

Imagination and Creation

—Coleridge's Idea of Symbolic Expression—

Tomohisa Hirose

Imagination and Creation

—Coleridge's Idea of Symbolic Expression—

Tomohisa Hirose

Preface —Imagination Lost and Discovered—

I. Mathesis, Symbol and Imagination

II. Reason, Idea and Imagination

III. Imagination, Symbol and Expression

Conclusion —The Ways of Symbolic Expression—

Preface —Imagination Lost and Discovered—

It was really not so long that Samuel Taylor Coleridge, an English romantic who presented brilliant images in his fantastic poems, was blessed with poetic inspiration. At the end of his most fruitful five years (1795-1800), he was compelled to give up completing "Cristabel", and in a letter to James Webbe Tobin dated September 17, 1800, he said:

I abandon Poetry altogether—I leave the higher and deeper Kinds to Wordsworth, the delightful, popular and simply dignified to Southey; and reserve for myself the honorable attempt to make others feel and understand their writings, as they deserve to be felt and understood.

(Collected Letters, I, p. 623)

In this passage Coleridge rather self-scorningly deplures what he has lost, but at the same time he seems to have found a possibility in another faculty of his mind. He must be hoping to grasp by this faculty the essence of what he has lost, and to recover it in another way. Almost in parallel with this letter he wrote to William Godwin, saying:

I wish you to write a book on the power of words, and the processes by which human feelings form affinities with them—in short, I wish you to philosophize Horne Tooke's System, and to solve the great Questions—whether there be reason to hold, that an action bearing all the semblance of pre-designing Consciousness may yet be simply organic, and whether a series of such actions are possible—and close on the heels of this question would follow the old 'Is Logic the Essence of Thinking?' in other words—Is thinking impossible without arbitrary signs? and—how far is the word 'arbitrary' a misnomer? Are not words etc. parts and germinations of the plant? What is the Law of their Growth?—In something of this order I would endeavor to destroy the old antithesis of Words and Things, elevating, as it were, words into Things, and living Things too. All the nonsense of vibrations etc. you would of course dismiss.

(Collected Letters, I, pp. 625-6)

In this letter Coleridge presents a model of his ideal language from which we can guess what he thinks poetic language should be. According to this model, language should not be an aggregate of arbitrary signs, but a growing process of 'living Things' in which the laws of organic nature and generative thinking are united in one. Here Coleridge seems to have took leave of empiricist view of language, and gained insight into what should be the essence of his poetic language. But at this stage his idea of language still lacked metaphysical background, that is, the reflection on the mental structure which actualizes and supports such language. This is most clearly shown by the fact that in this letter he recommends Godwin 'to philosophize Horne Tooke's System' which could not in any sense come to terms with the direction his own system is to take.

But by as early as March next year, Coleridge seems to have

reached the basic understanding of the nature of mental element behind his poetic language. During the time he intensively read the works of philosophers since Bacon and Descartes, especially Leibnitz and Kant, as is shown by his letters.

...to do what my heart within me burns to do—that is, concenter my free mind to the affinities of the Feelings with Words and Ideas under the title of ‘Concerning Poetry and the nature of Pleasures derived from it.’—I have faith, that I do understand this subject / and I am sure, that if I write what I ought to do on it, the Work would supersede all the Books of Metaphysics hitherto written / and all the Books of Morals too.

(To Humphry Davy, Feb. 3, 1801. Collected Letters, II, p. 671)

Change of Ministry interests me not—I turn at times half reluctantly from Leibnitz or Kant even to read a smoking new newspaper / such a purus putus metaphysicus am I become.

(To Thomas Poole, Feb. 13, 1801. Collected Letters, II, p. 676)

With these readings he seems to have overcome the early influence upon him of empiricist view of the mind especially that of Hartley.

If I do not greatly delude myself, I have not only completely extricated the notions of Time, and Space; but overthrown the doctrine of Association, as taught by Hartley, and with it all the irreligious metaphysics of modern Infidels—especially, the doctrine of Necessity.

