poetical works and persona in 1817, but still be non-compromising regarding his work and the younger intentions while writing the poem. Instead of considering this as a transition in years from a radical position to a more orthodox one, I believe it is necessary to bring to mind the Coleridgean muddle and his pursuit of an *oeuvre* divorced from his symbiosis with Wordsworth.

It would be too far-fetched, on the other hand, to suggest here that Coleridge's agenda was to separate himself as the author from his works, since he was after all in the process of reclaiming his works in *Sibylline Leaves*. As he himself clarified in the "Preface": "if it be asked why I re-published it at all? I answer, that the Poem had been attributed at different times to different other persons" (*PW* I.I, p. 434). Coleridge hence stressed the significance he attributed to owning the authorship of even his controversial works in the "Preface" to the poem due to the vitality at the time of proving, vis-à-vis Wordsworth, that he had accomplished notable *oeuvre* not only in prose but also in verse. What Coleridge wished to highlight in the prologue of 1817 was a subtly-Aristotelian distinction between a "poem" and "poet":[164] we are told that the poem itself belonged to the realm of fantasy and allegory, distinguishing the poem from the poet's real-life

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[164] According to the Aristotelian argument of the poet's relation to poem, the poet merely imitates the ideal, hence not merely copies the phenomenal world as it is: "the work of the poet is to speak not of things that have happened but of the sort of things that might happen and possibilities that come from what is likely or necessary." (*Poetics*, p. 32)

experiences. Coleridge illustrated his point through a reference to Milton who, Coleridge

suggested, neither stated his "ideal of virtue, or of depravity, as an individual or individuals

actually existing", nor named or referred in his poem "to any persons, living or dead",

though his "calumniators" dared to interpret his words as alluding to real persons (*PW* I.I,

p. 436).[165] Against his own calumniators, Coleridge in this way aimed to demonstrate how

the experience of reading the poem should not automatically lead the reader to infer that

they stemmed specifically from Coleridge's own knowledge, or his personal opinions.

Coleridge hence also defended himself against the charges that he was imagining the

destruction of Pitt with the poem by illustrating his point via a question concerning Dante:

"should we hold it either fair or charitable to believe it to have been Dante's serious wish,

that all the persons mentioned by him, (many recently departed, and some even alive at the

time,) should actually suffer the fantastic and horrible punishments, to which he has

sentenced them in his *Hell and Purgatory*" (*PW* I.I, p. 432)? It was through this line of

argument that he sought absolution for writing the dialogues between fire, famine and

slaughter: When asked about the person who bade them do their respective works, each

answer by saying "Letters four do form his name. / He let me loose, and cried Halloo! / To

him alone the praise is due" (*PW* I.I, pp. 442-443). At one point towards the end of the

poem, Famine, who is proud of "gnaw[ing] the multitude", states that once "the cup of

rage" is "o'erbrim", the multitude "shall seize him and his brood", and this projection is

carried even further by Slaughter's statement that "They shall tear him limb from limb"

(*PW* I.I, p. 443)! Dramatic voices of the fictional characters, Coleridge argued in the

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[165] "Had Milton stated either his ideal of virtue, or of depravity, as an individual or individuals actually existing? Certainly not! …His wish is expressly confined to a speedy stop being put by Providence to their power of inflicting misery on others! But did he name or refer to any persons, living or dead? No! But the calumniators of Milton *daresay* (for what will calumny not dare say?) that he had LAUD and STAFFORD in his mind, while writing of remorseless persecution, and the enslavement of a free country, from motives of selfish ambition." (*PW* I.I, p. 436)

"Preface", were created through his own "seething imagination", and as a poet he tried to paint "the circumstances that accompany war in so many vivid and yet fantastic forms, as proved that neither the images nor the feelings were the result of observation, or in any way derived from realities" (*PW* I.I, p. 433).

Revisions and Imagination

In *Sibylline Leaves* Coleridge sought to constitute a poetic collection neatly divorced from his previous affiliation with Wordsworth, and even when he included poems that were the products of their collaboration, or inspired by it, Coleridge made (or had to make, as in the case of "To William Wordsworth") necessary alterations in order to reclaim his distinct author identity. In addition to linguistic concerns, what spurred Coleridge's revisionary activity in 1815 (when he was collecting his poems and writing the *Biographia*) was his former partner's misunderstanding – or incomplete understanding – of one of the most crucial concept of Coleridge's poetical, theological and philosophical queries: Imagination. The point of divergence, as expounded in the third chapter of this study, was that whereas for Coleridge it was one of the fundamental functions of imagination to ensure generation of meaning in a wholly productive fashion, Wordsworth seemed to align it with fancy, which for Coleridge was merely an associative tool that was sharply distinct from both the creative potential of primary imagination and the divine power of secondary imagination. A striking example to Coleridge's revisions based on his views on imagination is "To a Gentleman", the 1817 version of "To William Wordsworth"[166], a poem originally composed as a response to Wordsworth's recitation on January 7, 1807 of the 1805 version

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[166] There are basically two different versions of the poem: "To William Wordsworth" (1807) and "To a Gentleman" (1817).

of *The Prelude* (most of which had been written during Coleridge's Malta years) over the course of several days.[167]

Ever since they designed *The Recluse* in 1797-98 and, especially after the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 and the "Preface" to the second edition in 1800, Coleridge was not unwillingly committed to the division of labours with Wordsworth: he had even pronounced himself in 1800 as a mere "Metaphysician" compared to the greatness of Wordsworth as a poet (*CL* I, p. 658). In another letter to Richard Sharp on 15 January 1804, he confessed that although "Wordsworth is a Poet" he felt himself "a better Poet, in knowing how to honour *him*, than in all my own poetic Compositions," because he still cherished the hope of "immortality to his *Recluse*, as the first & finest philosophical Poem, if only it be (as it undoubtedly will be) a Faithful Transcript of his own most august & innocent Life, of his own habitual Feelings & Modes of seeing and hearing" (*CL* II, p. 1034). Despite the divergences in their poetical methods that at times offended both parties in the course of their symbiosis, Coleridge was in 1805 still committed to maintaining their mutually-fruitful partnership so that he continued to inspire the first philosophical poem to be written by Wordsworth; so that his own poetic "*identity*" could "flow into" Wordsworth's and "live and act in" him (*CN* II, §2712). Being the embodiment of Coleridge's conception of a joint *oeuvre*, *The Recluse* project still underpinned Coleridge's strong wish to speak through Wordsworth in 1807, after hearing *The Prelude* and being assured that his expectations for a joint project was yielding the products he was looking for. After all, it was this "Orphic Tale", "A Tale divine of high and passionate thoughts" (*PW* II.II, p. 1031) that spurred Coleridge to compose one of the most major poems of his

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[167] As elaborated in the first chapter of this study, Coleridge wrote "To William Wordsworth" in 1807 days after hearing Wordsworth's *Prelude* to their joint project, *The Recluse*.

career, "To William Wordsworth". I therefore maintain that Coleridge for this reason was still not close to a discrete path in 1807. On the other hand, Paley (1996) asserts that Coleridge's "To William Wordsworth" (1807) inaugurated a post-Wordsworthian phase in his career as the poem marked a transformation in "Coleridge's own history as a poet" because "By representing himself as dead and in his coffin, Coleridge seems to represent the end of his poetic career while actually…leaving open the possibility of its rebirth in another form" (p. 12). "To William Wordsworth", Paley adds, is "thus a door that closes in one direction to open in another". The poem indeed figures Coleridge as Milton's drowned Lycidas (See: Paley, p. 21), or as the murdered John the Baptist in the following lines:

> A bodily Tumult! and thy faithful Hopes,
> Thy Hopes of me, dear Friend! by me unfelt
> Were troublous to me, almost as a Voice,
> Familiar once and more than Musical;
> To one cast forth, whose hope had seem'd to die,
> A Wanderer with a worn-out heart,
> Mid Strangers pining with untended Wounds!
> O Friend! too well thou know'st, of what sad years
> The long Suppression had benumm'd my soul,
> That even as Life returns upon the Drown'd. (*PW* II.II, p. 1032)

My line of thought, however, differs markedly from Paley's suggestive theory. In my alternative reading of "To William Wordsworth" Coleridge took the chance to highlight *The Prelude*'s joint authorship; that is, the view that it was largely his own ingenuity to intentionally retreat so that he could turn attention to Wordsworth's poetic genius, cultivating it as much as he could. If there was "a door that closes in one direction to open in another" at all, it led Coleridge to instil more of his "bold Optimism" (*PW* I.I, p. 280) into Wordsworth when he composed the poem because, as we will see in the following

analysis of the poem's 1807 version, the symbiotic partnership as well as the pride[168] of "speaking through" the composer of those lines was still there. Although I hold the same opinion with Paley (1996) when he argues that Coleridge's exaltation of *The Prelude* in fact underscored his "own failed ambitions", I think it would be misleading to relate this situation with Coleridge's "self- abnegatory position" at the time it was originally composed (p. 15). Years later, nonetheless, the poem with statements of Coleridge's admiration for Wordsworth's *The Prelude* in its 1807 version was revised so that it could epitomize his dissociation from a symbiotic partner a decade later in *Sibylline Leaves*.

"To a Gentleman" (1817) differs markedly from the original version, regarding its context and the transforming events in the timespan between the two versions. Coleridge's agenda had changed immensely since he wrote the poem in 1807: he had lost his optimism and hope in the project after *The Excursion*[169] and now, he was seeking to stop speaking through Wordsworth. To both John Morgan and Charles Lamb, Coleridge wrote in 1814 that he could say "with little appearance of profaneness" that he had been "crucified, dead, and buried, descended into Hell" but now, he was "rising again, tho' slowly and gradually" (*CL* III, p. 489). These words could be compared with his 1807 poem "To William Wordsworth" in which Coleridge compared himself with John the Baptist, heralding Wordsworth as Christ (Paley, 1996, p. 23).[170] It was in 1814, around the time he read *The*

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[168] Coleridge wrote "To William Wordsworth" as a response to *Prelude* in 1807 because, I argue, he found Wordsworth's poem largely promising in terms of reflecting his own metaphysical and philosophical views vis-à-vis language and imagination.

[169] It must be noted that the correspondence made to discuss the publication of "To William Wordsworth" ended up with another discussion of Coleridge's "comparative censure" (*WL* III, p. 238) of *The Excursion* (compared here with *The Prelude* of 1807).

[170] That way no more ! and ill beseems it me,
Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
Singing of Glory, and Futurity,
To wander back on such unhealthful road,
Plucking the poisons of self-harm! and ill
Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths

Excursion, that Coleridge was at least acknowledging in the letter above that it was himself that assumed the role of Christ all along. In the post-*Excursion* revisionary activity from 1814, as a result, a collection of his poetical works would provide him with a secure refuge, a familiar old friend for Coleridge as poetry was his oldest passion that would potentially guide him throughout his attempt to redefine and have a much better control over his *oeuvre*. The preliminary step to be taken was to bring the intrinsic elements of it together and, in an attempt to achieve this, he asked Lady Beaumont in April 1815 for a copy of one of his poems which was very crucial for constitution of his *oeuvre*.[171] Lady Beaumont, rather than sending the copy to Coleridge, showed the letter to Wordsworth and upon this, the latter wrote to Coleridge on 22 May, 1815 to dissuade him from publishing the poem addressed to himself: "Let me beg out of kindness to me" he wrote, "that you would relinquish the intention of publishing the Poem addressed to me after hearing *mine* to you. The commendation would be injurious to us both, and my work, when it appears, would labour under a great disadvantage in consequence of such a precursorship of Praise" (*WL* III, p. 238). Wordsworth's concern was that because *The Prelude* was yet to be published, the publication of Coleridge's response to it would be prejudial to their joint project. It would be an announcement of the existence of a "Poem to Coleridge".[172] On the other hand, against his former partner's objection to his plans to publish the poem, Coleridge's reply on May 30th, 1815 utterly bears the traces of his long-term plans to be achieved through corrections: "…since I lit on the first rude draught, and corrected it as

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Strew'd before thy Advancing! (*PW* II.II, pp. 1032-1033)

[171] "Should your Ladyship still have among your Papers those Lines of mine to Mr Wordsworth after his Recitation of the poem on the Growth of his own spirit [*To William Wordsworth*], of which you honoured by wishing to take a Copy, you would oblige me by inclosing them for me..." (*CL* IV, p. 564)

[172] In a letter of April 29, 1804, he wrote that "It seems a frightful deal to say about oneself, and of course will never be published (during my lifetime I mean) till another work [The Recluse] has been written and published, of sufficient importance to justify me in giving my own history to the world." (*WL* I, p. 470)

well as I could, I wanted no additional reason for it's not being published in my Life Time, than it's *personality* respecting myself..." (*CL* IV, p. 572). Coleridge was long resolved to publish the poem, and this correspondence is a firm statement that he was to hold on to his own works and nobody, not even Wordsworth, would have a say in this matter. An important sign for Coleridge's detachment in order to build a more healthy dialogue with his friend starts here: Despite Wordsworth's solid objections, Coleridge resolved to publish it, though under a different and more generic title, "To a Gentleman: Composed on the night after his recitation of a Poem on the Growth of an Individual Mind". I hold that in the revised version, Coleridge emerges as the autonomous version of himself, now in a dialogue with Wordsworth, speaking to him as a fellow poet.

This is largely due to the well-known removal of personal and intimate passages from the 1817 version of the poem. To begin with, the change of title from "To William Wordsworth" to "To a Gentleman" fairly neutralized the addressee of the poem from the beginning: whereas the original poem opened with the line "O Friend! O Teacher! God's great Gift to me!", it was replaced by a more formal addressing in 1817: "FRIEND of the Wise! and Teacher of the Good" (*PW* II.II, p. 1029)![173] Here, the impassioned tone in the poem transitioned into a more emotionally-settled voice. Likewise, in the 1807 version "Hope" is summoned "homeward to thy Heart", whereas in 1817 the "Hope" springs forth "from the general Heart of Human kind" (*PW* II.II, p. 1031). "Hope" is a crucial word in this period of Coleridge's life due to his loss of hope with regards to *The Recluse* project, and in addition to non-personalizing the expression, I think that Coleridge deliberately distanced the concept from the poem which was the product of his joint authorship with

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[173] To present a comparative revisionary activity from the 1807 to 1817 version, I will refer to *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Volume 16: Poetical Works II. Poems (Variorum Text) Part 2* (2001).

Wordsworth. It should be noted that as the revisionary activity was carried out, the eventual product turned out to be more than Wordsworth could have asked from Coleridge. The following passage expressing Coleridge's profound feelings for Wordsworth and mentioning Wordsworth's "hopes" for Coleridge in the original poem was also completely eliminated in the 1817 version:

> Dear shall it be to every human heart
> To me how more than dearest! me, on whom
> Comfort from thee, and utterance of thy love,
> Came with such heights and depths of harmony,
> Such sense of wings uplifting, that the storm
> Scatter'd and whirl'd me, till my thoughts became
> A bodily tumult; and thy faithful hopes,
> Thy hopes of me, dear Friend! by me unfelt!
> Were troublous to me, almost as a voice,
> Familiar once, and more than musical;
> To one cast forth, whose hope had seem'd to die
> A wanderer with a worn-out heart
> Mid strangers pining with untended wounds.
> O Friend, too well thou know'st, of what sad years
> The long suppression had benumb'd my soul,
> That even as life returns upon the drown'd,
> The unusual joy awoke… (*PW* II.II, p. 1032)

Considering the overall argument in this study, I interpret this erasure of intimacy and poetic proofs of personal "fecundations"[174] in the poem as the symbolic watermark of an irretrievability of their symbiosis in the aftermath of *The Excursion*. It is for this reason that Coleridge deleted the complete passage where he was talking about his pathological dependence on Wordsworth's approval, so that he could in 1817 demonstrate his independent authorship and discrete *oeuvre*, without needing the endorsement of a symbiotic partner.

