COLERIDGE'S CRITICISM OF SHAKESPEARE
AS ETHOLOGY AND JUDGMENT

by

Sharon Gail Fawcett
B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1970

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in the Department
of
English

© SHARON GAIL FAWCETT 1974
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
April 1974

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.
APPROVAL

Name: Sharon Gail Fawcett
Degree: Master of Arts
Title of Thesis: Coleridge's Criticism of Shakespeare as Ethology and Judgment

Examining Committee:

Chairman: Jared Curtis

__________________
Rob Dunham
Senior Supervisor

__________________
Gerald Newman

__________________
Walter Lever

__________________
Tony Bellette
External Examiner
Associate Professor
University of Calgary, Calgary

Date Approved: May 6, 1974
PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Dissertation:

Coleridge's Criticism of Shakespeare as Ethology and Judgment

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Author:

(signature)

(Sharon Fawcett)

(name)

June 21, 1974

(date)
It is my hypothesis that Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism is an ethological and judgmental mode of criticism. This criticism is an ethology inasmuch as its energies are consistently directed by, and directed toward, Coleridge's sense of the "organic form" of Shakespeare's plays. Ethos applies widely to Coleridge's sense of the nature of organic form, his definition of imagination, his principles of method in thought, and the quality of his self-declared "genial" (i.e. generative) criticism. Coleridge's analysis of Shakespeare's characters as both individuated persona and formal contributions toward the "organic wholeness" of the plays, is an ethological mode of critical thought insofar as it attempts to balance and reconcile form and character. Judgment enters Coleridge's declared critical intentions, as well as being a separate function of the ethical in ethology.

The first chapter is concerned with Coleridge's sense of organic form, and moves to his theory of imagination and his principles of method in order to conclude that the nature of ethos is implicit in Coleridge's summary intention to prove, by illustration of the principles of imaginative thought, that Shakespeare's judgment was equal to his genius. The second and third chapters deal respectively with Coleridge's critical commentary upon
King Lear and The Tempest. In these chapters, the particulars of Coleridge’s criticism are placed within the broad outline of ethology presented in the first chapter. Coleridge’s observations are criticized and his commentary is augmented by my own exegesis where I have felt such criticism and/or exegesis to be appropriate. The concluding chapter is summary and clarification according to Coleridge’s "Principles of Genial Criticism" and tentative suggestions are made regarding the presence of the ethical in ethology, and its relation to aesthetics and metaphysics. An Appendix is attached which describes the extant state of the text of Coleridge’s Shakespearean criticism, and some of the problems attendant upon it.
Dedicated to the fortunes of Robin Blaser,
and to my son, Jesse Charles Fawcett.
"Space, Validity and Pleasure"
Grateful acknowledgment is extended to the members of my supervisory committee: Gerald Newman, Walter Lever and especially Rob Dunham, for their encouragement, patience and kind interest.

The longsuffering members of my household and the good friends outside it who gave me time, space and energy, have my eternal gratitude. (They know who they are.)
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**PRELIMINARY PAGES**  \( \text{pp. } i - viii \)

**Chapter One:**  
**COLERIDGE'S CRITICISM OF FORM**  \( \text{p. } 1 \)

**Chapter Two:**  
**COLERIDGE ON KING LEAR**  \( \text{p. } 40 \)  
**Synopsis**  \( \text{p. } 70 \)

**Chapter Three:**  
**COLERIDGE ON THE TEMPEST**  \( \text{p. } 74 \)  
**Synopsis**  \( \text{p. } 101 \)

**Chapter Four:**  
**GENIAL CRITICISM AND THE NECESSARY STATEMENT**  \( \text{p. } 109 \)

**LIST OF REFERENCES**  \( \text{p. } 149 \)

**A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**  \( \text{p. } 156 \)
Chapter One

COLERIDGE'S CRITICISM OF FORM

For Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare I take the idea of form as a point of departure. When Coleridge speaks of the two conflicting principles of the free life and the confining form in his essay "On the Principles of Genial Criticism" he is speaking about principles which are, for him, ideally reconcilable and innately relative. That everything is relative is neither news nor absolutely true, but the term "correlative" appears in Coleridge's theoretical writings to mean the relationship of the parts to each other and to the whole of a thing, whether it is a painting, a tree, a play of Shakespeare's or a philosophical construct. The idea of form, then, begins with relationship, and relationship itself is at the source of procreative activity. Coleridge tells us that the methodical mind contemplates the relations of things, and that the beauty of a thing created by a methodical mind consists in the held form of its interior relationships: "Multeity in Unity." Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare's plays begins and ultimately ends with his notion of the correlative activity of character, speech
and action within the forms denominated by the titles of Shakespeare's plays. My intention to discuss Coleridge's criticism of *King Lear* and *The Tempest* is for purposes of comparing Coleridge's apprehension of the tragic vision with his apprehension of the comic vision, although it must be immediately stated that the visionary content of Shakespeare's plays -- and by visionary I mean the world envisioned by the process of its enactment within the play -- is not the direction of Coleridge's critical intent. But however Coleridge may attempt to confine himself to "illustration of principles" (by which he means formal principles) in his criticism of Shakespeare, this declared confinement nevertheless converges upon and affects the meanings of the plays to an extent I shall describe later.

The voices of Coleridgean scholarship join in unison to declare that Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is formal in nature and intent, regardless of its sometimes disparaging description as character or psychological criticism. That is to say, it has been shown that Coleridge's criticism of characters is essentially a criticism of their formal contribution to the play, and not of their personalities apart from the formal demands of the text. The characters in a play are for Coleridge one or
many of the components of the wholeness or harmony of the play, and their function as parts in relation to each other and to the whole is the function Coleridge seeks to articulate. Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is also generally considered to be great, and his greatness as a critic is partly a function of his formalist expedience and partly a function of his greatness as a thinker generally. Coleridge's critical limitations exist inadvertently alongside his critical greatness for the same reasons, and my occasional exposition of the limitations is not intended to diminish the greatness but rather to objectify the criticism both as artifact and as its own subject.