(To Thomas Poole, March 16, 1801. Collected Letters, II, p. 706)

And he went so far as to call Locke ‘a perfect Little-ist’, and further he criticized Newton as ‘a mere materialist’, for:

Mind in his system is always passive—a lazy Looker-on on an external World. If the mind be not passive, if it be indeed made in God's Image, and 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.

(To Thomas Poole, March 23, 1801. Collected Letters, II, p. 709)

Any system must be built upon the activeness of the mind made in 'the Image of the Creator'. So Coleridge's metaphysical speculation was directed to the searching of a system based on this activeness of the mind, and he found mathematics as an ideal example of such a system, it seems. He wrote to Godwin on March 25, 1801, saying:

In my long Illness I had compelled into hours of Delight many a sleepless, painful hour of Darkness by chasing down metaphysical Game—and since then I have continued the Hunt, till I found myself unaware at the Root of Pure Mathematics—and up that tall smooth Tree, whose few poor Branches are all at it's very summit, am I climbing by pure adhesive strength of arms and thighs—still slipping down, still renewing my ascent.

(Collected Letters, II, pp. 713-4)

He found mathematics after 'chasing down metaphysical game', and tried to climb to 'its very summit'. What did he see in this process? In the same letter he says:

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 and mitred with Flame.

(Ibid., p. 714)

Here at last Coleridge reached 'imagination', and recognized it as the mental element of 'the Poet'. And it was metaphysical speculation especially that on 'Pure Mathematics' that led him to this recognition, we can guess. Coleridge must have noticed some substantial relation between mathematics based on the activeness of the mind and imagination as the mental element of poetic language. Then what?

From that time on Coleridge's metaphysical speculation continued to elucidate the essence of imagination, and mathematics was always to give special light upon this speculation, it seems. Then how?

I. Mathesis, Symbol and Imagination

First in this chapter we shall consider what Coleridge thought to be the essence of mathematics, and what ideas Coleridge gained from mathematics, especially in relation to imagination.

In his "Philosophical Lectures" Coleridge refers approvingly to what he considers to be Pythagoras' conception of number that number is 'the best symbol, ..., of the representation of the laws of nature considered as homogeneous with the pure reason in man' (II, p. 108).

As the reason of number being such symbol, Coleridge also refers to what he thinks to be Pythagoras' ideas, that:

in numbers considered philosophically there was a perpetual reference to a unity that was yet infinite, and yet that in each number there was an integral or individual that still contained in its nature something progressive, that went beyond it.

(Loc. cit.)

These quotations show that reflecting on number, Coleridge

gained the idea of the nature of symbol. Symbol must first be able to represent both the laws of nature and the pure reason in man. And in this expressiveness symbol bears in more purified form the essence of Coleridge's poetic language in which the laws of organic nature and generative thinking must be united in one.

What is explained in the second quotation is another essential quality of symbol which makes its expressiveness possible. Each number, being itself an individual part of the whole, can represent (refer to) the essence of the whole, a unity, though infinite, because the essence of a number is the integration of its relations with other numbers ordered progressively, and numbers, thus related with each other, constitute an organically united whole, though infinite. This means that a symbol must be a part representing the whole as its essential part, and that for this symbols must constitute an organic whole. We could thus see that to Coleridge mathematics offered number as the best model of symbol from which he could construct his own idea of symbol. And it is because number has these qualities as 'the best symbol' that mathematics as a system of numbers can be:

not only the first pure science but supplies to all other sciences the most perfect model and exemplar.

(Collected Works 13, Logic, p. 90)

About geometry, also an expression of the relations translatable to those between numbers, Coleridge states the same thing:

That, which we find in ourselves, is (*gradu mutato*) the substance and the life of all our knowledge. ...The human mind is the compass, in which the laws and actuations of all outward essences are revealed as the dips and declinations. (The application of Geometry to the forces and movements of the material world is both proof and instance.) The fact therefore,

that the mind of man in its own primary and constituent forms represents the laws of nature, is a mystery which of itself should suffice to make us religious, ...