Another addition of 1817 is significant for my discussion here since I take this change as nostalgic reference to Coleridge's initial enthusiasm about imaginative power

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[174] For the term, see: McFarland, 1981, p. 56.

and, by extension, investment in language in *The Prelude*. That is, whereas in the 1807 version the praise is directed towards Wordsworth's "building up" of "thy own Spirit" in order to express what "thou hast loved to tell" so that something "within the mind" may "rise enkindled", the insertions as well as changes in 1817 tone down the addressee's powerful position. In the revised version, "To a Gentleman", Coleridge talks about building up of "the Human Spirit" because the poet "hast dared to tell" such "Thoughts" in the mind that are quickened by "vital Breathings, like the secret soul / Of vernal growth" (*PW* II.II, pp. 1029-30). Here, the addressee of Coleridge's poem activates the divine "Breathings" in his verses, that is, the imagination, so that the thoughts that may seem inexpressible through linguistic signs do get verbalised thanks to the courageous persona of the poet. Considering the fact that these changes were carried out after Coleridge read *The Excursion*, we can hold that they refer to Wordsworth's loss of faith in the linguistic mediums to express the thoughts "within the mind". Therefore, I assert, Coleridge's subsequent two-line addition aimed to draw Wordsworth's attention to vital function of the re-creative, secondary imagination: because Coleridge firmly believed that the generative power of imagination in human beings has its origins in the divine imagination in its fullness, in "To a Gentleman" he reminded his partner of the "Power" which is reflected "Now in thy inner life and now abroad, / When [it] streamed from thee, and thy soul received / The light reflected as a light bestowed" (*PW* II.II, p. 1030). However, prior to his revisionary activity in *Sibylline Leaves*, Coleridge had come to the realisation that Wordsworth's line of thinking about poetry and poetic language had undergone an immense change, and the former's expectations of a joint project had gone unconsummated, hence he almost admonishingly brought up "The Guides and the Companions of *thy way*" (*PW* II.II, p. 1030 – emphasis added)! I take this as a reference to

the similarities between Wordsworth's more materialistic and less spiritual handling of the "imagination" material and the Kantian reluctance to attribute transcendent characteristics to it.

Considering the revisionary activity in *Sibylline Leaves*, it becomes obvious that the most well-known and distinctive change was carried out on "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". Originally drafted between November 1797 and March 1798[175], the poem has massively drawn the attention of critics ever since it was first published. As one of its early critics once noted, the poem was "a rhapsody of unintelligible wildness and incoherence… [with] poetical touches of an exquisite kind" (*The Monthly Review* 29, June 1799, p. 204)[176], and Coleridge's poetic career owed immensely to it. "Coleridge's claim to be a great poet", Mays (2002) confirms, "lies in the continued pursuit of the consequences of 'The Ancient Mariner', 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan' on several levels" (p. 91). In this part of this study, therefore, the revisions on the poem's original 1798 (as first published in the *Lyrical Ballads*) and the *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) versions will be examined to provide a comparison between the preliminary versions as products of Coleridge "speaking through" Wordsworth and *Sibylline Leaves* version as the part of Coleridge's reconstitution of discrete *oeuvre*. More specifically, through this case study of "The Rime" I aim to demonstrate how, contrary to the 1798 version which was the product of his symbiosis

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[175] Tee (2009) states that "According to Coleridge's footnote to 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', it 'was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton' with William and Dorothy Wordsworth 'in the Autumn of 1797, that this Poem was planned, and in part composed'. It is, however, a context that is provided two decades later – the first appearance of the footnote being in the 1817 version. Though it is not until his letter to Joseph Cottle of 28 May 1798 that an explicit reference to 'the ancient Mariner' is made (*CL*, I, p. 412), as early as 20 November 1797, Dorothy had recorded 'William and Coleridge employing themselves in laying the plan of a ballad; to be published with some pieces of Williams' (*WL*, I, p. 194). While he did announce the completion of 'a ballad' shortly after Dorothy's correspondence, at 'about 300 lines' (*CL*, I, p. 357) the work is clearly different from the 658-line version that was first published in 1798." (*Coleridge, Revision and Romanticism*, p. 42)
[176] Attrib. Charles Burney, *Monthly Review*, XXIX (1799) pp. 202-10.

with Wordsworth and division of labours between the two, the 1817 version became an emblem of Coleridge's solo ordeal with imagination, his philosophical oscillations between Reason, Understanding and Sense, and the way the revised text of 1817 embodied Coleridge's desynonymization from Wordsworth in the aftermath of *The Excursion*. More specifically, I suggest, just as in the *Biographia*, the revisionary activity in *Sibylline Leaves* was partially carried out as a reaction to Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, and in some poems such as "The Rime" this need to respond to his former partner can be fully traced.

When the first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* appeared in 1798, "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere" (as it was originally titled) took up one-fourth of the volume as the opening piece, and it received mixed but mostly negative reactions from readers due to its obscurity and style (Stillinger, pp. 61-62). Surely, the "Advertisement" to the *Lyrical Ballads* written by Wordsworth must have contributed to this unfavourable reception of "The Rime", since the poems in the collection were presented as "experiments…written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure" (*LB*, p. 47). On the other hand, as Coleridge made clear in the *Biographia*, Wordsworth and himself had initially committed to a division of labours in the 1798 collection: Wordsworth was meant to "give the charm of novelty" to everyday objects whereas Coleridge was to engage his poems with "persons and characters supernatural" (*BL* II, pp. 6-7). In this respect, the whole collection – as Coleridge retrospectively claims in the *Biographia* – was to reflect their collaboration to arouse the power of imagination in the reader by dealing with different material but serving a common end.[177] However, "The Rime of the Ancyent

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[177] Retrospectively in a *Table Talk* of May 1830, Coleridge described "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" as a poem of "pure imagination". (*TT* I, p. 149)

Marinere", with its peculiar, archaic diction and animal-magnetic narrator was received as an eccentric piece in the whole collection. In a letter to Cottle on the 24th June 1799, Wordsworth hence wrote that the poem became "an injury to the volume" due to "the old words and the strangeness of it", which eventually "deterred readers from going on", and Wordsworth was even then planning to replace the poem with "some little things which would be more likely to suit the common taste" if the collection "should come to a second edition" (*WL* II, pp. 226–227). Obviously, whereas Coleridge said little about the poem and did little to resist the view that it did not make much sense, Wordsworth was anxious about the troubled reception of it.

As clarified in the *Biographia*, "The Rime" initially was a product of an agreement between Coleridge and Wordsworth: whereas the former was to transfer "from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith", the latter's poems would "give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us" (*BL* II, p. 6). "The Rime" of 1798 hence was an optimistic attempt on Coleridge's part to bring about a collection, which was meant to emerge as the body consisting of seemingly incongruous components by two poets inversely complementing one another.

At this point, I would like to join the scholarly conversation about the impact of the eighteenth-century Biblical criticism on Coleridge's understanding of poetry and the way we interpret poems, as well as the initial writing process of "The Rime". This line of Biblical criticism was based on historical and rational understanding of the Bible to prove that the Scriptures were originally constituted by drawing on ancient texts. As Elizabeth A.

Rubasky (2001) demonstrates, "One of their methods was tracing the sources of the Scriptures, from most primitive to more contemporary…determining the 'origin, character, and relative age' of the Scriptures, and the higher critics specifically used historical methods of textual comparison and philological inquiry to discover these origins" (p. 20). Anthony Harding (1985) also explains that "Romantic so-called primitivism… led many poets to imitate the spareness and emotional intensity they found in Biblical poetry. For such poets, the fact that the Bible was traditionally treated as a canon was arguably less important than the discovery that it was nevertheless open not only to imitation but reinterpretation… (p. 6). Coleridge was immensely informed by these ideas while formulating his own views about the nature of poetry in the 1798 version of "The Rime",[178] therefore, the primitive atmosphere and archaic language in the poem is interpreted as a demonstration of Coleridge's investment in the eighteenth-century criticism.[179]

According to Jerome McGann (1985), therefore, Coleridge's affirmation "that the Bible is indeed the Word of God, but that its Word is uttered by God's mortal creatures" led him to arrive at the conviction that "God's eternal Word is expressed and later re-expressed through commentary, gloss, and interpretation by particular people at different times according to their differing lights" (p. 145). As a corollary of this, Coleridge could as well compose poetry resembling the primitive but evocative narrative of Scriptures, recounted simply through the visual perception and eye-witnessing of the Mariner

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[178] See: Rubasky (2004), pp. 19-20.

[179] As Rubasky (2004) puts it, "In the 1798 version of the 'Rime,' Coleridge's ideas about the primitive mind, as reflected in the Mariner's simple descriptions of his journey, are clearly informed by his understanding of Biblical critics such as Lowth and Wakefield, who, in the tradition of early eighteenth-century criticism, emphasized the spare and pure character of primitive language." Therefore, "It is not surprising that Coleridge, like many other late eighteenth-century writers, became interested in the idea of the simple and expressive poet of Scripture…" (pp. 20-21, 22)

(Rubasky, 2004, p. 22). Considering these perspectives, I hereby aim to present an ampliative argument by approaching the simple and primitive content of "The Rime" of 1798 in terms of imagination, and later comparing the earlier poem with its 1817 version with its historically-informed marginal gloss.

Prior to responding to Kant's transcendental "productive" imagination that was subject to the check-and-balance system of constitutive Understanding and regulative Reason (that is, by the time he wrote *The Friend* of 1809), Coleridge's conception of imagination was not as transcendent and elaborate as he described in the *Biographia*. When we consider his references to imagination in the earlier years of his career,[180] it is obvious that he had its basic and more straightforward functions in mind; namely, fancy and primary imagination which, as has been demonstrated in the first chapter of this thesis, correspond to sense and understanding respectively. By extension, while writing the primitive, *Lyrical Ballads* version of "The Rime", Coleridge's theory of imagination was relatively pristine as well. In this respect, Rubasky (2004) and McGann's (1985)

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[180] For instance, in a letter of 25 March 1801, we can see that Coleridge's imagination was closely associated with fancy: "The Poet is dead in me - my imagination…lies, like a Cold Snuff on the circular Rim of a Brass Candle-stick…I was once a Volume of Gold Leaf, rising & riding on every breath of Fancy …" (*CL* II, pp. 713-14). In another letter of July 1802, he valued the kind of imagination that enables us "to send ourselves out of ourselves, to *think* ourselves in to the Thoughts and Feelings of Beings in circumstances wholly & strangely different from our own/ hoc labor, hoc opus/" (*CL* II, p. 809), a description which can be closely associated with his later formulation of Primary Imagination. He surely held metaphysics an inalienable part of poetry, as he wrote in a letter to William Sotheby in July 1802: "Metaphisics (sic) is a word, that you, my dear Sir! are no great Friend to/ but yet you will agree, that a great Poet must be…a profound Metaphysician" (*CL* II, pp. 809-10). Nonetheless, a proper theory of imagination that equipped one with divine power to not only think ourselves outside the phenomena but also to "diffuse" or "dissipate" in order to "re-create" (*BL* I, p. 304) was yet to systematised. During his Mediterranean years (1804-1806) that he began to formulate imagination as "the *modifying* Power in that highest sense of the word" distinct from fancy (*CL* II, p. 1034), and a year later, in September 1807, he wrote in a notebook entry the following "Imagination the Laboratory, in which Thought elaborates Essence into Existence. A Psilosopher, i.e . a nominal Ph[ilosopher] without Imagination, is a *Coiner-Vanity,* the *Froth* of the molten Mass, is his *Stuff* and Verbiage the Stamp & Impression. This is but a *deaf* Metaphor-better say , that he is guilty of Forgery-he presents the same [sort of] *Paper* as the honest Barterer, but when you carry it to the *Bank,* it is found to be drawn on-Outis, *Esq*. His words had deposited no Forms there, payable at Sight-or even at any imaginable Time from the Date of the Draft" (*CN* II, §315). In these letters and notes, we can see imagination as a concept evolving across the years, from the one similar to the associative fancy to a divine, transcendent power in a poet and philosopher.

arguments of primitive, bodily and untrained narrative in the 1798 version should be complemented with careful consideration of Coleridge's almost-embryonic adoption of imagination as well.

In the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), "The Rime" was altered in a way that addressed Wordsworth's concerns about the poem, including its archaic style. It was hence considerably curtailed in the 1800 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*,[181] published with a new title ("The Ancient Mariner: A Poet's Reverie") as a response to unfavourable critical reviews[182] directed towards the author of the opening piece and of the *Lyrical Ballads*. Nevertheless, in addition to the modernized archaic vocabulary and change of title, the poem's position in the volume was changed, and the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* was published with a "Preface" and Wordsworth's name as the author.[183] Although in the "Preface" Wordsworth gave a vague credit to Coleridge for writing some of the poems in the volume,[184] for any reader skipping this part, Wordsworth became the sole

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[181] This revision dismayed readers such as Charles Lamb, who thought that the changes worked to tame the pristine sublimity of the poem. Lamb wrote: "I am sorry that Coleridge has christened his *Ancient Marinere*, a *Poet's Reverie*; it is as bad as Bottom the Weaver's declaration that he is not a lion, but only the scenical representation of a lion. What new idea is
gained by this title but one subversive of all credit— which the tale should force upon us—of its truth." *The Letters of Charles Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, London, 1935,i.240.
[182] For instance, see: *The Analytical Review* xxviii (December 1798);*The Monthly Review.* Also see: *The British Critic* (October 1799) (1793). [London]: [Printed for F. and C. Rivington]. p. 365.
[183] "When the poem was first published, as the opening piece in the anonymous *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798, there was no identifiable author in sight. Or rather, the author of *The Ancient Mariner* was the author of all the poems in the volume—not only *The Ancient Mariner* but *Goody Blake* and *Harry Gill*, *Simon Lee*, *We Are Seven, The Thorn*, and eighteen other pieces, including some eloquent blank-verse lines about revisiting, or at least getting within a few miles of, Tintern Abbey—and he (if one assumed, from the name "William" in *Expostulation and Reply*, that the author was male) was a person on a mission to reform the language of poetry: "the following poems," he announces in the prefatory Advertisement, "are to be considered as experiments . . . to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure."(Stillinger, 1994, p. 61, 68)
[184] "For the sake of variety and from a consciousness of my own weakness I was induced to request the assistance of a Friend, who furnished me with the Poems of the ANCIENT MARINER, the FOSTER-MOTHER'S TALE, the NIGHTINGALE, the DUNGEON, and the Poem entitled LOVE. I should not, however, have requested this assistance, had I not believed that the poems of my Friend would in a great measure have the same tendency as my own, and that, though there would be found a difference, there would be found no discordance in the colours of our style; as our opinions on the subject of poetry do almost entirely coincide." (2010, p. 57)

author of the book. Compared to the first version of the poem, the revised and modernised text, "The Ancient Mariner", itself partially lost its pristine quality,[185] and transitioned into a relatively more settled narrative and became more of a lyrical ballad.[186] Therefore, we can hold that the 1800 version, with its overtly moralising narrative,[187] failed to yield further interpretive and imaginative possibilities due to, as we will see shortly, the lack of a tension between the matter-of-factness of the 1798 version and the rationalisation of the marginal notes in 1817.