For exemplary and comparative purposes I offer the propositions of Barbara Hardy and M. M. Badawi in two separate articles from the publication Essays in Criticism. Badawi's article, entitled "Coleridge's Formal Criticism of Shakespeare's Plays," is professed to be complementary to the issues raised earlier in Hardy's "I have a smack of Hamlet": Coleridge and Shakespeare's Characters." That the word "formal" enters Badawi's title as complementary to what Hardy sees as Coleridge's sense of character, reduces the argument promulgated by both to Coleridge's sense of character as a "part of the structure [of the
play], not as its psychological content." Hardy proposes that Coleridge's sense of structure or form is the derivative impulse governing his sense of a character's placement within that form, that is, "the sense of form directs the psychological analysis." Badawi is thereafter inspired to describe what Coleridge perceives the structure or form of the play to be. Neither issue can be separated from the "whole" issue of Coleridge's sense of form, and Coleridge's "sense of form," a phrase over which the eyes and the mind pass quickly, is in fact the content of Coleridge's lifelong thought about the nature, the vision, the boundaries and the method of Imagination. Both Hardy and Badawi in their separate papers use the terms "form," "formal," and "structure" almost interchangeably. I shall therefore depart momentarily from the content of these essays in order to describe the world encompassed by the word "form" when it is used in connection with the imagination and with Coleridge's thought about the nature of imagination.

The forms created by the Imagination, and the forms governing Imagination's activity, are theses and antitheses of a dialectical recognition which seeks philosophical shape in Coleridge's prose writings, of which the
critical writings as such comprise only a fraction. One looks to Coleridge's poems for the synthesis created from the struggle between the forms given to Imagination and the forms Imagination discloses and discovers as it attends to the forms which inhabit its own activity. The meaning of the word *imago* and the particular activity of metamorphosis enter our word imagination (both etymologically and entomologically) as the transformation visibly effected by the emergence of the butterfly from its own chrysalis, and becomes the image of what it is to make forms. And a poem, as an activity of *poesis*, is a making. Information is the genetic principle of transformation: the butterfly is the awakening and synthesis of the genetic principles contained within its own being. The form from which the butterfly gives birth to itself is in its own less remarkable way the product of another birth, another set of metaphorical activities in which birth and death are the necessary repetitions of one another. Metamorphosis is simply and profoundly participant in the inexorable laws of the natural world and "Nature itself is to a religious observer the art of God," Coleridge tells us. Coleridge's sense of form, as intuitive as it is eloquent, finds visible proof in
the kind of seeing made possible by modern science, whose magnifications of the invisible disclose "genetic codes" residing in the smallest particles of living forms and expressing the continuing history of those forms as forms. The combining and synthesizing of these particles into a visible whole is the ordered confluence of their own reproductive activity according to self-originating and self-limiting laws. The science of genetics repeats in its way Coleridge's definition of life as "the principle of individuation or the power that unites a given all into a whole that is presupposed by all its parts" and these particles of genetic knowledge literally imitate themselves into a recognizable form or wholeness. One is tempted, along with the scientists and along with Coleridge, as one is always vaguely tempted, to postulate the primary impulse in the universe which these laws imitate. This impulse Coleridge names -- and one is never made more aware of the inadequacy of the verbal form -- the Supreme Being; and the incessantly modified formulas of the scientists amount to the same thing, a sense of mystery. "There is nothing," Coleridge says, "the absolute ground of which is not a mystery." This is recognition, not capitulation; and that Coleridge defended Shakespeare against his critical predecessors who were content to
eschew the real nature of mystery in favor of solicitous bafflement, attests to this.

I have not invented the language of this rather extended metaphor of the way in which "form" participates in "imagination," any more than the scientists invented the genetic code which orders that the butterfly emerge from the chrysalis. As human beings we delight in the beauty of the butterfly: it is in motion; it is decorated with symmetrical bands of colour; it is delicate and sentient; we ascribe words like "monarch" to its grandest members. We do not find the chrysalis or the larva so beautiful except by an effort of academic will, and whoever uttered the word "metamorphosis" uttered his own human sense of beauty. Art itself, Coleridge tells us, is radically poesis and primally human. Poetry "avails itself of the forms of nature to recall, to express, and to modify the thoughts and feelings of the mind." In as much as poesis is the primal gesture of any art, it is only poetry which draws on language; thus muta poesis becomes Coleridge's definition of the "Fine Arts in general," where "mute" is taken as opposed not to sound but to articulate speech: "Poetry can only act through the intervention of articulate speech, which is so peculiarly human, that in all languages it constitutes the
ordinary phrase by which man and nature are contradis-
tinguished." The human observing the butterfly is
contradistinguished from the butterfly by his ability
to utter words and images in response to its transformed
being. By magic the butterfly emerges magically beautiful
-- our reduction of magic to psychic parlor tricks never-
theless persists in the image of the rabbits leaping from
the magician's hat which we supposed to be empty. But
the word "image" lives in our word "imagination" as
the human mind's recognition of the ways of its own
thought, and an apotheosis of this same recognition was
a female divinity named Psyche, for whom the butterfly
was an emblem. Coleridge's "psychological" criticism of
Shakespeare's plays is linguistically tied to, and meta-
phorically alive in, his sense of imagination's activity.
And the fact that the word imagination contains within
itself an imitation of nature (imitari) finds graceful
assent in Coleridge's statement that proceeding form is
a "self-witnessing and self-effected sphere of agency." However this is true for the nature of creation itself,
it is also true for what Coleridge called Method, or
the progressive principle of Shakespeare's imaginative
thought as it appears in his art. The idea of form as
a principle vitally within the processes of nature and
thought, as distinguished from an idea of form as organization imposed from without, is basically the same distinction between "organic" and "mechanic" form. That Coleridge's thought is "organic" and that it proposes an organic view of nature has become a commonplace. Yet numbers of critics still treat this organicism as a concept belonging to Coleridge's opinions about the world, and by extension, to the opinions about the world propagated by romanticism. There is correctness in the distinction between the perceptions of "romantic" thought and those of eighteenth-century rationalism, but such correctness falls short of the truth, which is to say that the overwhelming evidence of everything, including the meanings of human language, makes of the "organic" the nature of phenomenon itself. I have shown that organic form, far from being simply a conceptual rationalization, is the metaphorical content of whatever experience the constructs of language offer us, as well as being the factual empiricism of those who wish to discover truths outside of the realm of language's bias. The nature of organicism itself demands that it be apprehended from the inside and not from the outside -- its first principle is the SUM or I AM. Coleridge's own proceeding
from this first principle means that Shakespeare himself, and not his plays, is the centre of Coleridge's critical concern. And so appears another commonplace -- that Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is "psychological."