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman's Manual, Appendix C, pp. 78-9)

Geometry is what 'we find in ourselves' as 'the mind of man in its own primary and constituent forms', so it can represent the laws of nature. Thus he says:

True natural philosophy is comprized in the study of the science and language of symbols. The power delegated to nature is all in every part: and by a symbol I mean, not a metaphor or allegory or any other figure of speech or form of fancy, but an actual and essential part of that, the whole of which it represents.

(Ibid., p. 79)

Now, as these quotations suggest, the reflection on mathematics seems to have given Coleridge not only the insight into the expressive nature of symbol, but also the idea on the mental element behind symbol i.e. symbol making power of the mind which finds in itself 'its own primary and constituent forms'. About the construction of mathematics Coleridge says that mathematics has:

for its department the acts and constructions of the necessary imagination, and is subdivided into Geometry as the Correspondent to Space or the Outer Sense, and Arithmetic correspondent to Time, or the Inner Sense: while Algebra may be considered as the conversion of the one into the other by principles of equation and compensation.

(Collected Works 4, The Friend, I, p. 440, f.n.)

This suggests that mathematics is the product of the active and constructive power of imagination. Coleridge also says:

To the original construction of the line I can be compelled by a line drawn before me on the slate or on sand. The stroke thus drawn is indeed not the line itself, but only the image or picture of the line. It is not from it, that we first learn to know the line; but, on the contrary, we bring this stroke to the original line generated by the act of imagination; otherwise we could not define it as without breadth or thickness.

(*Biographia Literaria*, I, p. 172)

The original line is generated by the act of imagination, so it is possible to define it as without breadth or thickness.

the very words, "if these two surfaces cover each other they are equal", have no proper or immediate reference to the bodies. ...the true meaning of the words refers to the constructive faculty itself, not to the image, no, not even to the image in the fancy, which is no other than the mental diagram, both it and that drawn on the slate or paper being alike pictures of the mathematical line generated by the mathematical points and of the mathematical surfaces generated by the lines, which, as the very definitions are sufficient to show, are acts and products of the active and productive imagination.

(*Collected Works* 13, *Logic*, pp. 222-3)

Not only definitions (which are really a system of relations in themselves) but also the construction of mathematical relations itself depends on the active and productive power of imagination. So the whole system of mathematics is in fact the product of imagination, and this is enough to present imagination as the power of the mind which produces symbols as an organic whole.

From what Coleridge said on mathematics hitherto quoted, we can say that speculation on mathematics not only led Coleridge to the essence of symbol, but also to that of imagination. The essence of symbol is its expressiveness, and it is also the essence of poetic language. And the essence of imagination is its activeness and productiveness which, by finding in the mind its 'primary and consituant forms', creates symbols, and gives them that expressiveness. There are such substantial relations between these essences, and we shall see how they are related in the whole structure of Coleridge's view of the mind.

II. Reason, Idea and Imagination

When we consider the development of the basic framework of Coleridge's view of the mind, we find the particular significance of his lectures given at Bristol in 1795. It must be on the basis of the insight into the mind gained in these lectures that he could later set himself free from the influence of empiricist view of the mind and the mechanical view of nature by reading Leibnitz and Kant.

In the first of the series of lectures on politics and religion, he says, 'By Deity we mean a creative or at least an organizing Intelligence' (Lectures 1795, pp. 104-5). And in the fifth lecture he interprets the opening passage of "St. John's Gospel" as follows:

St. John asserts, that in the beginning there was Intelligence, that this Intelligence was together with God, not an emanation from him, and that this Intelligence was God himself. "All things were made by it and without this Intelligence was not anything made that was made", ...

(Collected Works 1, Lectures 1795: On Politics and Religion, p. 200)

And further:

The texts, "It was in the World and the World was made by it, and the World knew it not" and "it was made Flesh and dwelt among us" imply—that the divine Intelligence never ceased to govern the world it had created, ...

(Loc. cit.)

From this what we may call neo-Platonic interpretation of "St. John's Gospel" we can grasp what would be the fundamental structure of Coleridge's view of the mind. First there exists an active, creative intelligence as the original divine mind. And it dwells both in nature and human mind. So nature and human mind have active and creative intellectual principles derived from God as their essence.