Whereas "The Rime" was originally a profoundly symbiotic poem, for Coleridge in 1817, acknowledgement of his exchanges with Wordsworth was also part of his transition from "speaking through" his partner to "speaking to" a friend. Therefore, his 1817 footnote to line 227 (Part Four) of the poem must be noted in this regard. After the lines,

> I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
> I fear thy skinny hand!
> And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
> As is the ribbed sea-sand. (224-27)

when, as Stillinger says, "the disbelief-suspending reader as well as the Wedding-Guest might well worry about the Mariner's substantiality", Coleridge's insertion of this "chatty

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[185] Stillinger (1994) states that the 1798 version of the poem was "a relatively simple tale of crime and punishment" in which "the Mariner wantonly kills an albatross and suffers terrible consequences for his act", and the narrative "seems jerky, disconnected, and pointedly old-fashioned (the Mariner *speaks* in archaic spelling, as it were)." (p. 69)

[186] McGann (1985) presents an overview of the process at the end of which Coleridge's initial poem changed from a "literary ballad" to a "lyrical ballad": "This 1798 version tries to adhere so closely to the conventions of ancient balladry, which Coleridge adapted from Thomas Percy, that the work sometimes approaches pastiche. This quality in the early 'Rime'—its status as an imitation or literary ballad—sets it quite apart from all the other ballad-influenced poems written for *Lyrical Ballads*. The others are not literary ballads but lyrical ballads, a very different thing altogether. When a second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* was called for in 1800, Wordsworth, as we have seen, urged Coleridge to make some alterations. His views carried the day, and the result was a conscious attempt, acutely registered by Lamb, to make the 'Rime' appear less a literary ballad and more a lyrical ballad" (p. 141). Stillinger (1994) also states that "The new title in 1800, 'The Ancient Mariner, A Poet's Reverie,' calls attention, first on a separate half-title and again at the beginning of the poem, to the fact that, reverie or not, this is a work of artistic composition, by a poet, and not just (as it could have seemed in 1798) the recorded loose talk of a wild-eyed old seafarer." (p. 69)

[187] Whereas in the first version "the sole authority for the events and the moral is the Mariner himself, and it is a manifestly powerful authority", the revised version of 1800 "emphasizes the moral elements of the tale." (Stillinger, 1994, 69, 63)

footnote" (Stillinger, p. 71) is quite awkward but serves his purpose of enabling dialogue with Wordsworth: "For the two last lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. WORDSWORTH. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the Autumn of 1797, that this Poem was planned, and in part composed" (*PW* I.I, p. 391). Considering "The Rime" had recently reverted back to its author,[188] it can be held that in the 1817 version, Coleridge's revisionary reaction was at work to reciprocate almost all the moves by Wordsworth during their symbiotic collaboration. Coleridge's revisionary activity in the 1817 version of the poem was a solid enunciation of reclaiming a crucial part of his *oeuvre*, and transforming it from a joint composition to an independently transformed work. In *Sibylline Leaves*, "The Rime" is therefore the tangible manifestation of Coleridge's dialogue with Wordsworth: it is dialogic when Coleridge resituated the poem to its opening position, it is dialogic when Coleridge "Prefaced" his poetic collection with an autobiographical account in which he provided criticism on Wordsworth's works, it is dialogic when Coleridge published it under his own name, and it is dialogic when Coleridge gave way to a more vivid, divine conception of imagination through the notes in the margin. For Coleridge the role of notes in the margin of "The Rime", I maintain, was to equip him with the means to create a tension in the poem and present it as a showcase for Unity in Multeity he had sought to achieve in the *Lyrical Ballads*. He was therefore on the verge of fulfilling, thanks to the gloss, the task of not only giving new means of attraction to mundane phenomena (defamiliarization), but also dealing with those supernatural themes resembling the truth in our "inward nature" (*BL* II,

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[188] "The opening poem following the preliminaries, just as in the original *Lyrical Ballads*, is *The Ancient Mariner*, but here it appears (for the first time publicly) under Coleridge's name as author, and in a considerably worked-over text with, among other novelties, the addition of the Latin epigraph and the marginal glosses." (Stillinger 20)

pp. 6). Coleridge's revisionary insertion of marginal notes in 1817, among others, did not fail to serve this purpose.

Coleridge formulated his revisionary reaction to Wordsworth by bringing back some of the archaic diction he had used in the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, "strengthen[ing] the original archaic aspect of the work" (McGann, 1985, p. 142) and enhancing the "gothic atmospehere" (Tee, 2009, p. 79) – in a way unfolding his desynonymization from Wordsworth and their joint projects.[189] To this end, I argue that Coleridge in 1817 advanced towards realising on his own the division of labours he had envisaged in 1798 for Wordworth and himself for joint project of the *Lyrical Ballads*. That is, in the revised version of the poem, Coleridge's alterations went so far that he not only re-emphasized the "supernatural" themes to remind the reader of the familiar, but also adopted Wordsworth's task of "defamiliarization" in "The Rime". Consider the split between the main text and the marginal note in the following:

| Till a great seabird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality. | At length did cross an Albatross Through the fog it came; As if it had been a Christian soul, We hailed it in God's name. (*PW* I.I, p. 377) |

Here, whereas the poem itself is focused on the supernatural features of the bird through the familiar religious allusions to the reader with words such as "cross", "God" and "Christian", the gloss treats the Albatross just as a "seabird" we are mundanely familiar with and mentions how it was hailed by the ship crew as a sign of good omen[190] – defamiliarizing for the reader the bird as it is. After the Mariner kills the bird, the poem

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[189] Tee explains that "The new nine-line stanza on the fall of night after the departure of the 'spectre-bark' is a case in point. In 1800, Coleridge had changed his depiction of the sun from being like 'God's own head' to 'an Angel's head' because the British Critic had been offended by the impiety of the expression. In 1817…he restored the phrase." (2009, p. 79)

[190] As the following marginal note confirms: "And Io! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen…" (*PW* I.I. p. 379)

attributes a supernatural quality to the Albatross and says "I had killed the bird / That made the breeze to blow" (*PW* I.I, p. 379), whereas the gloss is more cautious about such metaphysical implications and uses more daily language: it is just "the bird of good luck" – the bird we are ordinarily familiar with, but a bird that is placed out of its usual context. The revised version, I therefore maintain, not only works to activate the reader's "suspension of disbelief" through its supernatural atmosphere, bringing the reader down to earth by associating the uncanny with the familiar; but it also defamiliarizes and disrupts the stability of association between objects of mundane experience.

The function of the marginal gloss has been heavily scrutinized in the literature: some scholars argue that the gloss acts as the complementary other (or an intimate friend) throughout the poem, some suggest that the gloss intervenes since the narrator has forgotten to provide details of the story, and there are others arguing that the narrator misremembers a fact and the gloss acts as the witness that corrects it.[191] In order to demonstrate the larger argument in this study, I would like to engage with Coleridge's hermeneutical project described in Jerome McGann (1985) and later expanded by Elizabeth Rubasky (2004).

McGann (1985) states that just as all texts including Scriptures progressed and evolved from their primitive states to a more modern versions by means of interpretation, the 1817 version of "The Rime" would lend itself to generation of new meanings and

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[191] To list only the major contributions: Huntington Brown (1945), "The Gloss to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Modern Language Quarterly* 6. pp. 319-24. Sarah Dyck (1973), "Perspective in 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,'" *Studies in English Literature* 13. pp. 591-604. Lawrence Lipking (1977), "The Marginal Gloss," *Critical Inquiry* 3. pp. 609-55. Frances Ferguson (1977), "Coleridge and the Deluded Reader: 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,'" *Georgia Review* 31. pp. 617-35. David Simpson (1979), *Irony and Authority in Romantic Poetry* (London: Macmillan). pp. 98-101. Anne K. Mellor (1980), *English Romantic Irony* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press). pp. 143-48. Kathleen M. Wheeler (1981), *Creative Mind in Coleridge's Poetry,* pp. 42-64. Wendy Wall (1987), "Interpreting Poetic Shadows: The Gloss of 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,'" *Criticism* 29. pp. 179-95.

readings thanks to an external editor – no one other than Coleridge himself (pp. 139-144).

Whereas Coleridge in 1798 was affected by the eighteenth century Biblical criticism and hence produced a primitive text resembling the Bible with its supernatural story, simple narration and non-interpreting characters, with the gloss in 1817 he acted not only as the writer of a Biblical narrative, but also as a critic adopting historical method of the Higher Criticm[192] by means of inserting a rationalising and interpreting voice to the poem (McGann, 1985, p. 146; Rubasky, 2004, p. 19).[193] Coleridge accordingly ensured in 1817 that the gloss played a crucial role in this interpretative process: "The special significance of the gloss," states McGann, "lies in its (imagined) historical relation to the ancient ballad which Coleridge has represented through his poem" (p. 153). The glosser in this way attempts to rationalise and historicise the events the Mariner undergoes (Rubasky, 2004, p. 26). Consequently, I hold that there arose a tension between the Mariner's tale constituted by an incomplex and lucid observation of his surrounding, a familiarising narrative and simple but effective "shadows" of Primary Imagination on the one hand, and the rational-interpretive comments of the glosser on the other. In the 1817 revised text, Coleridge not only enriched the way the text proper was read through the hermeneutical method, he also called secondary imagination as described in the *Biographia* into action by means of the the tension created by the remarks of a fictional glosser. In other words, in 1817 the hermeneutical project Coleridge adopted by means of inserting the marginal gloss in the poem transformed not only the way "The Rime" has been received and interpreted by readers, but simultaneously his acclaimed formulation of imagination. A comparative

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[192] The Higher Critics required that literary works must be interpreted again and again, "based not only on the text proper, but also on established commentary, and new discoveries" (Rubasky, 2004, p. 27).

[193] Rubasky (2004) also points to the way Coleridge's notes were by extension proved to be useful for those interpreting any type of text: "…the glosser is more than just a later historical foil to the uneducated Mariner; his methods help Coleridge to illustrate, and to comment on the type of person attempting to elucidate authentic medieval texts, and by extension any person interpreting a text." (p. 25)

analysis of the main text of "The Rime" and the marginal gloss will play the vital role to illustrate my point more profoundly.

My own reading of the gloss in the context of this study is immensely inspired by McGann (1985), who clarifies that whereas in its original form "a special theory of the historical interpretation of texts" was not clear, it was "when the glosses are added" that Coleridge was able to fully "extrapolate" and "[make] explicit his religious theory of interpretation which has its roots in the Higher Critical tradition" (p. 142). Accordingly, since the Scriptures are not fixed words of God but ever-changing, evolving historical records thanks to interpretation of pristine versions of texts, every text including the Scriptures should be approached, as McGann puts it, "with a double understanding" (p. 150) due to the symbolical connotations language inherently brings about.[194] The fictive voice in the marginal notes was intentionally inserted by Coleridge as the voice of a biblical critic, so that "the work developed under the dominion of Coleridge's own hermeneutic models", which has continued to underwrite "our dominant interpretive tradition" about the poem (McGann, 1985, p. 139). As Stillinger (1994) asserts, the marginal notes of 1817 as part of Coleridge's revisionary journey helped new interpretations proliferate and stable meaning become increasingly unattainable – contributing to textual "instability" (pp. 72-73). Instability is the keyword that guides me here because I think that it was through this unstable nature of his new text with a fictional editor that Coleridge managed to create a "multi-layered narrative (or set of narratives)

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[194] "In the *Confessions*, for example, Coleridge argues at length that the Scriptures are not an unmediated and fixed biblical text but an evolved and continuously evolving set of records which include the Church's later glosses on and interpretations of the earlier documents. The entire project of textual transmission and elucidation is a symbolic, revelatory act: 'all the intermediate applications and realizations of the words are but types and repetitions—translations, as it were, from the language of letters and articulate sounds into the language of events and symbolical persons' (*AC*, p. 303). As a result, Coleridge goes on to argue that every person should approach the Scriptures with a double understanding. (McGann, 1985, p. 150)

saturated with historical, social, moral, and theological significance, involving themes like… the creative imagination, for which it sets out a developed theory" (p. 60). Taken from this perspective, the fictive editor becomes a highly crucial figure in Coleridge's hermeneutic model due to its role, I hold, as the reader catalysing the Coleridgean conception of Secondary Imagination in the intended audience of the poem.

The main text of the 1817 "The Rime" invites primary imagination, which is "the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception" (*BL* I, p. 304). Consider the following lines:

> The ice was here, the ice was there,
> The ice was all around:
> It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
> Like noises in a swound! (*PW* I.I, p. 377)

The lines are unshakably observational on the part of the Mariner; hence combined with the primitive text, sublime atmosphere and bardic narrative style of the poem they emerge as "repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM". On the other hand, combined with the gloss, the text as a whole spurs the generative, secondary imagination by inviting the reader's interpretation and filling of in the gaps. Rubasky (2004) notes that "the glosser is not Coleridge's ideal interpreter, because he often imposes meaning on the text not explicitly stated in the Mariner's verse. It is this gap between his evaluations and the Mariner's own narrative that compels the reader to take an active part in interpreting Coleridge's poem" (p. 25). Indeed, the presence of two distinct, sometimes contesting and sometimes complementary voices at once "dissolve", "diffuse" and "dissipate" the narrative in its totality, activating readerly interpretation and re-creating the terms through which we can make sense of recalcitrant elements in the revised text of

1817. Consider the effect of the glosser's judgemental tone on the main text, and on the readerly perception of the story:

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.	"God save thee, ancient Mariner! From the fiends, that plague thee thus! – Why look'st thou so?" – With my cross-bow I shot the Albatross. (*PW* I.I, p. 377)

Coleridge is demonstrating in the 1817 version of the poem that "every person should approach the Scriptures" as well as literary works "with a double understanding" (McGann, 1985, p. 150). In other words, the activation of secondary imagination is expected through the reader's participation. This is possible through an awareness on the part of the readers that they themselves are, just like textually-transmitted materials and their writers, bound by their own delimited concepts and contexts. According to McGann, therefore, readers are not only supposed to see the "primitive texts, interpolations, commentaries" and "report historically mediated materials", but they are also required to recognise their own "time-specific cultural limitations" (p. 150). The reader steps in between the contesting voices of the Mariner in the main text and the glosser, thereby through their own reading inciting secondary imagination.

CHAPTER FIVE – REVISING A PRE-*EXCURSION* PERIODICAL: *THE FRIEND*

AS "RIFACCIAMENTO" IN 1818

> What is [Coleridge's] *Friend* itself but an enormous title-page; the longest
> and most tiresome prospectus that ever was written; and endless preface
> to an imaginary work…One number consists of a grave-faced promise to
> perform something impossible in the next; and the next is taken up with a
> long-faced apology for not having done it. Through the whole of this
> work, Mr. Coleridge appears…the Prince of preparatory authors!
> William Hazlitt, 08 September, 1816. (*Political Essays*, p. 120)

The last chapter of this study is devoted to an investigation of Coleridge's second attempt

(after the short-lived *The Watchman* of 1796) at issuing a weekly paper in 1809-10, *The*

Friend, and the revisions of it that he published in 1812 and especially in 1818.[195] The

examination of these two versions and their contexts will be presented in a way to

demonstrate the impact, resulting from the collapse of Coleridge and Wordsworth's joint

project, *The Recluse*, had on Coleridge's constitution of a discrete *oeuvre* through the

revised version of *The Friend* in 1818.

A Brief Background to the *The Friend* of 1809-10, 1812 and the *rifacciamento* of 1818

The Friend was first mentioned in Coleridge's notebooks and letters among the planned

works as early as 1803-1804.[196] In a letter of 1804, several months before Coleridge sailed

for Malta, he planned the title for his work as "Consolations and Comforts from the

exercise and right application of the Reason, the Imagination, and the Moral Feelings" (*CL*

II, p. 1036). When Coleridge finally returned from his Mediterranean interlude (1804-

1806), now relatively older and with health much worse than the time he left the country,

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[195] Coleridge saw through three editions of *The Friend*: 1809-10, 1812 and 1818 versions. The Bollingen edition of *The Friend* consists of two parts: Part I is based on the 1818 text, and Part II is an appendix covering the 1809-10 periodical version of *The Friend*, with the assembled version of 1812 provided in the footnotes.
[196] See: An entry of November 1803 (*CN* I, p. 1646) and a letter of January 15, 1804 to Thomas Poole (*CrPR*, p. 1034)

he had surely changed not only in terms of his expectations from others, but also from himself. Combined with an emotional turmoil worsened due to his marriage as well as his love for Sara Hutchinson, unemployment, and addiction Coleridge now "floundered", as Kathleen Coburn (1973) states, amidst the "extreme ups and downs" of his life; he was also "criticized by the Wordsworths and Mrs Clarkson", "upbraided by Southey", quarrelled with Poole and Josiah Wedgwood, and differed from "his West Country Unitarian friends and also his Calvinistic ones" (*CN* III, pp. xix-xx). I would like to remind that it was after such a period that Coleridge heard *The Prelude* (1807), which brought about a powerful revival of his expectations of the joint project with Wordsworth.

Barbara E.Rooke (1969) informs that the "notebook jottings for the 'Comforts and Consolations' run into 1807" (*TF* I, p. xxxvi). It was not until 21 May 1808 that Coleridge mentioned in a letter to Wordsworth the idea of producing a periodical (*CL* III, p. 112). In another letter of circa 7 November 1808, referring to the prospectus of his weekly periodical, Coleridge put his desire to bring together his ideas, philosophical reflections, literary opinions as follows:

> …I shall myself play off my whole Head & Heart, such as they are, in this work, as from the main pipe of the Fountain. Indeed, it is high Time. Hitherto, I have layed my Eggs with Ostrich Carelessness and Ostrich Oblivion – the greater part indeed have been crush[ed under] foot; but some have crawled into light to furnish Feath[ers] for other men's Caps, and not a few to plume the shaf[ts] in the Quivers of my Calumniators. (*CL* III, p. 126)

The quotation lays bare the ebbs and flows in the face of professional capacity and "constitutional indolence" Coleridge was experiencing in the process: he obviously felt he was unwittingly donating ideas to others, and now it was high time he produced for

himself. He had so far almost recklessly laid his eggs[197] but now, in his mid-thirties,

Coleridge decided that his weekly periodical, *The Friend,* would be "the main Pipe"

through which he would convey "the whole reservoir" of his "collected Knowledge" and

of "Genius" (*CL* III, p. 131). Towards the end of 1808 Coleridge settled in Allan Bank, and

spent most of his time sending prospectuses and planning the launch of his periodical.