By a single remark in his notebook, Coleridge felicitously exposed a fundamental error of mechanical empiricism, based on the mind's passive reception of single "sensations" from the outside world as constituting the human act of knowing. Coleridge said simply, "Who ever felt a single sensation?"\(^{14}\) Such a remark could not possibly come from a person who was not acutely aware of his own mental processes, and of his own experience as a knower interacting with and presupposing the knowable. "Knowledge without a correspondent reality is no knowledge; if we know, there must be somewhat known by us. To know is in its very essence a verb active."\(^{15}\) Coleridge's consciousness of the activity of thought as a process, and as a process dialectically connected to that process or consciousness grandly and mutely embodied in what he calls Nature, is inextricable from the activity presupposed in organic form. Owen Barfield notes that it was in Coleridge's lifetime that "for the first time a word was needed as a class name for 'inanimate matter'"
and bodies formed from it. For the first time life and living had become the correlatives, not of death and dying, but of inorganic, or, in its later sense, inanimate." The inanimate is as literally inconceivable as the single sensation in the realm of knowing, and that Coleridge makes knowledge an act is a fundamental principle informing, among other things, his criticism of Shakespeare. The word "psychological" as it is now used, is a sadly inadequate description of this principle, even as it appears in Coleridge's consummate interest in characters. I will return to clarify this later, but in the meantime I wish to force the issue that Coleridge's consciousness of the activity of thought is not mere egocentrism, for Coleridge asserts the I AM, not the I. His is not a mind disposed to be entertained by the superficial disparity of things which are underneath all alike, and all simple; or to hold to the "dreary...belief that every thing around us is but a phantom, or that the life which is in us is in them likewise." This is perhaps a disparity between Coleridge's thought and that of Wordsworth, and Coleridge's accurate criticism of Wordsworth's poetry was also an accurate criticism of a habit of thought. Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare
confines itself to the habits, the methods and the processes of thought demonstrably present in Shakespeare's art. Moreover, Coleridge believed that the methods of creative thought are as demonstrable as are the methods of empirical thought. The difference lies in the augmentation of the known effected by poetic thought and the reduction of the known to its most manipulable elements, to "single sensations," effected by rational empirical thought.

The word "form," then, when it is used by critics to mean "Coleridge's sense of form," means organic form; and the organic in turn is what is phenomenologically true -- it is phenomenon itself. I have earlier objected to those critics who confuse morphology in this sense with mere structure when they are speaking of Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare's plays, or who even more damagingly relegate organic form to the novel notions of a genre. To propose the organic as a static concept is in the first place self-contradictory. And to further introduce a static concept of a perpetually evolving and self-creating universe as a philosophical formula "influenced by" the conventions of a German school of thought, is an intolerable misprision of reason and denial of experience. Such an approach, unredeemed even by the tentativeness implied
by approaching, is exemplified in an article by Sylvan Barnet entitled "Coleridge on Shakespeare's Villains," to which I shall refer in my discussion of King Lear. Another is in the relentlessly partisan thought of Norman Fruman's *Coleridge, The Damaged Archangel*, to which I attend in the Appendix, and to which George Steiner referred in a review as a "profoundly vulgar book." The articles by Barbara Hardy and M. M. Badawi are attempts to protect the real integrity of Coleridge's criticism against accusations of "mere" psychologizing and "mere" character criticism at the expense of aesthetic appreciation and formal apprehension. Hardy cites such eminent Coleridgean scholars as Kathleen Coburn and T. M. Raysor as belonging to that beleaguering crew because of certain prefatory or editorial remarks to the effect that Coleridge's sense of form and language is overwhelmed by his psychological analysis. Hardy claims, in supposed opposition, that Coleridge's interest in the psychology of character was "controlled and directed by his sense of imaginative form." I say "supposed opposition" because Kathleen Coburn, in reference to what she calls Coleridge's "psychological approach to all
human problems" states as clarification, not reduction, that "whether it be punctuation, or political sovereignty...he sees it as a piece of human experience, understandable in relation to the whole human organism, individual or social, so far as that organism can be comprehended as a whole." Hardy's further remarks, and Badawi's supplementary propositions, are, ultimately, recapitulations of Coburn's statement. More to the point is that both Hardy and Badawi are loquaciously aware that the relegation of Coleridge's criticism to character alone or to psychological criticism is a false partitioning of the fundamental principle of organic form. Hardy says that "Coleridge's sense of form directs his analysis of individual characters and controls his interest in psychological realism. Without this sense of form he would still have been a great character critic like Hazlitt or Bradley...but with it he is a great dramatic critic." Hardy is defending Coleridge against "the persistent claim that his analysis of character is the most admirable part of his criticism of Shakespeare," and her defense is liberally populated with the characters from Shakespeare's plays toward whom Coleridge directs his essentially formal and therefore scholastically reputable concerns. She avers that
Coleridge's confession that "I have a smack of Hamlet myself" was an unfortunate one, adding fuel to the fire of those who would propose narcissism as the sinister cause of Coleridge's interest in character. I myself have never seen Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism deplored on the basis of that remark alone; on the contrary it is cited in many biographical contexts as an accurate perception, not only in terms of Coleridge's own life, but also in the larger terms that Hamlet's condition is potentially present in any man of imagination. In this sense, Coleridge's narcissism is put to sound pedagogical use; and only a profound naivety would assume that narcissism is absent from the complexity of the human response to art. In this respect Hardy states that "Coleridge's interest in psychological character was subordinated to his acknowledgement of Imagination. He sees the play as a communicable form, not as a series of truthful human documents." Coleridge's formal interest in character, tied as it is to his "acknowledgement of Imagination" and therefore to the issues of what it is to imitate reality as opposed to copying it, produces his "interest in the way in which verisimilitude is communicated, and the interest in those functions of character which are not determined by verisimilitude."
The central assertions of Hardy's article can be summarily found in an early statement that "[Coleridge] seldom considers the dramatic character in isolation, either from the dramatic context of other characters or from the full context of the orientation towards the audience....He is almost always aware that the play is a whole and that its parts are the diffusions of imaginative power and not the fixities and definites of accurate copying." In King Lear, for example, Hardy claims that Coleridge is placing the psychological effect in a dramatic context; but my discussion of Coleridge's treatment of King Lear will argue that the opposite is true for that particular play -- that is, that Coleridge places the dramatic context within its psychological effect. This is not, however, a disagreement with the entirety of Hardy's argument; nor is my reversal of Hardy's sense of King Lear to be understood as a negation either of the value of Coleridge's criticism of that play, or of Hardy's central precepts.