This view of the mind of Coleridge's must have been formed under the influence of Ralph Cudworth's works he read just before his Bristol lectures, but he kept its basic framework all through his life. In his plans of "Logosophia" of his later days which remained plans at last, Coleridge always gave a central position to this neo-Platonic interpretation of "St. John's Gospel".

I am about to put to the press a large volume on the Logos, or the communicative intelligence in nature and in man, together with, and as preliminary to, a Commentary on the Gospel of St. John; and in this work I have labored to give real and adequate definitions of all the component faculties of our moral and intellectual being, exhibiting constructively the origin, development, and destined functions of each.

(*Biographia Literaria*, II, p. 230)

Then in the development of this view of the mind, how would imagination be placed in its basic framework? For this placement

it was necessary to further analyse the principles of the workings of intelligence. And Coleridge could find the ground for this analysis in the critical philosophy of Kant, especially his limitation of the capacity of understanding. From this limitation Coleridge could make a distinction between reason and understanding in his own manner. Concerning this distinction he says:

What is the difference between the Reason and the Understanding? I would reply, that that Faculty of the Soul which apprehends and retains the mere notices of Experience, as for instance that such an object has a triangular figure, that it is of such or such a magnitude, of such and such a color, and consistency, with the anticipation of meeting the same under the same circumstances, in other words, all the mere *φαινόμενα* of our nature, we may call the Understanding. But all such notices, as are characterized by Universality and Necessity, as that every Triangle must in all places at all times have it's two sides greater than its third—and which are evidently not the effect of any Experience, but the condition of all Experience, and that indeed without which Experience itself would be inconceivable, we may call Reason—and this class of knowledge was called by the Ancients *Νοούμενα* in distinction from the former, or *φαινόμενα*. Reason is therefore most eminently the Revelation of an immortal soul, and it's best Synonime—it is the *forma formans*, which contains in itself the law of its own conceptions.

(To Thomas Clarkson, Oct. 13, 1806. Collected Letters, II, p. 1198)

Coleridge first considered understanding as the faculty which deals chiefly with phenomena. It extracts and abstracts various factors in phenomena, and relates them with each other. And if understanding be like this, it may be possible to found Newtonian

system on understanding, a faculty of the essentially active mind, not on 'the passiveness of the mind' in empiricism. But understanding cannot part with phenomena. It can 'generalize and arrange the phaenomena of perception' (The Friend, I. p. 156), grasp them under the category of sameness, and make use of them by its faculty of 'selecting and adapting means to proximate ends' (Lay Sermons, p. 61), but it cannot touch the reality, the original causes of the phenomena, in the end.

Thus limiting the capacity of understanding, Coleridge could furnish reason with what he considered as the essential qualities of the mind, the absolute activeness and creativity derived from the divine mind. Reason as the forma formans must be the active process which 'contains in itself the law of its own conceptions'. While reason is 'the knowledge of the laws of the Whole considered as One' (Lay Sermons, p. 59), its office is:

to bring a unity into all our conceptions and several knowledges. On this all system depends; and without this we could reflect connectedly neither on nature nor on our own minds.

(Aids to Reflection, p. 220)

Thus in reason act and object are integrated. So:

Reason, in the highest sense of the term, as the focal point of the Theoric and Practical, or as both in One, is the Source of Ideas and conversely, an idea is a self-affirming Truth at once theoric and practical, which the reason presents to itself as the form of itself.

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman's Manual, Appendix C, p. 61, f.n.)

Reason, when it works actively and creatively according to its essence, brings about ideas, presents them to itself as the form

of itself, and thus unites itself with itself into a whole. So naturally ideas thus produced are 'not merely formal but dynamic' (Loc. cit.). And this productive essence of reason is most typically exemplified in mathematics.

By the pure Reason, I mean 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; ...

(Collected Works 4, The Friend, I, p. 177, f.n.)