However, Wordsworth's initial reaction to Coleridge's project was sheer

hopelessness, as we can see in a letter addressed to Thomas Poole in May-June 1809 "…he

neither will nor can execute anything of important benefit either to himself, his family or

mankind…" (*WL* II, p. 322). In another letter of May 25, 1809, just before the periodical

came out, Wordsworth wrote that Coleridge neither had the tenacity nor the patience to

execute anything that necessitated regular focus on one project. He therefore wrote in a

letter of June 1809 that the project should "never commence", and if perchance begun, "the

sooner it stops, also the better - the less will be the loss, and not greater the disgrace", as he

had the firmly-established a rather pessimistic view of Coleridge (*WL* II, p. 322). Even the

arrival of the periodical's first issue in June 1809 and concretization of Coleridge's efforts

were therefore not enough: Wordsworth at first said in June 1809 that he was sorry because

he did not have "the least hope that it can proceed" (*WL* II, p. 323).[198] Against all odds,

however, *The Friend* of 1809-10 would indeed eventually become an invaluable medium

for Coleridge to rehearse his own idiosyncratic adoption, definition and interpretation of

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[197] "Until 1808, he told his friends, he had laid his eggs with ostrich carelessness and ostrich oblivion, to be crushed underfoot or, if they crawled forth into life, to feather the caps of others. Now, however, at the age of thirty-six, he intended to be more careful; he would lay a main pipe through which to play off the whole reservoir of his collected knowledge and genius. He was not exaggerating, for that main pipe, *The Friend,* was an outlet for many of the ideas that had appeared in his former lectures and writings, and from its pages would come ideas for his later works. *The Friend* remained of prime importance for him after its original publication…Letters, annotated copies, and manuscript fragments show that his interest in both its content and style continued almost to the end of his life." (Rooke, p. xxxv)

[198] Although he later slightly changed his opinion by writing hopefully of the project (See: His letter of 15 June to Stuart)

such key concepts in his philosophical journey as the Truth, mind, Sense, Reason, Understanding, imagination, free will, politics and morality, and organic unity.

The first number of the periodical finally appeared in 1 June, 1809 to be sustained over a period of ten months, during which Coleridge produced twenty-eight weekly issues in total, including a free supernumerary issue. He was working productively with Sara Hutchinson, who from the beginning acted as his amanuensis.[199] On 4 January 1810, when the periodical reached the 20th issue, subscription payments were due. Yet, Coleridge's expectations were dashed after he got much less subscription fee income than he had expected. That subscribers to the periodical largely failed to pay for the numbers had quite a plain reason: Coleman (1988, 2002) makes clear the contribution of Thomas Clarkson, an abolitionist dissenter and a writer himself, who "offered him a ready-made readership in the shape of dozens of well-off and well-read Quakers" to *The Friend*'s subscription figures (2002, p. 138). Nevertheless, happy as Coleridge was to receive their support and subscription, his publishing policy did not take the Quakers' views and sentiments into consideration, resulting in the low number of subscription payments and cancellations.[200] On top of the financial impasse, Coleridge became even more exasperated when Sara Hutchinson left Allan Bank at the end of February 1810: In a letter to Mrs Clarkson, Dorothy Wordsworth wrote on 12 April 1810 that although it was true that Coleridge was

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[199] Dorothy Wordsworth wrote on February 28, 1810 that "… she has been with us more than four years" and "she has transcribed almost every paper of The Friend for the press." (*WL* II, p. 390)

[200] "There is a general truth in the claim that the *Friend* marketed itself for a more establishment and professional coterie than the middle-class dissenters and friends of freedom targeted by the *Watchman*. But it is important to note that many of the *Friend*'s subscribers were friends and associates from earlier days, and that when the eminently practical Thomas Clarkson offered him a ready-made readership in the shape of dozens of well-off and well-read Quakers, the needy Coleridge was happy to accept their vote of confidence in him. But whilst willing to accept Quaker support, he would not then take direction about how to accommodate their special interests and views, with the result that they dropped their subscriptions, leaving Coleridge incensed by their desertion" (Coleman, 2002, p. 138). For a more comprehensive account of this process, also see: Rooke, 1969, pp. lxx-lxxii.

able to write *The Friend* for so long thanks to Sara, she could not believe that "it would have gone on if she had stayed. He was tired, and she had at last no power to drive him on" (*WL* II, p. 415). After two more issues following Sara's departure, on 15th March, *The Friend* was given up. The last issue, though, ended in a bracket: "(To be concluded in the next Number)" (*TF* II, p. 369). Two months after the periodical ended, Coleridge left Allan Bank, which marked the close of Coleridge's intermittent residence with the Wordsworths.

Between the periodical and the 1818 book form of *The Friend*, there is yet another version also called the 1812 collection, which consisted of the the periodical's revised versions of the issued numbers at the same time Coleridge was in the process of publishing the periodical version in 1809-10 (Rooke, 1969, p. xcii).[201] In June 1812 *The Friend* was reissued by Gale and Curtis. However, the publication of *The Friend* in collected form in 1812 was neither the emergence of a new book, nor a new content or a commercial achievement. It was an attempt on Coleridge's part to bring his physically scattered issues of *The Friend* together. Although, unlike 1818 version, he did not re-order *The Friend* of 1812, Coleridge himself called this version an "improved edition" in a letter of 1814, forming the basis of the 1818 edition (*CL* III, p. 503). This makes the 1812 version valuable considering the conditions under which the various numbers of periodical could have remained dispersed and forgotten.

Although Coleridge abandoned the *The Friend* project in 1810 and reprinted the 1812 version, as Kooy states, "the idea of reissuing the work stayed with him" (2009, p.

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[201] As Rooke clarifies, "the first twelve numbers were reprinted in revised form after the printer had a supply of unstamped paper in mid-November 1809 and before Coleridge gave up writing the periodical in March 1810" (p. lxxxviii). The copies of the first twelve numbers (from No 13, there are no revisions) were reprinted on 2000 unstamped sheets (amounting to one hundred copies of twenty numbers) and were to be "saved till they made a suitable volume and also were to supply new subscribers with back-numbers. From the evidence still extant, it also seems likely that the first twelve numbers were reprinted from early December on" (pp. lxvi-lxvii).

158). Although frustrated in June 1814 by the futility of his efforts to procure a copy of *The Friend*[202], lamenting how his good qualities "diffuse themselves" (*CL* III, pp. 502-503), Coleridge still pulled himself together to reissue *The Friend* in three volumes. In a letter of March 1815 to Joseph Cottle, Coleridge hence wrote: "'The Friend' has long been out of Print – and it's (*sic*) republication has been called for by numbers. Indeed, from the manner in which it was first circulated, it is little less than a new work –. To make it a compleat and circular work it needs but about 8 or 10 papers...which had I even 20£ only to procure myself a week's Ease of mind I could have printed…" (*CL* IV, pp. 551-552). In another letter of 8 July 1816, Coleridge wrote that probably owing, he guessed, to people's "disposition to enquire after [his] works" which, he hoped, would "become still more extended", he was "spoken to by an eminent publisher concerning the republication of the Friend" (*CL* IV, p. 650). He reported to have responded by saying that his intention was "never to publish it except under such alterations of form and arrangement, of omissions and additions, as would almost amount to the re-writing of it". In another letter of September 1816, he wrote to Hugh J. Rose:

> I have sent to Gale and Fenner to know whether it is possible to procure a copy of the Friend from any private hand – I fear not. I do not possess a copy myself; but borrowed one from an acquaintance. I mean to republish it, omitting what can not be completed within a work of three small volumes, completing what I can, and as far as is consistent with the subjects and the nature of my mind... (*CL* IV, p. 669)

An ingrained sense of the loss and wastage of his ideas illustrated through the egg analogy in 1808 was combined by the literal loss of even his published ideas. By December 1816, Coleridge had begun re-designing and revising it into a three-volume book form and in the *Biographia Literaria*, he advertised that a revised edition was on its way (*BL* I, p. 235n).

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[202] It was, as a London correspondent informed him, "Out of Print, & the Publishers, Gale, Curtis & c, have long given over the hope of inducing the Author to prepare a second Edition" (*CL* III, pp. 502-3).

Prior to Coleridge's embarkment on the revision of *The Friend* of 1818, his incessant quest for attachment to other persons was relatively at rest thanks to his residence with the Gillmans (where he settled in April, 1816). In April 1817 the second volume of *Lay Sermons* had been published, followed by the publication of the *Biographia* and *Sibylline Leaves* in July 1817, and Coleridge was also corresponding with Rest Fenner for publication of an *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana*. Although the discussions had led nowhere as he refused to leave Highgate and they had to drop the plan of his editorship, Coleridge contributed to the project with a "Preliminary Treatise on Method", published in January 1818 (Rooke, 1969, p. lxxxiii). Especially after having revised his life and opinions as well as poems, Coleridge was now in a good position to have another look at the messy body of his "intellectual reservoir" and recreate it appropriately.

A three-volume version of *The Friend* was published in November 1818. The new organisation of it meant, for Coleridge, "its logical growth, a unity organic rather than mechanical" (Rooke, 1969, p. xcv). Since the essays in their original sequence in the 1809-10 and 1812 versions were frequently interrupted due to the intervention of poetry, anecdotal pieces and letters - leading to a chaotic impression for readers - Coleridge decided to make considerable omissions.[203] He dropped as much as four complete issues of the earlier versions of *The Friend* while restructuring the 1818 edition.[204] Coleridge also re-organized the old and new material at hand and to divide the 1818 version into three volumes. The first volume contained sixteen essays showcasing *The Friend* as an

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[203] "Many other omissions" Rooke (1969) notes, "are mere mechanical adjustments to the new form of the work: Coleridge scrapped all appeals to subscribers, apologies for lateness of publication, answers to correspondents, and promises of future essays". (*TF* I, p. xcvi)

[204] The 1809 version had almost 450 pages in total, roughly 130 of which were omitted by 1818. Moreover, 1818 version contained almost 350-pages-long new additions out of a thousand pages. "Of the fifty-eight essays comprising *The Friend*," Rooke says, "only two have not been added to, and even they do not appear in their original form" (Rooke, 1969, p. xcv).

enterprise with a rhetorical agenda, the second volume laid out the principles of

Coleridge's political philosophy, and the third one (consisting of new material) drew on

the method of thinking and its theological determinants. Each volume ended with a

"Landing Place", containing essays "interposed for amusement, retrospect and

preparation" (*TF* I, p. 127). The 1818 version of *The Friend* was therefore a thoroughly-

revised edition with "a new title-page, shifting the emphasis from the 'Literary, Moral, and

Political' to aids 'in the Formation of Fixed Principles in Politics, Morals, and Religion'"

(Rooke, 1969, p. xciv).

Previous Scholarship

The academic focus on comparative revisions of *The Friend*'s different versions and the

grounds of revisions mainly in 1809-10 and 1818 is rather limited. Much as it has been

mentioned in monographs and collections handling Coleridge's prose works, *The Friend* is

mostly brought up to provide context (Christensen 1979; Kooy 1999; Coleman 2002;

Worthen 2010),[205] to underscore its rhetorical method (Christensen 1981 and 1995; Myers

1987)[206], or to support the main argument (Class, 2012) – the work *per se* with its different

versions is usually not dealt with as the main subject of inquiry. In what follows, I will lay

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[205] Christensen, Jerome. (1979). "Politerotics: Coleridge's rhetoric of war in *The Friend*". *Clio*, 8 (3). pp. 339-63.
Kooy, Michael John. (1999). "Coleridge, Malta and the 'Life of Ball': How Public Service Shaped 'The Friend'. *The Wordsworth Circle*, 30 (2) (Spring), pp. 102-108.
Coleman, Deirdre. (2002). "The Journalist". In L. Newlyn (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Coleridge* (pp. 126-141). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Worthen, J. (2010). "Mid-life works and contexts: 1803–1814". *The Cambridge Introduction to Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (pp. 62-72). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[206] Christensen, Jerome. (1981). *Coleridge's Blessed Machine of Language*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
---- (1995). "The method of The Friend". In Don H. Bialostosky and Lawrence D. Needham (eds.) *Rhetorical Traditions and British Romantic Literature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 11- 27.
Myers, Victoria. (1987). "Coleridge's 'The Friend': An Experiment in Rhetorical Theory. *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. 86 (1) (January). pp. 9-32.

emphasis on a review of the scholarship specifically focused on the differences between the two versions of *The Friend*.

Earl Leslie Griggs in his 1938-article "*The Friend*: 1809 and 1818 Editions" and Dudley Bailey in the 1961 article "Coleridge's Revision of *The Friend*" provide analyses of Coleridge's revisionary activity on the two versions of *The Friend*: 1809-10 and 1818. Griggs argues that the difference between the 1809-1810 and 1818 versions is mainly about the change of order of the essays, omission of parts that proved to be redundant by 1818, and important additions (especially to the third volume of 1818) that indicate the development of Coleridge's thoughts from 1809 to 1818. He goes on to claim that this development took place in terms of philosophy; political passages remained unchanged in the meantime, undergoing no substantial textual alterations.[207] Bailey's approach, on the other hand, largely falls at odds with Griggs. "Tabulations of the 1809 edition in terms of the 1818 edition and of the 1818 edition in terms of the 1809 edition" he argues, "will show that much of the 1818 edition was not much revised, but rather appropriated, in order, from 1809" (p. 91). Stating that "about a fourth of the 1809 edition was omitted in 1818" and that "about a third of the later edition is new material", Bailey holds that "we must scale down somewhat the usual estimates of the difference between the editions" (pp. 98-99). When it comes to the "development" of Coleridge's views, Bailey claims that the reflections Coleridge wrote in *The Friend* of 1809-10 were already part of his thinking

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[207] "From the foregoing evidence, then, the following conclusions may be drawn: (1) By 1818 Coleridge's interest in politics, as distinct from a moral system, seems to have diminished, whereas his interest in philosophy and theology had become almost an obsession. (2) When he came to revise *The friend*, therefore, he merely rearranged the order of the political passages, without attempting to modify his political philosophy. (3) His metaphysical thinking, however, had led him to religious and scientific problems; and he added a fuller definition of the reason and a long dissertation on method to clarify his point of view. (4) The 1818 Friend, then, is a "rifacciamento" of the first edition in so far as the political passages are concerned, but a new work in its fairly consistent pursuit of an attempted philosophical system" (Griggs, 1938, p. 373)

from the early 1800s.[208] In addition, Bailey goes on, "several of the leading ideas in the essays of the 'Second Section' may be found stated or suggested in the 1809 *Friend*; and several others had apparently been in Coleridge's mind even before 1809" (p. 95),[209] and because they can still be seen even in the 1818 version, we cannot talk about any substantial development from 1809 version to the *rifacciamento*[210] of 1818: the additions merely "constitute an extension of the 1809 text" and they worked to "keep continuity among broken and sometimes reordered essays" (p. 94).[211] "The lesser revisions which Coleridge made in his *rifacciamento* are confined to grammatical and rhetorical problems" argues Bailey, carried out with an aim to "clarify and simplify his prose, to sharpen the focus of his point of view, and with these things, to make more incisive his criticism of the reigning political and moral philosophies of his time" (pp. 97-98). Bailey thereby

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[208] Bailey clarifies this by saying, "Additional evidence that Coleridge had arrived at some of the conclusions of the 1818 essays by 1809 may be found in writings and letters which antedate the first edition of *The Friend*" (Bailey, 1961, p. 96).

[209] "Taken together with the findings from an examination of lesser additions to the 1818 edition, these pieces of evidence modify the novelty of this large addition and indicate that Coleridge's thinking between 1809 and 1818 was more of a piece than a cursory look at the two editions of *The Friend* would lead one to believe. The central point made in the 1818 essays on method-that any productive method is mentally initiated-had been very clearly implied in an 1809 essay in which Coleridge mentioned the scientific method of Sir Humphry Davy" (Bailey, 1961, p. 95)

[210] Coleridge's own spelling of the term derives from the Italian "rifacimento", meaning "remaking", "reconstructing" and "rebuilding". Coleridge wrote in the advertisement to the 1818 edition that "The present volumes are rather a *rifacciamento* than a new edition. The additions forming so large a proportion of the whole work, and the arrangement being altogether new, I might indeed hesitate in bestowing the title of a republication on a work, which can scarcely be said to have been ever published, in the ordinary trade acceptation of the word." (*TF* I, p. 3)

[211] "Certainly no one can assume that between the first and twentieth issues of *The Friend* in 1809 Coleridge had moved from a belief in absolute predestination to one of modified meliorism. Obviously, on the contrary, Coleridge was aware of no change in his opinions at all. Whatever Coleridge's reasons for omitting [a] passage in 1818 were, a change in his opinions is, in this case, not one of them. And the fact of his retention, in large part and without substantial revision, of much of the 1809 *Friend* in the 1818 edition argues a similar consistency in Coleridge's thought; it should lead us to deal warily with the temptation to see a change which so large an addition as represented by the third volume suggests to us. The additions of more than sentence dimension which Coleridge made in the 1818 edition of *The Friend* also fall into groups: introductory and transitional passages were required to keep continuity among broken and sometimes reordered essays, and many additional mottoes were needed to give conformity to the presentation; other passages were added to elucidate points of the 1809 text, ranging from credit-line footnotes to sizable emendations in the text; and the bulk of the third volume was added to extend the scope of *The Friend* to the area of the principles of morals and religion. This last, the bulk of which is given to a series of essays on intellectual method, is about the only addition in 1818 which may be properly said to constitute an extension of the 1809 text." (Bailey, 1961, p. 94)

contravenes the developmental approach by endorsing the idea of constancy in Coleridge's thought beginning from the early 1800s.