In "Coleridge's Formal Criticism of Shakespeare's Plays" M. M. Badawi acknowledges that while Hardy demonstrated Coleridge's formal criticism of Shakespeare's characters, Badawi himself will demonstrate, as complement, Coleridge's criticism of the structure of Shakespeare's
plays. But Badawi is finally not arguing from design, as his term "structure" would have us believe, but rather from Coleridge's notion of form itself as an inner structure, the unity of the parts within the whole. Badawi says "each play is an organic whole, a temporal development, and not a static adding of one scene to another. Every individual scene has an implied past, a present and a future." What Badawi sees as the case for every individual scene is more obviously present in what Coleridge sees as the necessary case for every individual character. And in the realm of "scenes" Coleridge is usually content to place the larger part of his critical interest in the first scene of each play. In this regard Badawi notes that Coleridge's interest in first scenes is inextricable from his sense of organic wholeness, and "in nearly all Coleridge's remarks on these first scenes, a scene is judged by him valuable in proportion to its contribution towards the total effect of the whole play." Like Hardy, Badawi defends Coleridge against accusations that he neglects plot by proposing that "of all the Romantic critics of Shakespeare, Coleridge is the most sensitive to the formal aspects of the plays," and moreover, that "Coleridge was the first English Shakespearean critic to write serious formal criticism."
However, Badawi makes one statement about Coleridge's sense of form which inadvertently exposes some of the limitations of Coleridge's criticism. Badawi says that "with his deep sense of the organic form of Shakespearean drama, [Coleridge] apparently considered the whole outward movement of a play as the embodiment of the vision it expresses." My point is that the vision the play expresses is rarely expressed by Coleridge, and I propose this not as accusation rife with value judgment but as the apparent fact that Coleridge's critical strengths and failings are those of formalism. Badawi concedes that Coleridge went too far in his attempt to reinstate Shakespeare's judgment, as a reaction to eighteenth-century critics who made of Shakespeare an inexplicable phenomenon. The difference to my mind is that Coleridge made of Shakespeare an explicable phenomenon, and I generally concur with Badawi that Coleridge's effort to reinstate Shakespeare's judgment was excessive, but not for the same reasons Badawi proposes. I will discuss later the imaginative context within which Coleridge places judgment, and its emergence from that context as an explicable phenomenon of imaginative thought.

Barbara Hardy and M. M. Badawi together treat Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism as a general accom-
plishment relative to the critical accomplishments which both precede and follow it. The exhibition of instances of "Coleridge's sense of form" is for purposes of placing Coleridge's character analysis within a competent integrity of intent. As such, their papers are among pioneer contributions to the kind of Coleridgean scholarship which finds more creative and relevant scope in books like J. R. de J. Jackson's *Method and Imagination in Coleridge's Criticism.* Jackson's book is particularly useful because it places Coleridge's concept of method as interior to and inextricable from his theory of imagination, and thus the issue of "judgment," as a function of method, becomes a more vital one than Badawi suspected it to be. Hardy makes no specific mention of Coleridge's concern with Shakespeare's judgment, although she refers to Coleridge's "acknowledgement of Imagination" as suavely as she refers to Coleridge's "sense of form." The structural is what Hardy's intelligence is most amenable to, critically speaking, and this aesthetic is clearly present in her argument that Coleridge's aesthetic is structural also, and I have mentioned that she uses the words form and structure with little demarcation between them. Coleridge, however, would relegate form to the organic and structure to the mechanic modes of creation; and my attempt so far has been to show that this relegation is neither
arbitrary nor simply conceptual. I have also attempted to show that organic form is itself the nature of phenomenal reality. Inasmuch as this reality is the one imitated by Shakespeare, the artifact subsequently created in the form of the plays is the artifact par excellence to which Coleridge addresses his sense of form. As a "vital writer" whose "judgment reveals itself in his genius as in its most exalted form" (CWS 199), Shakespeare's sense of form is the revelation effected and ordered by the methodical processes of imagination. Coleridge rarely displays critical interest in mere talent as such, or with structure as such, or with form as imposed structure. Instead, Coleridge creates a faculty called "fancy" in which to place the necessary but fundamentally uninteresting activities of structural creativity. I will return to this later, but here I wish to point out that Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is not simply an academic exercise. Coleridge's sympathy with the art of Shakespeare is essentially the platonic love or philos of a poet for a poetry which most visibly demonstrates its own imaginative activity, and which most richly fulfils the formal principles informing its own process. There is little doubt in Coleridge's mind about the greatness of Shakespeare's art -- he is mainly concerned to show why and how it is great.

The imagination is the transmitter of the world, and
the poet, as a man of intense imagination, is an articulate transmitter of the world. The process of transmitting is active, participant, creative and willed; and Coleridge's description of the activity of the poet "in ideal perfection" echoes and augments his description of the secondary imagination found in this famous definition:

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 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.34

It will be recalled here that Coleridge's use of the term "organic" places it in polar opposition to the inanimate. The secondary imagination in this sense is radically tied by way of its "vital" processes, to the vital process which is the meaning of organic form. "Form" is a "proceeding," Coleridge declares, to set against "shape as superinduced"35 and whereas the proceeding of form recreates the thing it imitates, the imposition of mechanical shape results in the "death or imprisonment" of the
thing it attempts to copy. So, the poet described in ideal perfection is Coleridge's reification of the forms made by a poetic intelligence which imagines the poetic intelligence of the Supreme Creator of nature's proceeding forms:

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity...He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity that blends and...fuses each into each, by that synthetic and magical power to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power...reveals itself in the balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order...and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry.36

The range of contraries whose "reconcilement" is the domain and the impulse of poetic thought encompasses everything that can be imagined or observed to belong to the realms and the impulses of life and death; and which exist in polar, not logical, opposition to one another. The difference is profoundly important, for Coleridge's sense of polarity presupposes a single power manifested in two forces, among them and relevant to our concern, "the two conflicting principles of the FREE LIFE and the
confining FORM,"\textsuperscript{37} which appears in Coleridge's "Principles of Genial Criticism." Coleridge states elsewhere that "every thing or phaenomenon is the exponent of a synthesis as long as the opposite energies are retained in that synthesis."\textsuperscript{38} This activity of synthesis is translated into Coleridge's description of the ideal poet whose imagination is a "synthetic and magical power." The "opposite or discordant qualities" synthesized by imagination's power in that description are those which would participate in the formal demands of an artifact such as a play of Shakespeare's -- "the individual with the representative" and so forth. But behind Coleridge's sense of the synthesizing power of imagination lies the thesis and the antithesis, the polarities whose apprehension, Owen Barfield tells us, "is itself the basic act of imagination."\textsuperscript{39} So Coleridge, alluding to the polar opposition of the "free life" and the "confining form" states that in poetry, "passion itself imitates order, and the order resulting produces a pleasureable passion."\textsuperscript{40} Therefore the act of synthesis effected by the imagination means that the polarities imitate, and do not preclude, one another. Coleridge can scarcely state often enough the necessity that the artist imitate nature and not copy it, for "the word imitation itself means
always a combination of a certain degree of dissimilitude with a certain degree of similitude" (CWS 69).