Now it is evident that to Coleridge imagination is nothing other than this active and productive aspect of reason.

that which is neither a Sensation or a Perception, that which is neither individual (i.e. a sensible Intuition) nor general (i.e. a conception) which neither refers to outward Facts nor yet is abstracted from the Forms of perception contained in the Understanding; but which is an educt of the Imagination actuated by the pure Reason, to which there neither is or can be an adequate correspondent in the world of the senses—this and this alone is=AN IDEA. 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, ...

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman's Manual, Appendix E, pp. 113-4)

Reason works actively and creatively as imagination which produces living ideas. This is how imagination is placed in the basic framework of Coleridge's view of the mind.

III. Imagination, Symbol and Expression

Imagination is that energetic form of reason which produces ideas. This productive essence of imagination is further explained in its two aspects.

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.

(Biographia Literaria, I, p. 202)

In the act of imagination perception and creation are the same process in which the active, productive principle is the intelligence derived from Deity, an organizing Intelligence, and also dwelling in nature. So ideas produced in this process may well be 'CONSTITUTIVE, and one with the power and Life of Nature, according to Plato, and Plotinus'.

...every principle is actualized by an idea; and every idea is living, productive, partaketh of infinity, and containeth an endless power of semination.

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman's Manual, pp. 23-4)

And he further explains this nature of ideas, referring to what he considers as Pythagoras' thought that:

what in men the ideas were, as we should say, those in the world were the laws; that the ideas partook according to the power of the man, of a constitutive character, in the same

manner as the laws did in external nature.

(Philosophical Lectures, II, pp. 107-8)

Then in practical level how is the production of such living ideas by imagination realized? It must be by way of the expression by symbols. If we remember here what Coleridge thinks to be the essential quality of symbol i.e. 'the representation of the laws of nature considered homogeneous with the pure reason in man', we can see that Coleridge considers symbols as the best expression of ideas. About this he says:

An IDEA, in the highest sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a symbol; ...

(Biographia Literaria, I, p. 100)

To express an idea in the highest sense, a living constitutive idea, a symbol must be of the same quality. This quality a symbol has, because, as we have seen in the case of mathematics, it is 'an actual and essential part of that, the whole of which it represents', and for this symbols constitute an organic whole. And as we have also seen in the case of mathematics, the active power of imagination always produces symbols as a system, for imagination is:

that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the Reason in Images of the Sense, and organizing (as it were) the flux of the Senses by the permanence and self-circling energies of the Reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the conductors.

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman Manual, p. 29)

Thus symbols are born as a system, and it is in and as a system that symbols can be the expression of living ideas.

But expression has at the same time the aspect of fixation other than that of creation. It is so, because symbols are formed with 'Images of the Sense' as media. With this fixation ideas settle and individualize themselves, with which symbols lose systematic relations and become arbitrary signs. This happens, because there exists in the mind a tendency towards fixation. And it is the understanding that works in this direction. Understanding is 'that Faculty of the Soul which apprehends and retains the mere notices of Experience, ..., with the anticipation of meeting the same under the same circumstances'. And in this direction also works 'the imagination in its passive sense', which Coleridge would rather call 'Fancy', and this:

may not inaptly compared to the Gorgon Head, which looked death into everything—and this not by accident, but from the nature of the faculty itself, the province of which is to give consciousness to the Subject by presenting to it its conceptions objectively, ...

(The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, III, #4066)

Because of this faculty 'without which there would be no fixation, consequently, no distinct perception or conception' (*ibid.*), it opens the way to understanding. Fancy:

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; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word Choice. But equally with the ordinary memory the Fancy must receive all its material ready made from the law of association.

(*Biographia Literaria*, I, p. 202)

So understanding can be 'the power of generalizing the motives of the Sense, and of judging of the objective reality of all Appearances by their reducibility to a genus or class', and be 'the faculty of selecting and adapting means to proximate ends' (*Lay Sermons*, pp. 60-1). And this process from fancy to understanding is a necessary one so far as man lives in this world physically and materially. Our life is surrounded by fixed ideas and individualized symbols.