Barbara E. Rooke (1969) in her introduction to the Bollingen edition of *The Friend* provides an account of the writing process of both the periodical (1809-10) and the book version (1818). In the body and footnotes to *The Friend* volumes (I and II), Rooke provides useful technical details about the revisions (such as what words/passages were replaced from one version to another). However, they are not analytical enough and fall short of presenting a comprehensive argument about the versions. For example, Rooke takes the 1818 version as the main authoritative text in the first volume, and relegating, as it were, the obscure and chaotic periodical versions to an appendix in the second volume – just in case readers might want to compare the alpha-text with its secondary prototype.[212] Hence, rather than thoroughly meddling with the previous versions that made the 1818 text possible in the first place, and presenting their distinct characteristics considering what Coleridge thought he was doing from one version to another, Rooke misses out on the process in which Coleridge quite radically revised his periodical as well as his earlier self and affiliations. I therefore hold that such editorial primacy of a version over another misses out the chance to elaborate on the differences between the two versions and the motivations behind Coleridge's refashioning of his *oeuvre* in 1818. As a result, whereas the first volume is taken as the standard and most refined version of *The Friend*, the "Appendix" provides the historical background to it. On the other hand, Deirdre Coleman's *Coleridge and The Friend, 1809-10* (1988) is devoted to the exploration of personal and intellectual context during the time of the 1809-10 *Friend*'s composition.

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[212] As Rooke maintains, she prioritizes the last edition "Coleridge saw through the press" since the excerpts disrupt not only the "flavour" but also the "continuity" of the periodical version, and the 1809-10 text is therefore appendixed (1969, p. lxxxvi).

Coleman also criticizes Rooke for appreciating *The Friend* from an uncritical viewpoint based predominantly on the latest version (pp. 77-82). However, she inversely adopts a similar approach to that of Rooke by dealing only with the periodical version of *The Friend*. Due to the lack of a holistic approach to different versions, Coleman's work is quite antagonistic towards the 1809-10 version of *The Friend*. She holds that it is one of the examples of "mismanagement and failed goals, an exercise not so much in principles as in muddy thinking and anxious equivocation" (1988, p. 1). Coleman hence cannot but overlook the comparative aspect of Coleridge's pursuits while composing and revising the versions of *The Friend*, which can only emerge when one considers them together.

More recently, Michael John Kooy (2009) has provided a comparison between the 1809-10 and 1818 versions of *The Friend* in terms of their involvement with a "primary motivating force": Political theology (p. 148). According to Kooy, the periodical was prudentially concerned with secular politics, suppressing political theology and continually "prioritizing…principles over policies and events" (p. 155). Pointing out that Coleridge's endeavours to play a role in public affairs in different periods of his life was always fraught, Kooy outlines how his disillusionment compelled Coleridge to seek "fixed principles" both in *The Watchman* (1796) and *The Friend* (1809-10, 1818) by addressing this "nagging feeling of disenchantment" (2009, p. 144). "These concerns" Kooy adds, "are amplified by the new material Coleridge added to the 1818 edition" because the additions shifted "*The Friend*'s burden of argumentation away from the themes of his wartime 'liberal republicanism' and towards a novel conception of Christian communitarianism as an answer to postwar anomie" (p. 159). The 1818 version hence gave prominence to Coleridge's political theology:

> The secular inflected 'liberal republicanism' of the 1809-10 edition, with its appeal to violence, fascination with the market economy and commitment to 'national unity', remains amply evident, notably in the recycled essays on taxation, on war and international law and in the 'Life of Ball'. But theological concerns that pull in an opposite direction also have an increasing presence in the 1818 *Friend*, evident in the revised essays on the freedom of the press, education and the political role of the conscience. (p. 159.)

Kooy holds that revisions in the 1818 changed the periodical in a way that enabled the dominance of Coleridge's theological concerns in 1818 and their direct correspondence in "the rough and tumble of political life" (2009, p. 144). In this respect, Kooy contributes to Griggs's and Bailey's argument of whether Coleridge developed his ideas from one version to another, and holds that the *rifacciamento* is a considerably improved version of the periodical in these terms. However, although Kooy does bring up Kant a few times in his discussion of the periodical version,[213] he fails to provide an analysis of the role Kantian critical philosophy played in constitution and revision of the two versions. It is Monika Class (2012) who deals with Coleridge's engagement with morality and conservative politics by taking into consideration the radical political implications of Kant's ethics and the notion of "categorical imperative". Stating that "the tensions between Coleridge's lasting admiration for Kant's philosophy and his conservative reorientation have been overlooked" , Class draws attention to the fact that "despite the radical and transformative power of critical philosophy", Coleridge made use of the Kantian moral principles to undergird his own conservative judgement in 1818 (p. 145). Class hence quite explicitly puts, and in a way complements Kooy's suggestion above, that in his attempt to "suppress Kant's and his own Jacobinism", Coleridge favoured the politics of expedience

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[213] "My interest is to show how Coleridge tries to articulate political theological responses to a variety of contemporary crisis situations (revolution, war, anomie). These responses fluctuate between different forms of Christian materialism on the one hand (modelled on the perfectionism of Unitarianism and then, later, the incarnation of Trinitarian theology) and a secular-inflected idealism (derived from Kant) on the other." (pp. 148-149)

in the versions of *The Friend*, "making Kant known as a proponent of conservatism" (2012, p. 148).

Gap in Scholarship

The scholarship about the differences or continuities of *The Friend*'s periodical (1809-10) and *rifacciamento* (1818) versions fall short of discussing the extent to which Coleridge's attitude towards the function of a "Friend" underwent a substantial and long-sought change after the publication of Wordsworth's *The Excursion* in 1814. It is within this framework that I will examine the two versions of Coleridge's *The Friend,* and I think compared to the periodical, in the revised version Coleridge managed to form a more sober relationship with not only his own past but also with Wordsworth by means of dissociating his corpus of works as a result of revisionary activity. As was the case during the period he collated *Sibylline Leaves* and composed the *Biographia*, the determining factor of such a schismatic attitude stemmed largely from the fact that Coleridge came to realise the virtue of speaking *to* a friend rather than habitually speaking *through* a partner.

Taking Coleridge's idiosyncratic response to Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy into account, I will argue that the already-existing "radical differences" between Coleridge and Wordsworth ever since the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) gradually sharpened following the "Preface" of 1800. We can hold that this situation was even more intensified in the period paving the way for the periodical version itself. Coleridge's philosophical views, as reported by himself to Poole in 16 March 1801, underwent a substantial change as he claimed to have "overthrown the the doctrine of Association, as taught by Hartley, and with it all the irreligious metaphysics of modern Infidels" and promised to do even more in

a short span of time (*CL* II, p. 706).[214] However, as it turned out, he would continue to cherish a prolonged respect for Hartley for years to come and this claim was only tentative.[215] Noting it was at "Wordsworth's advice" that Coleridge had "intermitted the pursuit" (p. 706), and considering Coleridge's intellectual development and unsteady (and even "muddled" in the sense Perry uses the term) system of thought from the early 1800s up until the time he wrote the first version of *The Friend* in 1809, I hold that even the first version of *The Friend* interestingly contained quite a sharp rupture with Wordsworth, even though I also simultaneously maintain that Coleridge was at the time still had faith in the joint project with his partner. On the other hand, in addition to the debacle of 1810[216], Wordsworth's failure in 1814 to bring their grand scheme for a first "genuine" philosophical poem into completion disheartened Coleridge: *The Excursion* fell short of meeting Coleridge's expectations because whereas his organic view of the world involved the recognition of an active mind seeking the universal "Truth" through the inner synthetic faculties as well as the empirical laws in nature, Wordsworth's poem was founded upon an obscurely precarious ground between the outside world and the inner self, thereby being closer to the Kantian critical philosophy rather than Coleridge's organic approach. By comparison, I argue, the 1818 version of *The Friend* unexpectedly moved much closer to Wordsworth by virtue of the dialogic revisionary activity Coleridge carried out.

Coleridge wrote on 11 January 1810 in the supernumerary "Essay" of *The Friend* that for months, he had been giving "the History of [his] own mind" (*TF* II, p. 277). *The*

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[214] Coleridge clarified this by saying "that I shall be able to evolve all the five senses, that is, to deduce them from one sense, & to state their growth, & the causes of their difference ----- & in this evolvement to solve the process of Life & Consciousness. (p. 706)

[215] As shown by scholars such as Griggs (1938), Richard Haven (1959), Christensen (1981) and Wendling (1995).

[216] This is when Coleridge heard the disparaging remarks of the Wordsworths about himself after the periodical version of *The Friend* came to an end in 1810.

Friend of 1809-10 was indeed a work that displayed Coleridge's thought processes in the least 'cooked' form possible. It was as if Coleridge was inviting the reader to watch him think in real time,[217] and some unsurprisingly found the experience and the invitation very rebarbative indeed. After *The Watchman* of 1796, Coleridge's second experiment in periodical writing, *The Friend* (1809-10), was notoriously obscure but, it still purported to address the difficulty of communication by Coleridge. The periodical version of *The Friend* insisted that the truth was transformative but that "the reception of Truth" was beset with difficulties few understood or even knew existed.[218] In Hamilton's terms, what is offered is a model of *relationship*, one that few people could live up to. In 1809-10, these difficulties were presented largely in "psychological" terms, derived from Wolff and Moritz.[219] However, rather than explaining his psychological method conceptually, Coleridge proceeded by illustrations of the mind's apparently often motiveless resistance

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[217] In the *Biographia*, Coleridge exemplifies this with the following illustration: "Now let a man watch his mind while he is composing; or, to take a still more common case, while he is trying to recollect a name; and he will find the process completely analogous. Most of my readers will have observed a small water-insect on the surface of rivulets, which throws a cinque-spotted shadow fringed with prismatic colours on the sunny bottom of the brook; and will have noticed, how the little animal *wins* its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resisting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary fulcrum for a further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking. There are evidently two powers at work, which relatively to each other are active and passive; and this is not possible without an intermediate faculty, which is at once both active and passive. In philosophical language, we must denominate this intermediate faculty in all its degrees and determinations, the IMAGINATION. But, in common language, and especially on the subject of poetry, we appropriate the name to a superior degree of the faculty, joined to a superior voluntary control over it." (*BL* I, pp. 124-125)

[218] Hamilton states that "Truth is one thing, according to *The Friend*, and the 'reception of Truth' is its further realization by which 'we *became* what we are'." (2007, p. 90)

[219] It must be noted here that 'psychology' was a word virtually unknown in English at the time, at least in the sense intended by Coleridge. As Neil Vickers (2007) explains: "At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the word implied two things. The educated would have known it as one of the two major branches of medicine, the other being physiology…Most often it meant the science in which 'the actions of the soul or mind are investigated'…The actions of the soul or mind needed to be investigated because of their effects on the *body*…The term 'psychology' was known to be German in origin and this gave rise to a second set of associations. OED notes that the word entered most European languages from Germany in the late sixteenth century and that the first person to use it in the modern sense was the German philosopher Christian Wolff (in his *Psychologia Empirica* of 1732 and *Psychologia Rationalis* of 1734). Wolff used the term to mean the study of mental experience but his interest in it was philosophic. He wanted to know what the soul or mind was capable of experiencing…By Coleridge's time, it had become associated with the study of mental experience of all kinds. The key figure here was Karl Phillipp Moritz (1756-93)…" (pp. 274-275)

to truth. I therefore think that a consideration of the psychological bias of the periodical version sheds light on a number of big contrasts emerging with the 1818 version, in which the German psychological tradition was intended to be replaced by the scientific method. *The Friend* as a periodical was an experimental enterprise Coleridge aborted, with numbers ending in the middle of sentences and full of unfulfilled promises to its readers. With its tangled-prose, the periodical was fairly digressive, full of distractions both for Coleridge and the reader, thought-provoking inasmuch as perplexing. I think part of the problem was the matter was so obscure that it was not always clear if he was sticking to the point or digressing. The version of 1809-1810, as a result, was physically and intellectually too demanding and, at first glance at least, all about irrationalism. Considering this background, my investigation on the 1818 version of *The Friend* will draw on Coleridge's theories of language and imagination as guiding spectacles through which we can assess his revisionary activity from the 1809-10 to the *rifacciamento* in its fullest sense.

Coleridge's Revisionary Activity from the Periodical (1809-10) to the 1818 *"rifacciamento"*

An investigation of both versions of *The Friend* is a simultaneous comparison between two distinct Coleridges: one expectantly hopeful, one bitterly frustrated. By 1809, he had heard *The Prelude* (1807) and written "To William Wordsworth" to celebrate the poem, and the reason for referring to Wordsworth's mind as "superior" stemmed from the firm hope that it was only his partner who could accomplish writing the grand philosophical poem. In *The Friend* of 1809, "hope" was therefore presented as the chief virtue and a significant medium that sustains all the others: "What an awful Duty, what a Nurse of all other, the fairest Virtues, does not hope become!" (*TF* II, p. 70). As a symbolic indication of his

lessening of hope, or a reference to his need for hope he wrote the word in small capitals "HOPE" in the 1812 and 1818 versions (*TF* I, p. 103). It is only in the 1818 version that Coleridge mentioned "hope" in pessimistic terms, when he wrote of "having hoped proudly of any individual, and the having been miserably disappointed" (*TF* I, p. 90). Although he was in expectation of "the excitement of Hopes that could not be gratified" (*TF* II, p. 86) by Wordsworth due to their radical differences respecting poetry and "hopes plucked like beautiful wild flowers" (*TF* II, p. 263; *TF* I, p. 397), in the periodical Coleridge refers to his partner as the "one still more and more deservedly dear to me" (*TF* II, p. 26) – a statement which was omitted in the 1818 version. Wordsworth, in this sense, was a figure who was in some way present during not only Coleridge's writing process but also his revisions in different versions of *The Friend*.

Coleridge's most thorough revision of 1818, right after the publication of the *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves* in 1817, decidedly came as a reaction to Wordsworth's two Prefaces of 1815 and his *Poems*. With the revised version of the 1818 *Friend*, Coleridge surely managed to infuse "new blood into it" (Rooke, Introduction, 1969, p. xciv), inciting an organic proliferation of bits and pieces that were already there since the original composition. He did this through additions and omissions, but this time to a considerable extent. A re-consideration of his relationship and collaboration with Wordsworth especially after *The Excursion*, I assert, was prominently reflected in the 1818 *The Friend*. Coleridge's major revisions for the 1818 version therefore also aimed to achieve his revision of their collaboration and simultaneous emancipation from symbiotic relationship with Wordsworth so that he could build a proper friendship with his former symbiotic partner. For example, Coleridge removed Wordsworth's poems as well as his "Essays on Epitaphs" from the *rifacciamento*. In addition, the *rifacciamento* version of *The*

Friend was dedicated to Mr and Mrs Gilman of Highgate, with whom Coleridge had been living for two years and whose friendship, Coleridge's dedication goes, "had its strongest foundations in hope" (*TF* I, p. 4). The most important point for us in this dedication is that there is no reference to any of the circumstances under which, and people with and through whom, he wrote the periodical in the first place.