It is sufficient that philosophically we understand that in all imitation two elements must coexist, and not only coexist, but be perceived as coexisting. These two constituent elements are likeness and unlikeness, and in all genuine creations of art there must be a union of these disparates. The artist may take his point of view where he pleases, provided that the desired effect be perceptibly produced -- that there be likeness in the difference, difference in the likeness, and a reconcilement of both in one. If there be likeness to nature without any check of difference, the result is disgusting, and the more complete the delusion, the more loathsome the effect.

Coleridge goes on to insist that the artist must imitate the beautiful in nature and must "master the essence, the natura naturans which presupposes a bond between nature in the highest sense and the soul of man." I will take up the issue of imitation and beauty in the context of my discussion of King Lear and The Tempest, but in the meantime I wish to limit Coleridge's sense of the activity of imitation to his perception of it in Shakespeare's creation of characters:

The truth is, Shakespeare's characters are all genera intensely individualized; the results of meditation, of which observation supplied the drapery and the colours necessary to combine them with each other. He had virtually surveyed all the great
components and impulses of human nature,—had seen that their different combinations and subordinations were in fact the individualizers of men, and showed how their harmony was produced by reciprocal dis-proportions of excess or deficiency. The language in which these truths are expressed was not drawn from any set fashion, but from the profoundest depths of his own moral being (CWS 207).

I have stated that Coleridge's apprehension of character, apart from its description as "psychological," derives from a metaphysical apprehension of SUM, or I AM, and not simply the I, which Coleridge says is an effect, not a power. The imagination, it will be recalled also, is "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM." Shakespeare's characters, Coleridge tells us, are all "genera intensely individualized" and organic form is precisely the nature of their embodiment, for "poetry must embody in order to reveal itself" and "each exterior is the physiognomy of the being within" (CWS 32).

The form is mechanic when on any given material we impress a predetermined form not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material, as when to a mass of wet clay we give whatever shape we wish it to retain when hardened. The organic form on the other hand is innate; it shapes as it develops itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form. Such is the life, such the form...(CWS 68).

Information is the genetic principle of transformation;
the process of metamorphosis is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form. The characters of Shakespeare's plays, as figured languages of poetic thought, participate in this "law." And the term "law" brings us to the realm of Coleridge's placement of method within the activity of poetic thought.

Coleridge's criticism is essentially judgment, in the manner in which the word criticism derives from krino, to judge. The thing to which judgment refers, either implicitly or explicitly, is law. The symbolic act of judgment is balancing and its most exquisite form is absolute equipoise, the equipoise that Coleridge sees as both the derivative and procreative center of poetic thought, insofar as it balances and reconciles discordant qualities. But such equipoise is not to be confused with stasis or suspension; on the contrary, the balanced scales each contain the full and integral qualities of each polarity or contrary they "reconcile." And to repeat, "the apprehension of polarity is itself the basic act of imagination." So that Coleridge's concern to relate "law" to "method" in the imaginative act, and to take these concerns directly to his criticism of Shakespeare, is essentially the formulation of an ethos which is able
to hold an imagination of law within its ordering vision. In the widest sense *ethos* means a character as well as the behavior emanating from one's character, and implications about two kinds of law become immediately apparent: that which is imposed upon, and that which is the outgrowth of, the inner nature of a thing, whether subjective or objective. Coleridge says "no work of true genius dare want its appropriate form; neither indeed is there any danger of this. As it must not, so neither can it, be lawless! For it is even this that constitutes its genius -- the power of acting creatively under laws of its own origination" (CWS 67). Shakespeare, as a dramatist, does not produce plays which fulfill the demands of the classical unities of time and space, but Coleridge notes that as a kind of law, these unities were appropriate in their way to the demands and limitations of the classical stage -- the ever-present chorus, the absence of a curtain, the size of the theatre itself, and so forth. In implied reply to Dr. Johnson who referred to Shakespeare's "deviations from the art of writing" -- that is, deviations from the Sophoclean norm -- and to Johnson's contemporaries who presumed Shakespeare's "wild irregularities," Coleridge maintains that the plays of Shakespeare are analogies of the Greeks
"because by very different means they arrive at the same end" (CWS 83). The means are those of imagination itself and Coleridge proposes the presence of a "unity of feeling" in Shakespeare's plays, inasmuch as they are "romantic poetry revealing itself in the drama" (CWS 51):

...the romantic poetry, the Shakespearian drama, appealed to the imagination rather than to the senses, and to the reason as contemplating our inward nature, the workings of the passions in their most retired recesses (CWS 52).

Remember here Coleridge's insistence that in poetry, passion itself imitates order, and the order resulting produces a pleasurable passion.

But the reason, as reason, is independent of time and space; it has nothing to do with them....The reason is aloof from time and space; the imagination has an arbitrary control over both; and if only the poet have such power of exciting our internal emotions as to make us present to the scene in imagination chiefly...

The power of poetry, Coleridge says in his criticism of The Tempest is "by a single word perhaps, to instil that energy into the mind which compels the imagination to produce the picture" (CWS 212).

...he acquires the right and privilege of using time and space as they exist in the imagination, obedient to only the laws the imagination acts by (CWS 52).
"Obedient only to the laws the imagination acts by." The terms "law" and "imagination" are for Coleridge interactive and symbiotic (i.e., polar) energies, whose synthesis is viably present in a phaenomenon or "thing" such as a play of Shakespeare's, a human body, a tree, or an imago. In Shakespeare's imagination, as in all phenomena of nature, "every form is true, everything has reality for its foundation," for "such is the life, such the form. Nature, the prime genial artist, inexhaustible in diverse powers, is equally inexhaustible in forms" (CWS 68).