The production of living ideas expressed in systematized symbols, therefore, should begin with the breaking of such fixation. And this is the function of what Coleridge calls 'the secondary imagination'.

The secondary Imagination 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 recreate; 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.

(*Biographia Literaria*, I, p. 202)

Fixation means separation and individualization, that is, the losing of relation and organic unity. The secondary imagination, by way of dissolution and unification, causes relations in this state of fixedness and separatedness, and brings symbols and therefore ideas into an organic unity. It is this process of 'recreation' that is the reality of the activities of mathematicians, poets and artists. The primary imagination is nothing but the abstraction of the creative aspect of these activities.

Conclusion —The Ways of Symbolic Expression—

Coleridge recognized the death of his poetic mind as the loss of imagination, and tried to elucidate the nature of imagination by way of metaphysical speculation. As a result of it, he found that imagination is the active aspect of reason whose essence is the creativity derived from divine intelligence. Reason, by its activities, produces living ideas as the form of itself, and presents them to itself. In this creative process, imagination, as an energy of reason, plays the very role of production by means of symbolic expression. As for reason in which activities and their objects are united, its energetic side is imagination, and its expressive side is symbols.

Then what possibilities did Coleridge find in this concept of symbolic expression? How far is its effective range in the consideration of human expression exemplified by the creation of poems? Coleridge thought that he could establish a criterion for the evaluation of expressions by further analysing the expressive faculty of symbol especially in the comparison with allegory. About allegory and symbol he says:

Now an Allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses; the principal being more worthless even than its phantom proxy, both alike unsubstantial, and the former shapeless to boot. On the other hand a Symbol is characterized by a translucence of the Special in the Individual or of the General in the Especial or of the Universal in the General. Above all by the translucence of the Eternal through and in the Temporal. It always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representative.

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman's Manual, p. 30)

And in the seventh of "Lectures on Literature" he repeats the same explanation with an example.

The Symbolical cannot, perhaps, be better defined in distinction from the Allegorical, than that it is always itself a part of that, of the whole of which it is the representative.— 'Here comes a sail,'—(that is, a ship) is a symbolical expression. 'Behold our lion!' when we speak of some gallant soldier, is allegorical.

(Collected Works 5, Lectures 1808-1819: On Literature, II, pp. 417-8)

What Coleridge tries to say in this seemingly strange example can be understood by taking into consideration the very essence of symbol, that is, the expression of the whole as its part. Calling a ship 'a sail' may seem to be an impoverished expression at first glance, but in fact doesn't it express the whole situation related to the ship more imaginatively? We can imagine its class, its shape, its position and motion, and even the psychology of the people seeing it. If the words were those uttered by the king of Athens waiting for the return of Theseus on the Acropolis, there could be no alternative expression for them.

Meanwhile, calling a soldier a lion may be thought to be an expression of the whole of him, but is actually a mere abstraction of and a translation into 'picture-language' of an aspect of the soldier, bravery. Therefore what 'a lion' expresses does not expand beyond his bravery.

As another example of the symbolic expression, Coleridge refers to the Bible, and calling its histories 'the living educts of the Imagination', says:

the Sacred Book is worthily intitled the WORD OF GOD. Hence too, its contents present to us the stream of time continuous as Life and a symbol of Eternity, inasmuch as the Past and Future are virtually contained in the Present. According therefore to our relative position on its banks the Sacred History becomes prophetic, the Sacred Prophecies historical, while the power and substance of both inhere in its Laws, its Promises, and its Comminations. In the Scriptures therefore both Facts and Persons must of necessity have a two-fold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and a perpetual, a particular and a universal application. They must be at once Portraits and Ideals.

(Collected Works 6, Lay Sermons, The Statesman's Manual, pp. 29-30)

What Coleridge means here is that as the Bible is the words of God and expresses God's design with its whole words, its every individual person or event is given an essential position in the whole. So even a wicked person is a necessary part to express God's supreme good. The reason Coleridge could recognize this very essence of the expression of the Bible is that he read it in the light of his concept of symbol, that is, a part expressing the whole. And as is shown in this case of the Bible, the whole expressed by its part must be an organic unity.