As early as 1800, on the other hand, overwhelmed by Wordsworth's poetic genius, Coleridge with a seeming self-sacrifice had announced to the world that he was going to abandon writing poetry and "leave the higher & deeper Kinds to Wordsworth, the delightful, popular & simply dignified to Southey; & reserve for myself the honorable attempt to make others feel and understand their writings" (*CL* I, p. 623). Although this role of a mere "Metaphysician" was, I hold, a cloak for Coleridge's tacit intention of "division of labours", Coleridge did not fail, indeed, to make critics take for granted that at this time he lost his poetic powers. "Coleridge did not," states Stillinger (1994), "after *Dejection* in 1802, write another poem of the quality and reputation of the seven to be studied in this book. Instead, at a relatively early age, he hung out his shingle as a thinker, and for the rest of his adult life the projects he was most concerned with were contributions to systematic philosophy" (p. 5). Stillinger's approach revolves around the "solitary genius" image of Coleridge, which he thinks evolved from his ingenuity in writing verse into, basically, philosophically-laden prose. Morton D. Paley (1996) likewise states that "In any consideration of Coleridge's later poetry a blocking figure will be encountered: Samuel Taylor Coleridge" (p. 2) because Paley believes that Coleridge, from the time he wrote "To William Wordsworth" in 1807, effectively disguised himself as a poet of the eighteenth century in deference to Wordsworth. The point I diverge from Stillinger and Paley is my ongoing argument that this was not at the expense of giving up on poetry;

Coleridge's poetic ambitions just transformed into the joint *oeuvre* ideal, which made him think that he was already speaking through Wordsworth by virtue of their joint venture. In this respect I agree with Christensen (1978) when he claims that it is via Coleridge that "Wordsworth's genius is presented as whole and complete…in every sense of the word", and it has hence been a tricky occupation to determine "what in Wordsworth's poetry is truly Wordsworthian and what is not" (p. 227).[220] At times, there might be no distinct voice or identity at all.

Coleridge once said of *The Friend* that it was a secret he had entrusted to the public and that "unlike most secrets, it hath been well kept" (*TT* II, p. 374). I subscribe to Hamilton's recognition (2007) that for Coleridge, it could "scarcely be human" to have a "consciousness that remains mutely uncommunicative", and his "re-creation of [*The Friend*] in 1818 shows the perennial quality of his communicative ambitions" (pp. 17-18). Having been unable to fully achieve the dialogic reader-perspective in the "obscure" periodical of 1809-1810, Coleridge aimed to make up for this aspect when he brought out a new version of *The Friend* in 1818. Whereas he had assiduously depended on others in a manner that characterized his habit of speaking through the other during the time he issued the periodical,[221] in the *rifacciamento* version Coleridge's dialogic and revisionary approach to Wordsworth had considerably replaced this pattern, as his philosophical views had grown relatively more mature, if not totally stable. Considering my overall argument, it can therefore be held that even the meaning of the title underwent a transformation from

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[220] "The genius in the *Biographia Literaria.*" *Studies in Romanticism*, 17: 215-31.
[221] He dictated the periodical to Asra, who served as his amenuensis (Rooke, 1969, p. lv); he made use of the Kantian critical philosophy and German idealist tradition in order to develop and distinguish his own line of thought in the periodical, he had used Nitsch's interpretation of Kant to be able to understand and formulate a response to Kantian philosophy (Class, 2012, pp. 33-4), and he also collaborated with Wordsworth and at times depended on bits and pieces of his works and comments while issuing the periodical (Rooke, 1969, p. lxv)

1809-10 to 1818. Whereas Coleman (1988) takes the title *The Friend* in 1809-10 merely as a cunning ploy on Coleridge's part to appeal to the Quakers (1988, pp. 80-83), and Christensen argues that the title represents the narrative voice throughout the work itself (1981, p. 210), I would like to establish my own argument here and investigate the extent to which the title in the 1809-10 addressed to Coleridge's concerns with readership, whereas the title in the 1818 version had more subtle ramifications.

Elinor Shaffer (1990) argues that it was when Coleridge dedicated the 1818 version to the Gillmans by addressing them as "Friend", and also "signing himself 'Friend'" that he was able to link the author with the "reader-dedicatee" with its "reciprocal, even circular" title (p. 213). Shaffer also argues that it is only "when in intimate conversation with a friend that one is closest to knowing the mind with which one is engaged" (pp. 205). Regarding the argument of my thesis, Shaffer's statements shed light on how the title for Coleridge in 1818 must have been the means to achieve a proper dialogue with Wordsworth and his mind, which was necessary in the aftermath of the former's desynonymization from his once symbiotic partner. In other words, just as the reader is the addressee of Coleridge's work, Wordsworth in 1818 also took on the same role, a "fellow-labourer" (*TF* I, p. 183) and a friend to communicate, rather than being a symbiotic partner to collaborate with and speak through during the work's composition (or revision, for that matter) process. Hamilton (2007) therefore holds that having established "his communicative premise" in the 1818 version of *The Friend*, Coleridge was able to "make a striking transition from his own work into Wordsworth's poetry" by, for example, elevating a passage[222] in which he provided his insights by using the lines from a poem of

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[222] "Men are ungrateful to others only when they have ceased to look back on their former selves with joy and tenderness. They exist in fragments. Annihilated as to the Past, they are dead to the Future, or seek for

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Wordsworth's, "from the footnote to which it was consigned in August 1809 to the main body of the text in 1818" (p. 99). Provided that Coleridge connected the constituent elements of his life and works by bringing them together and highlighting their "relationship"[223] with one another, "the rationale of" his *rifacciamento* could be established. Not only does, for example, the "Quakerish title" connect Coleridge with his "Dissenting past"; it also enables him to safeguard "the friendly relationship of that past with his present philosophical concerns" (Hamilton, 2007, p. 100).

Taking the overall publication process of the 1809-10 edition into account, it is obvious that Coleridge was cautious about touching upon current political or social issues in an attempt to establish the "true principles" and higher truths. The periodical hence was announced in the title page of the 1809-10 version to be "a literary, moral, and political weekly paper, excluding personal and party politics and the events of the day" (*TF* II, p. 1). As for the reason for this apolitical stance in general, Coleman holds that "He was afraid that talking about social and political problems might cause the loss of subscribers", which caused a tension between the private and the public worlds for Coleridge (1988, pp. 11,

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the proofs of it everywhere, only not (where alone they can be found) in themselves. A contemporary Poet has exprest and illustrated this sentiment with equal
fineness of thought and tenderness of feeling:
My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky!
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So let it be, when I grow old,
Or let me die.
The Child is Father of the Man,
And I would wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety." (*TF* I, p. 40)

[223] "Relationship appears preserved at all stages of this composite passage. Self and other, self and past, and even the production of self through time define each other oppositionally through a kind of religious affection and friendship. To Coleridge, these relations seem necessary for human flourishing, and friendship is what keeps their symbiosis healthy. The biographical facts of Coleridge's relationship with Wordsworth also emphasize the friendliness belonging to his use of this quotation, epigraph to the "Immortality Ode," which must have intended some amends after the criticism of the pantheism of the ode itself in *Biographia*." (Hamilton, 2007, p. 100)

13). Coleman goes on to say that Coleridge adopted the language of "studied neutrality" so that his work paved the way for "consensus rather than controversy (p. 60). It is true that the recognition of Coleridge's financial expectations is considerably important during any kind of analysis of *The Friend* (and of practically all his works).[224] However, I challenge those opinions assessing Coleridge's seemingly apolitical attitude and exclusion of material of transient nature *solely* on such pragmatic grounds as not losing subscribers or not causing ideological clash.[225] After all, excluding an explicit discussion of politics from the journal, considered from a pragmatic point of view, in fact would do him disservice. As Rooke notes, *The Friend* was planned to differ markedly from its predecessor, *The Watchman* (1796), in that the latter had become "avowedly concerned with events of the day and current politics. Even at the risk of losing three quarters of his readers, he planned to exclude just those things" because the initial endeavour was to keep the new periodical engaged with broader and more philosophical issues (p. xxxvi). *The Friend* of 1809-10 was surely political, but Coleridge's primary objective at the time was to address to people who formed the opinions of the masses: the first issue of *The Friend* on June 1, 1809 hence began with a revealing quotation from Petrarch's *On the Life of Solitude* about Coleridge's inward intentions:

> Believe me, it requires no little Confidence, to promise Help to the Struggling, Counsel to the Doubtful, Light to the Blind, Hope to the Despondent, Refreshment to the Weary…But it is my earnest wish, I confess, to employ my understanding and acquirements in that mode and

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[224] It cannot be overlooked that Coleridge did plan to earn money with his weekly, and Stuart's estimates before publication was as follows: "A sale of 250 would probably pay all current expences & if you sold 500 you would probably have a profit of 300£ per ann: - if 1000, of about 800£" (letter from Stuart to Coleridge, 17 Dec 1808, qtd. in Rooke, p. lxxi).
[225] A paradoxical example for Coleridge's risking money and subscribers for the sake of disclosing his mindset is, quite interestingly, his treatment of the Quaker audience of *The Friend*: Thanks to Thomas Clarkson, Coleridge had an assured number of Quaker subscribers at the very beginning. However, in time, as Coleridge got more and more involved in conservative politics, he apparently provoked his Quaker subscribers (by "sneering at the Quakers' pacifism." (Coleman, 1988, p. 19)

> direction, in which I may be enabled to benefit the largest number possible of my fellow-creatures. (*TF* II, p. 5)

For Coleridge, publishing *The Friend* was an important mission to enlighten himself as well as others. That Coleridge abstained from having a political agenda (at least an overtly publicized one) demonstrates that he obviously wanted to present his opinions as a philosopher and opinion-former, therefore he took pains to abstain as much as possible from commenting on current affairs, or writing for people from all walks of life. In a letter to Humphry Davy written prior to the publication of his weekly paper, Coleridge explicated his objectives in establishing a periodical with the following words:

> My Purposes are widely different. I do not write in this Work for the *Multitude*; but for those who by Rank, or Fortune, or official Situation, or Talents or Habits of Reflection, are to *influence* the Multitude. I write to found true PRINCIPLES, to oppose false PRINCIPLES, in Criticism, Legislation, Philosophy, Morals, and International Law. (*CL* III, p. 143)

Coleridge hence does not seem to be randomly opportunistic at all. His aim was to address a privileged group of cultivated people capable of acting as opinion-formers in the society, and he hoped to accomplish this by establishing political, social and philosophical principles.

The work in his mind was, unsurprisingly, to be highly elitist, exclusive and intellectually demanding. In this respect, Coleridge distinguished himself from *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* (another periodical that was started in 1802) by writing to Stuart in 14 December 1808 that they were going to have two major differences:

> [Cobbett] applies to the Passion[s that] are gratified by Curiosity, sharp & often calumnious Personality, the Politics and the Events of the Day, and the names and characters of notorious Contemporaries. From all these Topics I not only abstain as from guilt; but to strangle these Passions by the awakening of the nobler Germ in human nature is my express and paramount *Object*. (*CL* III, p. 141)

Nonetheless, *The Friend* was in fact never meant to be an apolitical register at all: We can gather from Coleridge's letters, for example, that his intention was to keep on the side of the political authority in power rather than swim, as he wrote in a letter to Stuart in 15 April 1809, in "the muddy yet shallow stream" of the Whigs (*CL* III, p. 195). Coleridge hence was not altogether abstaining from meddling with political issues in the periodical, neither was he making practical politics his main focus.[226] On the other hand, following Kooy (2009) and Class (2012)[227], it can be established that Coleridge principally aimed to sever the ties between morality and politics to a considerable extent in 1809-10. For instance, he made use of the Kantian concept of categorical imperative and reduced it into a non-political and individual moral dictum (Class, 2012, pp. 7-11). While revising the periodical in 1818, however, his religious views dominated his views, hence making his views less limited to individual conscience and more involved in political ideas governed by religion and God.

By 1818, the role of religion in establishing fixed principles and methodological enquiry in the philosophical as well as the political arena became more dominant and less private.[228] Coleridge now sought to provide a moral foundation for those fixed principles and develop a method for the sake of grounding his views on the universal truth. For

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[226] As Class (2012) states, "It is true that this search for a metaphysical ground in politics proved so complicated that it tended to undermine Coleridge's ability to call for specific political actions. However, Coleridge's failure to make a decisive impact on contemporary politics should not be misunderstood as a lack of concern. On the contrary, his insight into the difficulty of combining morality and politics appears to be one of the major reasons which prevented Coleridge from committing to any manifestation of Realpolitik, one of the corresponding societies or a political party." (pp. 55-56)

[227] "Coleridge was a contradictory Kantian, at once sociable and solitary, public and hidden, radical and conservative, genial and copying, and it was in these conflicting terms that Coleridge used critical philosophy consistently, and at times intensively as well as emotionally. Nevertheless, his public mediation had one effect in particular: it contributed profoundly to a conservative image of Kant in England, which remains one of Coleridge's lasting legacies." (Class, p. 190)

[228] And Kooy (2009) pinpoints the reason for this: "For the 1818 *Friend*, conscience is no longer the private moral reflection…but the catalyst for communitarian solidarity…Community arises from the experience of expressing shared values, not (as the 1809-10 Friend would have it) from the experience of fighting for them." (p. 160)

example, in the Essay 13 on Law and Religion, which was a new addition to the fifth essay of the periodical version, Coleridge seems at the onset more focused on "blend[ing] and harmoniz[ing] the most discordant elements" (p. 91) hence positing Law and Religion not only as distinctive entities but also as "THE TWO POLAR FORCES OF ONE AND THE SAME POWER" (*TF* I, p. 94). I find this later distinction as an improved manifestation of Coleridge's commitment to multeity in unity as well as a more mature sense of his adoption in the 1809-10 version of an elevated notion of "Understanding" vis-à-vis Sense and Reason. Therefore, as Kooy states, "Abandoning his earlier Idealist dualism between politics (Understanding) and conscience (Reason), Coleridge now argues that Law without Religion (modern liberalism) is as politically disingenuous as Religion without Law (theocracy)" (2009, p. 159). As he also stated in the *rifacciamento*: "…religion and morals cannot be disjoined without the destruction of both: and that this does not take place to the full extent, we owe to the frequency with which both take shelter in the heart, and that men are always better or worse than the maxims which they adopt or concede" (*TF* I, p. 444). As will be discussed shortly, it was yet another substantial insertion in the last third of the 1818 version, "Essays on the Principles of Method", that allowed Coleridge to be even more explicit about the religious agenda of the *rifacciamento* (which also became more orthodoxly Christian), by placing it in a non-Kantian framework.

Linguistic Grounds for Revisions

In the second number of the periodical *Friend* Coleridge claimed to detail "the settled convictions of my mind for the last ten or twelve years, with some brief intervals of fluctuation" (*TF* II, p. 24-5). He announced right in the first number that his aim was to "uphold those Truths and those Merits, which are founded in the nobler and permanent

Parts of our Nature, against the Caprices of Fashion, and such Pleasures, as either depend on transitory and accidental Causes, or are pursued from less worthy Impulses" (*TF* II, p.18). However, in fact Coleridge's scattered views and ineffable arguments as presented in *The Friend* were visibly in the process of becoming. This is why Hazlitt in 1816 retrospectively complained about the work for being an "endless preface to an imaginary work" and the "most tiresome prospectus" and ever written, hence vilified Coleridge for appearing as "the Prince of preparatory authors" (*Political Essays*, p. 120)! Whereas to Coleman (1988), the source of this problem was Coleridge's "anxiety-ridden inability to carry out his stated intentions" (p. 3), it must be considered as the more definitive aspect of what Coleridge called "the History of my own mind" (*TF* II, p. 277) – rather than simply a product of pure inhibition. In other words, it was an attempt to take the reader through a complex and unfamiliar train of thought by attempting to illustrate how we can, psychologically speaking, think about thinking process itself. Coleridge's conception of language had the biggest role in this process because he thought, as McKusick suggests, that the periodical *Friend* would emerge "not simply as a miscellaneous collection of essays, but as a coherent and many-faceted attempt to remedy the contemporary abuse of language by reestablishing the proper meaning of words" (2009, p. 580). A notebook statement of June 1810 bears witness to this because Coleridge was anxious that the preliminary "Hints & first Thoughts" he put down on "this & [his] other Memorandum Books" could be "understood as…fixed opinions", as they were rather mere "Suggestions of the disquisition; & acts of obedience to the apostolic command of Try all things: hold fast that which is good" (*CN* III, §3881). This note, I think, can be applied to his periodical which had ended several months ago: rather than seeking fixed principles in language and

philosophy, Coleridge sought to present incongruous material in the weekly version of *The Friend*.