The spirit of poetry, like all other living powers, must of necessity circumscribe itself by rules, were it only to unite power with beauty. It must embody in order to reveal itself; but a living body is of necessity an organized one,— and what is organization, but the connection of parts to a whole, so that each part is at once ends and means! This is no discovery of criticism; it is a necessity of the human mind -- and all nations have felt and obeyed it, in the invention of metre and measured sounds as the vehicle and involucrum of poetry; itself a fellow-growth from the same life, even as the bark is to the tree" (CWS 67).

Notice that Coleridge says that it is the "spirit of poetry" and not poetry or the poem itself, that by necessity circumscribes itself by rules. And the spirit of poetry residing within the mind of the poet is transposed to reside within ("impregnates") the poetry he makes, in
order to touch the spirit of poetry residing in the mind of its reader.

So likewise, whilst it recalls the sights and sounds that had accompanied the occasions of the original passions, poetry impregnates them with an interest not their own by means of the passions, and yet tempers the passion by the calming power which all distinct images exert on the human soul. In this way poetry is the preparation for art inasmuch as it avails itself of the forms of nature to recall, to express and to modify the thoughts and feelings of the mind. 44

Coleridge never forgets the human minds of Shakespeare's audience, not because of a personal interest in mass psychology, but because of the basic principle of knowledge as an agency acting upon the known. Unlike Dr. Johnson's imagined spectators of Shakespeare's plays, who in the first place were the "barbarous" products of a "barbarous age" 45 and who continue to attend Shakespeare's plays in order to observe "just representations of general nature," 46 Coleridge's projected auditors (in the first place the products of a "heroic" age) are the genera intensely individualized in his own response to the plays. Indeed it has been both remarked and disputed that Coleridge is the ideal audience of Shakespear- ean drama. Insofar as these concerns revolve around the double location of Coleridge's critical stance, I will
take them up in the more specific contexts offered by King Lear and The Tempest.

"The spirit of poetry...must circumscribe itself by rules" at the same time, and in order to, "appeal to our imagination, our passions and our sympathy" (CWS 93). Having declared that Shakespeare was a "true poet," Coleridge goes on to define the common denominator of that condition: "One character attaches to all true poets: they write from a principle within, independent of everything without" (CWS 93). What the imaginative principle is independent of, Coleridge has told us, is time and space as mechanical regularity and shapings "superinduced." The laws of imagination, on the other hand, are grounded in what Coleridge calls "Method." Method reaches into the deepest sources of Coleridge's experience of the processes of imagination; and as an activity, method is the articulable "science" of organic form. "Form [is a] proceeding" and method (methodos) means literally a way or path of transit. In his "Principles of the Science of Method" Coleridge asserts that "as without continuous transition there can be no method, so without a preconception there can be no transition without continuity. The term, method, can not therefore ...be applied to a mere dead arrangement, containing in
itself no principle of progression." Coleridge's recognition of method in Shakespeare's thought finds expression in his central premise that Shakespeare's judgment is equal to his genius. The vocabulary reveals again the concerns of balance and law, and I have already indicated that the law Coleridge means is ethos. Coleridge's sense of method, then, is primarily ethical, and when he finds Shakespeare deficient in form it is usually because of what Coleridge perceives to be an absence of the ethical. Coleridge's "method" is not to be understood as simple intention, or the effort to organize fixed and known subjects or objects into a new arrangement. This is the realm of Fancy, a term Coleridge uses to set the product-arranging processes of the memory apart from the life-producing processes of the imagination. "The Fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association" Coleridge says in appendation to his definition of Imagination. But while the Fancy is an "inferior" mode of imagination only in terms of relative vitality of process, it is yet necessary and present as the "drapery" of poetry (CWS 35).

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lily prison'd in a gaol of snow,
Or ivory in an alabaster band;
So white a friend engirts so white a foe.
(CWS 56)
This is Coleridge's illustration of Fancy from Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis," wherein Fancy is "considered as the faculty of bringing together images dissimilar in the main by some one point or more of likeness distinguished" (CWS 56). So that Fancy is only notionally participant in Method, a by-product and not a source. The secondary Imagination, on the other hand, is the active agent of method itself. Unlike the Fancy, it does not simply "bring together" but acts upon phenomena, and Coleridge's definition of secondary Imagination is a plethora of active verbs: "It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create... it struggles to idealize and to unify." Method is involved in both the dissolution and the re-creation, for the imagination dissolves in order to recreate, or it struggles in order to unify and idealize. In this way, the secondary Imagination is distinguished from both the primary Imagination and Fancy by the degree to which Method is present in its activity. The primary Imagination perceives, while the perception of secondary Imagination contains a percept, an initiative, a "principle of progression" and therefore the immanence of Method. I have earlier indicated how Coleridge places method in this sense within the poet's imagination. The power of imagination to act creatively under laws of its own origination means that "genius," as a quality of thought, is both contained and
nourished by method. (Genius enters the adjective "genial" as Coleridge defines his principles of "genial criticism.")

Method itself is revealed in judgment, and absolutely consistent to principle, Coleridge declares in his criticism of The Tempest that Shakespeare's "genius reveals itself in his judgement as in its most exalted form." We can summarily state, then, that Coleridge proposes a method that is innate to the processes of poetic imagination at the same time that it is an emanation from those same processes. Being, as it is, so vitally centred in the nature of ethos, Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is essentially an ethology. Since Coleridge's method is not a set of rules (e.g., temporal and spatial unity) to be imposed upon poetic thought from a rational aesthetic outside it and inimical to its diffusing processes, it can even appear by a process of elimination to be ethological. Ethos finds pragmatic expression in organic form: "it shapes as it develops itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form." Ethos requires imitation and not copy to reveal itself: "the artist must imitate that which is within the thing, that which is active through form and figure...the Natur-geist, or
spirit of nature, as we unconsciously imitate those whom we love." That which we love the most, and which loves us the most, "the spirit of nature" or the imitation which is the human imagination, is the apotheosis of ethos in method:

I have thus assigned the first place in the science of method to law; and first of the first, to law, as the absolute kind which, comprehending in itself the substance of every possible degree, precludes from its conception all degree, not by generalization, but by its own plenitude. As such...I contemplate it as exclusively an attribute of the Supreme Being, inseparable from the idea of God; adding, however, that from the contemplation of law in this its only perfect form, must be derived all true insight into all other grounds and principles necessary to method, as the science common to all sciences....