Here we may repeat what Coleridge said on mathematics, that because of the fundamental quality of symbol, number as the best symbol can express 'the laws of nature considered homogeneous with the pure reason in man'. Poets and artists must surely aim at such expression. So Coleridge distinguishes 'imitation' from 'copy', saying:

The artist must imitate that which is within the thing, that which is active through form and figure, and discourses to us

by symbols—the Natur-geist, or spirit of nature, as we consciously imitate those whom we love; for so only can he hope to produce any work truly natural in the object and truly human in its effect.

(*Biographia Literaria*, II, p. 259)

In the activities of imagination where perception and creation are the same process, for one to recognize and imitate the spirit of nature through symbols as its expression is none other than to express his internal living ideas by means of symbols. Imitation is creation:

If the artist copies the mere nature, the *natura naturata*, what idle rivalry? If he proceeds only from a given form, which is supposed to answer to the notion of beauty, what an emptiness, what an unreality there always is in his productions, ..., you must master the essence, the *natura naturans*, which presupposes a bond between nature in the higher sense and the soul of man.

(*Biographia Literaria*, II, p. 257)

Now we should come back to that basic framework of Coleridge's view of the mind shown in his interpretation of "St. John's Gospel". First of all there exists the divine mind whose essence is an active creative intelligence. Nature and human mind, both the creation of Deity, have also an active creative intelligence derived from Deity as their essence.

Imagination is the energy which causes resonance between these three spiritual beings, and symbol is the music emanating from this resonance.

Bibliography

Coleridge, S. T., *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. K. Coburn and B. Winer, Vols. 1-7, 10, 12, 13, and 14, 1969-.

- Collected Letters of S. T. Coleridge, ed. E. L. Griggs, 6 vols., 1966.
- Imagination in Coleridge, ed. J. S. Hill, 1978.
- The Notebooks of S. T. Coleridge, ed. Kathleen Coburn, 3 Double vols., 1957-73.
- The Portable Coleridge, ed. I. A. Richards, 1950.
- Aids to Reflection (Bohn's Popular Libr.), 1913.
- Biographia Literaria, ed. J. Shawcross, 2 vols., 1907.
- The Philosophical Lectures of S. T. Coleridge, ed. K. Coburn, 1949.
- Table Talk and Omnia of S. T. Coleridge, 1917.
- Cudworth, R., The True Intellectual System of the Universe, 1678.
- A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality, 1731.
- Barfield, O., What Coleridge Thought, 1972.
- Barth, J. R., The Symbolic Imagination—Coleridge and the Romantic Tradition—, 1977.
- Beer, J., Coleridge's Poetic Intelligence, 1977.
- Brett, R. L., Fancy and Imagination, 1969.
- Burwick, F., ed. Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, 1989.
- Dekker, G., ed. Coleridge and the Literature of Sensibility, 1978.
- Gallant, C., ed. Coleridge's Theory of Imagination Today, 1989.
- Hamilton, P., Coleridge on Poetics, 1982.
- Hawkes, T., Metaphor, 1972.
- Jasper, D., ed. The Interpretation of Belief, 1986.
- Kato, R., Coleridge's Philosophy of Language, 1981.
- Kessler, E., Coleridge's Metaphors of Being, 1979.
- Levere, T. H., Poetry Realized in Nature, 1981.
- Marks, E. R., Coleridge on the Language of Verse, 1981.
- McFarland, T., Coleridge and the Pantheist Tradition, 1969.
- McKusick, J. C., Coleridge's Philosophy of Language, 1986.
- Milleur, J. P., Vision and Revision—Coleridge's Art of Immanence—, 1982.
- Modiano, R., Coleridge and the Concept of Nature, 1985.
- Swiattecks, M. J., The Idea of the Symbol, 1980.
- Taylor, A., Coleridge's Defense of the Human, 1986.
- Warnock, M., Imagination, 1976.
- Wheeler, K. M., The Creative Mind in Coleridge's Poetry, 1981.