On the other hand, Coleridge in the early years as well as around 1809-10 already cherished a firm belief in the power of language in terms of constituting thought and according meanings to words by bringing the mind into action. "Language" he stated in a notebook entry of April-June 1803, "give *outness* to Thoughts / & this the philosophical essence & purpose of Language" (*CN* I, §1387). In another entry of October 1803, Coleridge asked,

> What is it, that I employ my Metaphysics on? To perplex our clearest notions, & living moral Instincts? To extinguish the Light of Love & of Conscience, to put out the Life of Arbitrement – to make myself & others *Worthless*, *Soul*-less, *God*less? – No! To expose the Folly & the Legerdemain of those, who have thus abused the blessed Organ of Language – , to support all old & venerable Truths, to support, to kindle, to project, to make the Reason spread Light over our Feelings, to make our Feelings diffuse vital Warmth thro' our Reason – these are my Objects – & these my Subjects. (*CN* I, §1623)

Coleridge re-worked on this notebook entry in the periodical, and then kept it in the 1818 version as well (*TF* I. p. 108; II. p. 73): the word "Organ" underwent a metaphoric shift, and replaced by "Machine". I think this replacement is critical in terms of showing language's non-subjective but transcendent role in constitution of thought and guidance towards profound truths.[229]

By the time he revised *The Friend* (1818), Coleridge had come to the recognition that he had originally lacked an essential element in the periodical version, which he retrospectively thought was among those works consisting of "arrangement guided by the light of no leading idea" and "mere orderliness without METHOD" (*TF* I, 513). It was a prerequisite for Coleridge in 1818 that he set down fixed principles that would guide his

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[229] See: Christensen, 1981, p. 244.

intellectual offspring and, by extension, his literary works. In January this year, Coleridge's essay titled "General Introduction: or Preliminary Treatise on Method", a work of applied logic in which Coleridge presented his brainwork on the proper method of philosophy, was published in the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana* (Jackson 1969, Myers 1987). However, because the introductory piece was "bedeviled", "interpolated" and "topsy-turvied" (*CL* IV, p. 825) by the editors, Coleridge included the revised version of it in *The Friend* in November 1818 because the piece was to serve as "the groundwork of [his] philosophic opinions" (*CL* IV, p. 860). Coleridge now acceded to the view that although the periodical was a success in terms of its content and distinctive line of thought in the essays, they were, and might "remain for ages limited in their uses, insecure and unproductive" because they were able to neither "excite some master IDEA" nor "lead to some LAW" (*TF* I, p. 478). The *rifacciamento* was meant to compensate for this gap with the revised version of the preface to the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana* by establishing fixed principles in philosophy.

Whereas Coleridge in the periodical version sought to pour down his intellectual reservoir in a rush to produce his weekly, the *rifacciamento* was committed to achieve fixed principles by pursuing "the science of Method" that could be extracted from "the *grounds* and essential *principles* of" the philosophical works of such groundbreaking figures as Lord Bacon or Plato, "which constitutes their true systems of philosophy" because at their cores "they are radically one and the same system… which is of universal and imperishable worth" (*TF* I, p. 487). This idea presupposes that attentive readers are capable of detecting the epistemological origin of those systems within their own minds as this knowledge is inexctricably connected with faith in the Absolute governing power. The

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rifacciamento in this respect aimed to provide a methodological venue for Coleridge's lifelong exploration of the nature and source of language.

In the 1818 version of the periodical, Coleridge pursued a scientific method in the service of fixed principles, through which his habit of considering all possible thoughts at once could ideally be systematised and the thoughts could be properly organised in relation to one another. Waka Ishikura (2004) suggests that Coleridge's "Essays on the Principles of Method" can be seen as "his philosophical response to Davy's scientific endeavor" because, as he puts, it was "Davy who opened Coleridge's eyes on the newly developed practical sciences" (p. 69). Therefore, in his awareness of how widely scientific knowledge in the age of industrial revolution was already applied to the "practical manners" (p. 68), Coleridge proposed in *The Friend* (1818) that the "Method" to be expounded was bound to be scientific in terms of mediating the distinguishing potentials of the phemomenal and spiritual worlds alike. As Schlutz (2009) confirms, according to Coleridge, "true philosophical insight can thus only be achieved if the relations that are the material of Method originate not in empirical observation, but in the mind of the observer", and Coleridge termed this "superior kind of relation" as "Law", granting it "the foremost place in the science of Method" (p. 220). This is because the principles of Law simultaneously "account for the relations between and for the very existence of the objects of empirical reality" by virtue of being "the divine causes of empirical phenomena… The science of Method is thus firmly grounded in religious faith" (pp. 220-21). It must have been such a conception of constitutional relations of things with one another[230] that induced Coleridge

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[230] "It is the idea of the common centre, of the universal law, by which all power manifests itself in opposite yet interdependent forces…that enlightening inquiry, multiplying experiment, and at once inspiring humility and perseverance will lead him to comprehend gradually and progressively the relation of each to the other, of each to all, and of all to each (*TF* I, p. 511).

to provide methodological framework for his opinions, since Coleridge explains that the root of the word "Method" in Greek literally denotes "a way, or path of Transit" (*TF* I, p. 457) and this was Coleridge's own path to converge the laws of science with his religious faith.

To Coleridge, because "all Method supposes A PRINCIPLE OF UNITY WITH PROGRESSION; in other words, progressive transition without breach of continuity" (*TF* I, p. 476), scientific principles hence presuppose that "the whole is of necessity prior to its parts" (*TF* I, p. 497). In this respect, through the transcendent-deductive orientation of his "method", Coleridge also sought to ground his linguistic views concerning "Multeity in Unity" and, by extension, his practice of "desynonymization" in relation to his quest for fixed principles and knowledge of Law.[231] That is to say, whereas the method he pursued in the revised version of *The Friend* would help Coleridge firmly keep his faith in existence of an all-governing divine principle, multiplicities could also be vindicated by means of the same "scientific" method so that Coleridge could come up with universally-binding fixed principles. This is why he asserted in the *rifacciamento* that "the material world must have been made for the sake of man, at once the high-priest and representative of the Creator" provided that he is guided by the reason "in which the essences of all things co-exist in all their distinctions yet as one and indivisible" (*TF* I, p. 516). Therefore, in an attempt to provide an accurate correspondence between the words and the objects they signify (so that he could also prove the coexistence of multeity and unity at once), Coleridge adopted this method through which he could, without violating the principles of

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[231] Ishikura (2004) holds that this is "indispensable to method, pointing to a scientific investigation. This is a fine example of Coleridgean thinking, methodical or not, in which all thoughts are diversified and unified in the light of one idea." (p. 71)

unity, separate the concepts that have been seen as synonymous in everyday use of language.

The proposed method in *The Friend* amounts to an epistemological claim to certainty, which was absent in the 1809-10 version and, by extension, I suggest that the method hence corresponded with the linguistic concerns of Coleridge in 1818. The method was a way for him to *scientifically* establish the implicit connection between language and the absolute, divine Truth. After all, Coleridge's language in the periodical version was intensely criticised for being too obscure to understand, and Coleridge must have thought the method could remedy this, when he put "the art of METHOD…is the clue, without which it would be difficult to exculpate the noblest productions of the divine philosopher from the charge of being tortuous and labyrinthine in their progress, and unsatisfactory in their ostensible results" (*TF* I, p. 472). On the other hand, considering Coleridge's search for the grounds to his ontological argument of language, Kant's critical philosophy would obviously not take him far due to the fact that he sought to establish those ideas that had been exiled from the transcendent realm of Kant's philosophy. Therefore Coleridge in 1818 was relying on the laws of a method instead in order to bring his theory of language and philosophical inquiry in line with the scientific method imbued with moral principles. This is why, as Ishikura argues, he expected Davy "to prove scientifically that the work of nature was pertinent to the work of the mind, and to find something in the electrochemistry analogous to the work of human consciousness" so that he could endorse the view that "If one power governs the universe, the human mind may exert a power that is ultimately the same as one that governs external nature, and all powers will converge in God" (2004, p. 72). Therefore, Coleridge held that pursuit of the absolute Truth or moral concerns could not be excluded from this scientific method; on the contrary, the scientific method had to

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follow the moral foundations in order to be a reliable "method": "The naturalist, who cannot or will not see, that one fact is often worth a thousand, as including them all in itself, and that it first *makes* all the others *facts;* who has not the head to comprehend, the soul to reverence, a *central* experiment or observation…will never receive an auspicious answer from the oracle of nature" (*TF* I, p. 481). The method sought in the *rifacciamento* was also a response to Wordsworth's conception of language in the sense that he was theoretically more invested in copying the ordinary language consisting of arbitrary signs and this, for Coleridge, gave way to his once symbiotic partner's distrust for language to express the inner thoughts. It is almost as if Coleridge in the 1818 *Friend* was working out what he should have said in the first part of the *Biographia*. He obviously thought that Wordsworth possessed the genius, but instead of producing "the strongest impressions of novelty" in his poems and rescuing "the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission", his language theory lost "all the life and efficiency of truth" and lay "bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side, with the most despised and exploded errors" (*TF* I, p. 110; II, p. 74). The problem to Coleridge lay in the idea that considers language, which for him springs forth "at the first creative fiat", and thought as distinct binaries (*TF* I, p. 109; II, p. 73). In *The Excursion*, as discussed before, the dramatic method Wordsworth adopted disappointed Coleridge even more because of the split between the language of the author and that of his characters.

For Coleridge language contains within itself the power of bringing the natural and the spiritual realms together so that it can attain the core principles enabling the conceptualization of both. Religious faith, therefore, was indispensable for any quest for method because the idea "That we acknowledge a *method*…results from the religious instinct" (*TF* I, p. 497). Coleridge with his ardent search for fixed principles of method in

the *rifacciamento* aimed to establish his insights on the transcendent relationship between language and mind.[232] His conception of the constitutive function of Reason depended on a view of mind that not only shapes but is also shaped by the external world: for if man wants to recognise "himself in nature", he must "learn to comprehend nature in himself, and its laws in the ground of his own existence" in the first place (*TF* I, p. 511). Coleridge found that this was the only method through which reduction of "Phaenomena to Principles" could be made possible (p. 511). This was highly crucial for Coleridge's theologically-inclined philosophical pursuits because, he thought, he would in this way be able to establish the mutually-nurturing bond between the phenomena and man's Reason, and prove Kant's Copernican Revolution epistemologically flawed. By virtue of the science of method, Coleridge thought it was possible to found permanent parameters to gauge the way language, our thoughts and the external world organically relate to one another. Therefore for Coleridge, linguistic structures in the mind must also rely upon the exhanges between mind, word and phenomenon. By extension, language ideally activates mind to perceive the existence of the *phenomenal* as well as *noumenal* world. As Coleridge asked in "The Essays":

> Hast thou ever raised thy mind to the consideration of EXISTENCE, in and by itself, as the mere act of existing ? Hast thou ever said to thyself thoughtfully, IT is! heedless in that moment, whether it were a man before thee, or a flower, or a grain of sand? Without reference, in short, to this or that particular mode or form of existence? If thou hast indeed attained to this, thou wilt have felt the presence of a mystery, which must have fixed thy spirit in awe and wonder. … There is that within us which repels the

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[232] "When the naturalist contemplates the structure of a bird", Coleridge illustrates his objective, "the hollow cavity of the bones, the position of the wings for motion, and of the tail for steering its course, &c, he knows indeed that there must be a correspondent mechanism, as the *nexus effectivus*"; however, Coleridge adds, "it must not be overlooked, that the assumption of the *nexus effectivus* itself originates in the mind, as one of the laws under which alone it can reduce the manifold of the impression from without into unity, and thus contemplate it as one thing; and could never…have been derived from outward experience, in which it is indeed presupposed, as a necessary condition." (*TF* I, p. 499)

> proposition with as full and instantaneous light, as if it bore evidence
> against the fact in the right of its own eternity. (*TF* I, p. 514)

Coleridge is suggesting that language is inherently and mysteriously in accord with the *noumena*, which philosophically confirms the truths we pursue via more laborious means by its very nature. However, no such guarantee was offered to the reader of the first version of *The Friend*. In the 1818 version, Coleridge built up on the premise that language reveals the way our mind works – hence enabling us to gain access to immediate knowledge of the things in themselves, *Ding an Sich*.

The Role of Imagination in Revisionary Activity

In the first *Critique* Kant draws attention to the theory that direct knowledge of objects is obtained by the understanding (*CPR*, A 645 / B 673). On the other hand, Reason, as Alison Laywine (1998) explains, is preoccupied with attaining "the highest principle of all—that principle from which all the laws of nature might be seen to follow" (p. 282). Laywine adds that the Kantian Reason is not allowed to "*do just anything* to achieve its ends; it can only do rightly what it has been permitted to do by the understanding" (p. 309). Kant's transcendental idealism hence excludes *noumena* (thing in itself) from the realm of epistemology as it takes for granted that we are not capable of cognising anything that is beyond the sensible and wholly intellectual – hence not-filtered by understanding in the first place. As delineated in the first chapter of this study, however, such a philosophical approach postulating that Reason is beset by epistemological delimitations, being subservient to the constitutive function of understanding, was simply not satisfactory for Coleridge's quest for a transcendent argument inclusive of *noumena*, religion and, obviously, God. Whereas Coleridge was committed to transgressing the limits of

knowledge set by the critical philosophy on grounds of a transcendent configuration of metaphysics, Kant's transcendental deduction required that reality is attained through the machinations of understanding, which basically moulds the way we experience and learn about the reality. Coleridge's conception of the reality was far removed from Kant's deduction because in his idiosyncratic philosophical schema, the *noumena* could be accessed through Reason, which had a constitutive role in the acquirement of knowledge. In other words, prioritisation of the constitutive power of Reason was the means to find out about the laws of *noumena* and the possibility of arriving at knowledge of non-sensible realm.

The first conception of *The Friend* in and around 1804 came with a long title emphasizing its dedication to the "right application of the Reason, the Imagination, and the Moral Feelings".[233] Shortly after this, Coleridge's distinction between Reason and Understanding was to grow systematically at odds with the Kantian epistemology: in a letter of October 1806, Coleridge made an explicit statement about the function of understanding as "that Faculty of the Soul which apprehends and retains the mere notices of Experience" whereas Reason was defined as "most eminently the Revelation of an immortal soul, and its best Synonime" (*CL* II, p. 1198). He radically held Reason sharply superior to Understanding in terms of having a divinely-ordained constitutive function as opposed to the materialistic, regulative Reason in Kant's philosophy. The relegation of understanding to the secondary position in 1806 was relatively softened in the periodical

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[233] In a letter of 15 January 1804 he wrote that the work would be titled as "Consolations and Comforts from the exercise and right application of the Reason, the Imagination, and the Moral Feelings, addressed especially to those in Sickness, Adversity, or Distress of mind, *from Speculative Gloom,* etc." (*CL* II, p. 1036).

Friend, where Coleridge gave "the Understanding credit for forming cognitions" (Class, 2012, p. 185). We can see Coleridge aligning Understanding closely with Reason:

> From Reason alone can we derive the Principles which our Understandings are to apply, the Ideal to which by means of our Understandings we should endeavour to approximate. This however gives no proof, that Reason alone ought to govern and direct human beings, either as Individuals or as States… Reason never acts by itself, but must cloath itself in the Substance of individual Understanding and specific Inclination, in order to become a Reality and an Object of Consciousness and Experience. (*TF* II, p. 131)

Although this passage was used *verbatim* in *The Friend*'s 1818 version (*TF* I, p. 199), the primary position of Reason in his mind remained unchanged for the rest of his life and in his later works (Class, 2012, p. 185), including the *rifacciamento*.[234] On the other hand, the role previously ascribed to Understanding (as the medium informing Reason by experiencing the world) was replaced by senses.

In the Coleridgean universe governed by a transcendent perception of every single philosophical concept, his adoption of Reason, Understanding and Sense enabled Coleridge to conduct his ontological quest for the source of knowledge. I maintain that the process in which Coleridge adapted Kant's tripartite division in *The Friend* 1809-10 contributed to his conception in 1815 of the acclaimed separation between the concepts of fancy, primary imagination and secondary imagination. The periodical version of *The Friend* hence played yet another crucial role in his career since it at times became an outlet for Coleridge's adaptation of Reason, Understanding and Sense perception. Later, these views were recycled in his formulation of budding theory of imagination.