And ethos multiplied into forms "from Othello and Macbeth down to Dogberry and the Grave-digger" is the human population of Shakespeare's plays, his characters, those "ideal realities...which a great mind takes into itself and there naturalizes them to its own conception" (CWS 86). When Coleridge says that poetry must embody in order to reveal itself and when he says that art is the figured language of thought, we can look at a poem and apprehend its symbols in this way as consubstantiation. Or we can look to Shakespeare's plays and see the characters acting, speaking and being acted upon as literal embodiments
which reveal, and as actual figures and figured languages, of Shakespeare's thought. Shakespeare's creation of characters as an imaginative act, as well as the characters themselves as substantial particularities with a life of their own, locates ethos in both as precisely as reification rhymes with deification, for "Nature itself is to a religious observer the art of God." Art is an imitation of nature; the drama is an imitation of the reality we call human nature; and "man's mind is the very focus of all the rays of intellect which are scattered throughout the images of nature." This is the dialectic of ethology; and Coleridge's thought is dialectical within the realm of metaphor or poetic thought. Inasmuch as poetic thought is manifested in the drama, it presupposes the Aristotelian premise that the drama is an imitation of an action. Coleridge says that "the definition of the drama is involved in its name. Instead of simply narrating the actions of men, it represents men acting; or if it narrates, it is narrative in representation" (CWS 44). The word drama is derived from the Greek draō, to do; to act, and when Coleridge speaks of representations of men acting he means it in the sense of imitation. We need not attend a play in order to see people acting; we need only be alive and living our lives in order to observe the
actions of people. When we choose to see a play, Coleridge says, "it is the representation of it, not the reality, that we require, the imitation and not the thing itself; and we pronounce it good or bad in proportion as the representation is an incorrect, or a correct imitation." 

In his criticism of Shakespeare's plays, Coleridge maintains that we go to see a play because "we choose to be deceived" (CWS 202), and the deception he means involves the "willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, that constitutes poetic faith." My discussion of King Lear and The Tempest will incorporate these issues into an active context.

Having attempted to establish that Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is an ethology, I must qualify my assertion by stating also that Coleridge's criticism at its best is an ethology as I have just described it. Coleridge repeatedly states that his criticism of Shakespeare is for purposes of illustrating the principles of method, in order to prove that Shakespeare's judgment is equal to his genius. I am deliberately putting aside the fact that this body of criticism we possess in the form of a composite whole, is only a composite whole, a piecing-together of fragments the large majority of which Coleridge
himself did not even submit for publication. I refer the reader to the Appendix for a description of textual problems but here I wish to deal with Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism simply as extant canon. As canon, this criticism is consistent with its declared principles and intentions, and the first chapter of Coleridge's "Principles of the Science of Method" in *The Friend* (written contemporaneously with the presentation of the 1811-12 lectures on Shakespeare) is devoted almost exclusively to quotations from the speeches of Shakespeare's characters, and are meant to illustrate either the presence or the absence of Method in their content and syntax. My point is that Coleridge's very consistency in applying to Shakespeare's drama what can be reduced to illustrations of judgment, often results in a reduction of, if not an imposition upon, Shakespeare's text. And in a criticism which purports to disclose organic form, a discrepancy between Coleridge's theory and his practise emerges. If Coleridge's criticism is ethology, it is also judgment; and the judgment in turn can force the ethic of methodology into the blatant didacticism of Christian ethics and codes of behaviour. Coleridge is morally offended, for example, by Goneril and Regan in *King Lear*, and his moral outrage is felt so profoundly that it overwhelms his aesthetic
perceptions. *Measure for Measure* is likewise dismissed as "a hateful play" (CWS 249). But there are often valid and viable reasons for Coleridge's ethical admonitions against Shakespeare; and I shall discuss these in my following chapter.

As tentative conclusion, then, it seems to me fruitless either to attack or to defend Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare on the basis of whether or not it is "psychological" criticism, and whether or not his character criticism is a function and a presupposition of his sense of form. I have attempted to show, taking as my departure point Coleridge's sense of form, that Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is by necessity a criticism of character insofar as *ethos* means both a character and the forms of behaviour emanating from one's character. And it is obvious that Shakespeare's plays are the actions of characters. As ethology, Coleridge's criticism ideally holds "character" and "form" in equipoise, and to argue that one is the derivation of the other is in this sense tautological. However, I say "ideally" because the balance can sometimes dip from one extreme to the other depending upon the weight Coleridge's judgment chooses to confer, for a complexity of reasons, upon one or the other. The following chapters attempt to describe these complexities.
I have singled out for examination Coleridge's treatment of King Lear and The Tempest. The reasons for this choice are various and include the occasion offered to my own enduring interest in these plays. Another is that they are among Shakespeare's later plays, so that we are extricated from the kinds of concerns which surround early or incipient genius: the fact of itself, its habits, excesses and wants. Surrounding the recognition of later or established genius are similarly qualitative concerns, but here we are involved with a sense of wonder which spares us the considerations of novelty and of beginnings in the ordinary sense. Coleridge finds the formal composition of The Tempest to be exquisite; he is similarly enchanted with instances of the composition of King Lear. "Lear is the most tremendous effort of Shakespeare as a poet" (CWS 167), Coleridge says, and he acknowledges the great degree to which the poet and the dramatist are "blended" in this play. Yet Coleridge's critical response to King Lear as a whole is rather cursory and diffident; and his criticism of The Tempest, despite the eloquent lyricism of its praises, is lacking at the level of exegesis.
It is my purpose, therefore, to criticize Coleridge's criticism of these two plays because they seem to me to epitomize, both in terms of their content and of Coleridge's response to that content, the strengths and weaknesses of a criticism that is nevertheless distinguished by the sublimity of its informing concerns. This is not, however, to credit Coleridge with sublime intention at every level, nor to evade the fact that his purposes are as much to instruct in the Miltonic sense of "justifie" as they are to illustrate. The particular care Coleridge takes with Hamlet, for instance, is at least partly informed by narcissism ("I have a smack of Hamlet myself, if I may say so...") but more largely informed by the play's approachability and its internal and psychological coherence. In his criticism of King Lear Coleridge is primarily concerned with the characterization of villainy and with certain admonitions to Shakespeare regarding his unethical presentation of the nature of evil in his characterization of Goneril and Regan. Coleridge's concern with ethics is tied to the radical meaning of that condition as ethos or character, and for Coleridge a character is a successful imitation of nature (reality) insofar as his actions are relative, either positively or negatively, to the ethical. I shall posit, later, the reasons for this according to the scheme put forward by the critical contexts of King Lear and The Tempest.
The Tempest enters by way of contrast, and its particularities will be examined in Chapter Three. It is noteworthy here, however, that the ease and pleasure with which Coleridge articulates the movement of The Tempest is only uncertainly present for King Lear, and the mood extends itself into the particularities of the plays -- for example, his apprehension of what Caliban is surpasses his understanding of who the Fool is. But generally speaking, one must take into account Coleridge's insistence on his own behalf that "illustration of principles is my main object; therefore I am not so digressive as might appear" (CWS 47). Coleridge might also have explained that he was not so exclusive as might appear, since it is the exclusions and not the digressions which produce the major effect on the play in the reductive sense. It is important to understand, however, that the extant text of Coleridge's criticism of King Lear is composed of manuscript notes, marginalia, fragments of conversation and reprints from the Literary Remains. There is no coherent text such as that we possess for The Tempest in the form of Coleridge's lecture notes and J. P. Collier's transcription of a lecture. Coleridge therefore cannot be adjured for the fragmentary or partisan nature of a criticism which is itself only a posthumously
edited collection of fragments. What Coleridge might have said about *King Lear* in a lecture or in a specific essay is a matter of conjecture, yet the fragments we do possess have in common a tone of moral dismay coupled at times with almost speechless admiration. Whatever I say about Coleridge's criticism of *King Lear* derives from a sense of Coleridge's ambivalence about the play, and I would furthermore venture to suggest that the profundity of this ambivalence is such that it would be only more quantitatively present in a definitive critical statement.