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[234] He extravagantly extolled Reason, which he held was the "best and holiest gift of Heaven and bond of union with the Giver. The high Title by which the Majesty of Man claims precedence above all other living Creatures! Mysterious Faculty, the Mother of Conscience, of Language, of Tears, and of Smiles! Calm and incorruptible Legislator of the Soul, without whom all its' other Powers would "meet in mere oppugnancy." Sole Principle of Permanence amid endless Change! in a World of discordant Appetites and imagined Self-interests the one only common Measure!" (*TF* II, p. 125; *TF* I, p. 190)

To Coleridge senses always precluded the active elements of the mind, he hence announced in both versions of *The Friend* that "Under the term SENSE, I comprise whatever is passive in our being, without any reference to the questions of Materialism or Immaterialism, all that Man is in common with animals, in kind at least- his sensations, and impressions whether of his outward senses or the inner sense" (*TF* I, p. 177; II, p. 104n). The important distinction between fancy and imagination in the *Biographia* presents a similar understanding of fancy to sense: Fancy is described as a mode of "ordinary" Memory that deals with "fixities and definities" relying on "the law of association" so that it can present its productions under these terms (*BL* I, p. 305). Fancy is a copyist, elaborating on the previous perception of images and combining them into refreshed new forms, and in this respect its functions fall in line with the most basic form of the Kantian epistemology, the *sense*. Understanding, on the other hand, has a more complicated history in the process of Coleridge's philosophical maturation. In a letter of October 1806, understanding was held to be a faculty that acts upon "the mere notices of Experience" (*CL* II, p. 1198). On the other hand, from the periodical version, understanding emerged as an active medium of knowledge for Coleridge. His definition of "understanding" in 1809 illustrates the Kantian way in which he held this faculty above sense perception: "By the Understanding," stated Coleridge, "I mean that faculty of thinking and forming *judgements* on the notices furnished by the Sense, according to certain rules existing in itself, which rules constitute its distinct nature" (*TF* I, p. 177; II, p. 104n). In addition to "forming cognitions", such an "enhanced role of the Understanding" now ensures that an order is secured through enforcement of rules on the senses (Class, 2012, p. 185). However, Coleridge's conception of the Understanding never had the "constitutive" function Kant assigned to it; Coleridge's religious sensibility accorded only

a regulative function to Understanding so it does not infringe in the territory of Reason. Along the similar line, his definition of the primary imagination in 1815 correlates with his definition of understanding in 1809: It is "the prime Agent of all human Perception" and it only partakes in "the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" through repetition, hence reproduction (*BL* I, p. 304). This is surely not mere copying, the function of primary imagination can be more closely associated with imitating in the Aristotelian sense: It is at work in every act of perception (although we may or may not have consciousness of it), and turns the material of sense experiences into an imaginative activity.

For Coleridge, the place accorded to Reason did not undergo a tremendous change in 1809, which is due to its constitutive function that enabled him to build an intrinsic connection with the divine Absolute, God. As Coleridge defined it, Reason is "the power by which we become possessed of Principle, (the eternal Verities of Plato and Descartes) and of Ideas, (N. B. not images) as the ideas of a point, a line, a circle, in Mathematics; and of Justice, Holiness, Free-Will, &c. in Morals" (*TF* I, p. 177; II, p. 104n). Reason hence follows the eternal, fixed principles rather than mere images or sense experiences,[235] and it has the power to constitute knowledge and function as a non-representational agent of the Truth and emerge as an epistemic authority superior to sense and understanding. Such a view of Reason would later serve Coleridge's metaphysical and philosophical pursuits more profoundly, as he made explicit in the 1818 *rifacciamento* of *The Friend*: "…God, the Soul, eternal Truth…are themselves reason" (*TF* I, p. 156). In this respect, Reason's exalted position in Coleridge's vocabulary brings in his definition of secondary imagination, which is equally divine and related to the soul, to mind. Differing from its

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[235] "Preserve the pure Reason pure & debase it not by any mixture of sensuality - the sensuous Imagination." (*CN* III, §3293)

primary counterpart "only in *degree*" and "in the *mode* of its operation", Coleridge's secondary imagination exists side by side "with the conscious will", vitalizes the stable and cadaverous phenomenon by means of dissolution, diffusion and dissipation, so that it can re-create, idealize and unify (*BL* I, p. 304). Unlike the primary imagination that is reproductive, the secondary re-creates, hence instead of participating in the repetitive act, it has the power to create the eternal act again, by the power of constitutive Reason. Hence the willed conscious activity of the intellect (primary imagination combined with understanding) dissolves the illusionary divisions of empirical consciousness in order to re-create ideal unity, for example, in the works of the artist or the poet.

Coleridge's two imaginations in the *Biographia* could be properly established once they were grounded by an all-encompassing method governed by fixed rules and principles, and the "Essays" on method in the *rifacciamento* of 1818 emerged as the antidote to this relatively shortcoming, half-grounded theory. Coleridge's proposed method and desired system in 1818 was solidly transcendent in that it sought to explore imagination's potential to converge the mind of man with the divine, hence philosophy would also be merged with religious faith. It is this divine principle that would distinguish imagination from fancy, or divine language from mere signs. In this respect, Coleridge also differs from Wordsworth's poetic practice, for example, in *The Excursion* (1814) because his friend excluded the Godly potential of imagination, holding it similar to fancy in his 1815 Preface to *Poems*. I take the following excerpt from the "Essays" as his criticism to the "law" of Wordsworth's "understanding and fancy" through which

> he is impelled to abstract the outward relations of matter and to arrange
> these phenomena in time and space, under the form of causes and effects.
> And this was necessary, as being the condition under which alone
> experience and intellectual growth are possible. But…by the same law he is
> inevitably tempted to misinterpret a constant precedence into positive

causation, and thus to break and scatter the one divine and invisible life of nature into countless idols of the sense; and falling prostrate before lifeless images, the creatures of his own abstraction, is himself sensualized, and becomes a slave to the things of which he was formed to be the conqueror and sovereign. (*TF* I, pp. 517-518)

From the periodical to the *rifacciamento*, Coleridge was able to establish a more idiosyncratic response to Kant, and thanks to his revisionary activity in the *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves* Coleridge desynonymized not only his views of language but also his views of imagination from Kant and Wordsworth. In 1818, therefore, the new addition to the volume, *Essays on Method*, "his most refined published attempt at presenting his view of systematicity" (Schlutz, 2009, p. 219), helped Coleridge revise and revive his theory of imagination.

By means of dissociating himself from Wordsworth and Kant in the revised version of *The Friend* (1818), Coleridge's distinction between Reason, Understanding and Sense became relatively more settled, especially considering his theory of fixed principles in the "Essays on Method" part, whereas in 1809-10 the tripartite distinction was still immature and less integrated with his views of imagination. Having written the *Biographia* and formulated his theory in chapter 13, new implications of the distinction would follow in the *rifacciamento*. Coleridge hence made yet another diagnostic separation of Sense, Understanding and Reason as follows:

> The Sense, (vis sensitiva vel intuitiva) perceives: Vis regulatrix (the understanding, in its own peculiar operation) conceives: Vis rationalis (the Reason or rationalized understanding) *comprehends*. The first is impressed through the organs of sense; the second combines these multifarious impressions into individual *Notions,* and by reducing these notions to Rules, according to the analogy of all its former notices, constitutes *Experience:* the third subordinates both these notions and the rules of Experience to ABSOLUTE PRINCIPLES or necessary LAWS: and thus concerning objects, which our experience has proved to have *real* existence, it demonstrates moreover, in what way they are *possible,* and in doing this constitutes *Science.* (*TF* I, pp. 157-58)

Through his more settled discussion of the tripartite divison, Coleridge was able to establish the connection between Reason and secondary imagination, even though he did not explicitly mention his theory of the latter in 1818. Just as Coleridge's search for fixed principles and scientific method in 1818 aimed to explain the phenomenal reality through the spectacles of faith, the secondary imagination, as Schlutz emphasizes, "'dissolves' the habits of empirical perception in order to recreate the customary relations between thoughts and things in order to return the self to its true origins in the divine and living Law of reason" (2009, pp. 229).

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION

In the past five chapters, I have endeavoured to demonstrate the extent to which Coleridge's revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818 was informed by the collapse of his hopes for a joint *oeuvre* with Wordsworth once *The Excursion*, as part of *The Recluse* project, was published in 1814. Coleridge was aware of the implications of Kant's critical-transcendental philosophy in the process leading up to his desynonymization from Wordsworth and a joint corpus of works with his once symbiotic partner. He therefore developed his unique response to the Kantian handling of especially "language" and "imagination", which he thought resembled closely the way Wordsworth approached the terms and made use of them in not only his own poems, but also his joint venture with Coleridge, *The Recluse*. Through the works examined in the previous chapters, the *Biographia Literaria*, *Sibylline Leaves* and *The Friend*, I aimed to articulate Coleridge's desire to gradually distance himself from Wordsworth through his reactionary and dialogic revisions between 1814 and 1818.

The first chapter of my study thus primarily investigated how Coleridge's engagement with Immanuel Kant informed his authorship, in what way his response to the critical-transcendental philosophy mediated by the radical figures in his youth enabled his idiosyncratic adoption. To this end I explored how Coleridge's organic approach and his religious views, especially after the Mediterranean interlude, considerably impinged on his reaction to Wordsworth's poem of 1814, *The Excursion*, written as one of three parts of the *Recluse* project, especially on the grounds of language and imagination. Taking Wordsworth's publication of the poem as my touchstone, and considering the role of Kantian philosophy in Coleridge's assessment of his friend's poem, I analysed in the second chapter the grounds for Coleridge's re-writing practice and dialogic-comparative

interpretation of his previous self-conception in the aftermath of *The Excursion*. While Coleridge through his revisionary activity earnestly aimed to bring unity to his body of works and system of thought, the outcome was almost always yet another fragment or fragments. Drawing inspiration from Seamus Perry's description of the "muddle" (1999) at the heart of Coleridge's poetic, political, philosophical and metaphysical pursuits, I have investigated to what extent his erratic revisionary activity from 1814 to 1818 unwittingly contributed to his canon.

The following chapters engaged closely with the works through which Coleridge conducted an enormous and ingenuous revisionary activity between 1814 and 1818. In Chapter 3, I argued that the *Biographia Literaria* was fundamentally dialogical, and the dialogue was a four-sided one, involving not only Coleridge himself and his past self, but Wordsworth and *his* past self as well. The *Biographia* thus was not only a revisionary account of Coleridge's life and opinions, it also was a critique of Wordsworth's poetical works and principles, which Coleridge thought were extensively rooted in the ideas he first expressed to Wordsworth in the 1790s. The *Biographia* was as much a response to *The Excursion* as it was to the poetics in Wordsworth's *Poems* of 1815, including *Lyrical Ballads, and The Miscellaneous Pieces of the Author*. Just as *The Prelude*[236] explained how the poet projected himself as future author of *The Recluse*, the *Biographia* attempted to relate Coleridge's "practical criticism" (a term invented and first used in the volume) to his philosophico-theological odyssey in the book. I suggested that the writing of the *Biographia* embroiled Coleridge in a contradiction he had already been acutely aware of: the greatness of Wordsworth's verse was inseparable from the notion of "Unity Entire" (the ultimate inter-relatedness of all things) in which the two had once believed. But

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[236] The thirteen-book *Prelude* of 1805-06, or "The Poem to Coleridge", as it was then known.

Coleridge, as a result of his abstruse preoccupation with the Kantian critical philosophy, and the post-Kantian and Schlegelian organic synthesis, had grown discontented with the pantheism implicit in the concept of unity entire and was now committed to "Multeity in Unity". Whilst Coleridge's willingness to collaborate with Wordsworth from the initial stages of their friendship is intrinsically connected with his search for unity in religion and primacy of Reason in philosophy, his later appreciation of Multeity refers to his adoption of "both ways", as Perry calls it (1999, p. 104), within years: he acknowledged the validity of Trinitarianism and Orthodoxy while he also retained Unitarian and even pantheistic elements in his creed (even as he vociferated against Socinianism).

In Chapter 4, I investigated how Coleridge's idea of writing about (and revising) his literary life and opinions in the *Biographia* created a domino effect in his handling of the poetic collection, *Sibylline Leaves*. This was an attempt to distinguish himself from Wordsworth and establish his own reputation as a writer with critical as well as poetic genius in his own right. In addition to the case studies throughout the chapter to illustrate the objective and extent of Coleridge's revisions of his past affiliation with Wordsworth, the inclusion of a revised version of "To William Wordsworth" into the collection has also been analysed against the backdrop of Coleridge's unfavourable reaction to *The Excursion*.

In the final chapter, I dealt with Coleridge's second experiment in periodical writing after *The Watchman*, *The Friend*. I mainly examined the two versions of Coleridge's *The Friend*: The periodical version of 1809-10 and the *rifacciamento* of 1818. My argument predominantly focused on the idea that compared to the periodical, in the revised version Coleridge managed to form a more sober relationship with not only his own past but also with Wordsworth in terms of building a dialogue and realizing an alternative meaning of the "Friend". In addition, considering Coleridge's response to

Kant's transcendental philosophy in the periodical version where he gave up the earlier habit of prioritizing "Reason" and stigmatizing "Understanding" as mere sense experience from 1809 *The Friend* (Class, 2012, pp. 169-190), I have investigated how his tripartite recognition of Sense, Understanding and Reason as epistemological mediums may have eventually led Coleridge to formulate his famous theory of two imaginations and fancy later in the *Biographia Literaria*.

In a broad sense, this dissertation significantly contributes to the revaluation of Coleridge's joint project with Wordsworth and the reasons behind its dissolution. It is now common knowledge in Coleridge studies thanks to McFarland (1981) that the symbiotic relationship between these two important figures of the English Romantic Literature existed during the *annus mirabilis*. I observed, however, that for as long as their joint project remained to be completed, their symbiosis (though not actively) continued to be there for Coleridge and Wordsworth. As a result, my dissertation exhibits a close reading of the works Coleridge heavily revised between 1814 and 1818 from the perspective of Coleridge's theological and transcendent conception of language and imagination vis-à-vis Kant's transcendental method of philosophy.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that Coleridge scholars have not yet sufficiently explored the definitive role of Coleridge's dialogic and reactionary revisions in the post-*Excursion* period of his career (compared with the symbiotic reactions prior to it). Much work remains to be done if we are to fully exhaust the ways Coleridge and Wordsworth mutually defined their authorship both during their collaboraton in *The Recluse* project and after Coleridge's bitter frustration with it.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG IN DEUTSCHER SPRACHE

Die Dissertation untersucht Samuel Taylor Coleridges Praxis der Selbstredaktion in den Jahren von 1814 bis 1818 und beleuchtet dabei die zentrale Rolle, die William Wordsworths *The Excursion*, 1814 als Teil von *The Recluse* erschienen, in der Herausbildung von Coleridges Œuvre einnimmt. Die Arbeit entwickelt ihre zentrale These zu Coleridges Überarbeitungspraxis durch eine detaillierte Analyse der Verfahren, über die Coleridge aufhörte, *durch* Wordsworth zu sprechen. Ich beziehe mich dabei in erster Linie auf die Überarbeitungen von *Biographia Literaria* (1817), *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) und dem 1818 erschienenen *rifacciamento* zu dem Periodikum *The Friend*, das ursprünglich 1809–1810 publiziert worden war.

Vor dem Hintergrund von Coleridges in den 1790er- und 1800er-Jahren neu aufgekommener und sich später weiterentwickelnder Rezeption von Immanuel Kants kritischer Philosophie werde ich argumentieren, dass sich die „radikale Differenz" zwischen Coleridge und Wordsworth, die seit den *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) und dem „Preface" (1800) bestand, weiter verstärkte, nachdem es Wordsworth nicht gelungen war, das groß angelegte Konzept eines „first genuine philosophical poem" – *The Recluse* – zu vollenden. Insbesondere nachdem Coleridge 1807 *The Prelude* gehört hatte, enttäuschte *The Excursion* nach den Maßstäben seiner „vergleichenden Kritik" seine lang gehegten Erwartungen. Während sein organisches Weltbild einen aktiven Geist kannte, der nach universaler „Wahrheit" sowohl durch innere synthetisierende Kräfte als auch empirische Naturgesetze strebt, gründete sich Wordsworths Gedicht auf ein obskur-labiles Fundament zwischen Außenwelt und Selbst. Coleridges aus seinen eigenen Theorien zu Sprache und Einbildungskraft erwachsene Enttäuschung über *The Excursion* und die nachfolgende Loslösung von Wordsworth und ihrem gemeinsamen Werk verschafften ihm letztendlich die notwendige Autonomie, die einerseits einen nüchternen Blick auf die eigene Vergangenheit und andererseits eine dialogische Freundschaft zu Wordsworth ermöglichten, innerhalb derer Coleridge die Bedeutsamkeit erkannte, *zu* einem Freund zu sprechen.