Further accounting of the differences between Coleridge's criticism of *King Lear* and that of *The Tempest* would of course include the fact that the ambience of *The Tempest* is of a different order than that of *King Lear*, and that their being respectively comedy and tragedy has much to do with it. We need only to acknowledge the difference between the feelings of awe and dread, or between wonder and fear, in order to acknowledge at the same time the enormous and yet tenuous difference between the marvelous and the excessively mundane; the real and the irreal; comedy and tragedy. In these plays the polarities of creation and destruction are active and emergent within the tying and untying of human bonds. Throughout, we
somehow understand that creation is its teleology, and that the image of creation, also as the first divine act, has its corollary in the necessity that human relationship should image divine grace — "Be merciful as your Father is merciful." The reader will here remember Prospero's epilogue in *The Tempest* and the abuses of charity and mercy as forms of love in *King Lear*. *King Lear* achieves its end by mutilation; *The Tempest* by magic, but redemption is the form they share at their endings. That Coleridge responded with greater pleasure to *The Tempest* than he did to *King Lear* is only an indication of his human sentiments, but his deep dismay with regard to some of the characters and incidents in *King Lear* pervades his critical overview. His recognition of the "organic wholeness" of these plays becomes a celebration of the harmony of *The Tempest*, but in *King Lear* the peculiar evil of Goneril and Regan seems to threaten or defy organic wholeness itself. But again, *The Tempest* is a play in which the characters continually celebrate the event of their own being, and no matter how offensive or even villainous the forms of this celebration take, none of the characters are consumed by the kind of introspective self-loathing that is present in the major characters of *King Lear*, and that both encompasses and seems to cause
the general catastrophe the play enact. Coleridge's general critical dissatisfaction with unjustified evil and unexpected catastrophe is as aesthetic as it is moral, but on the other hand it is only truistic to state as explanation that Coleridge's aesthetics are "intimately related to his moral values." The fact is that Coleridge is caught in an ends-means, form-content dilemma in his criticism of King Lear -- a play which furthermore troubles the Kantian categorical imperative that persons be treated as ends and not means. I regard the presence of Coleridge's moral values in his aesthetics as both illuminative and delimiting; and as both analogous to and the cause of his diffidence toward King Lear.

In a paper entitled "Coleridge on Shakespeare's Villains" Sylvan Barnet ascribes Coleridge's defensive attitude toward villainy to the "optimistic" spirit of romanticism which along with certain other "features" is "incompatible with the tragic view." Optimism and pessimism are surely small things which refer to small things, and tragedy declines their favors by the enormity of a gesture which has nothing to do with the inclinations of this or that genre. Barnet's assertion that romanticism leaves little room for the "powers of darkness" and that the "principle of reconciliation of opposites [e.g.,
good and evil)... is fatal to tragedy\(^4\) reveals an underlying assumption that tragedy represents the triumph of evil -- an equation which might have interested Coleridge but certainly not one he would propose in such a cavalier manner, if only because dramatic forms are art forms. Evil is admitted but the teleological direction of both tragedy and comedy is to create or recreate the conditions hospitable to the good. It is the profoundly moral function of art to do this. Means and ends are integrated, for death (in tragedy) necessitates a rebirth of order, and marriage (in comedy) proposes the fruition of order. By "order" I mean what is ontologically sound, that is to say, the constructs of human life which imagine themselves to be reflections of divine construct. Order is also participant in notions of good and evil: just as unordered good is inconsequential (Hamlet), unordered evil (i.e., evil for its own sake, without causal reference to an external order) is without meaning. And it is important to Coleridge that we not passively accept the notion of evil as meaningless. Thus Coleridge's intimation that Shakespeare had abdicated a certain responsibility to his audience in his portrayal of Goneril and Regan:

[Shakespeare] had read nature too heedfully not to know that courage, intellect and strength of character were the most impressive forms of power,
and that to power in itself, without reference to any moral end, an inevitable admiration and complacency appertains... But in the display of such a character it was of the highest importance to prevent the guilt from passing into utter monstrosity -- which again depends upon the presence or absence of causes and temptations sufficient to account for the wickedness, without the necessity of recurring to a thorough fiendishness of nature for its origination. (CWS 181)

The comparison with Goneril and Regan is implicit in this statement about Edmund, whose intelligence is as extraordinary as his malice. But Edmund, unlike Goneril and Regan, is not monstrous; we are not forced to presuppose, as Coleridge suggests, a thorough fiendishness of nature to account for his wickedness. In the Christian scheme it is argued that even Satan has hope of redemption, and even Satan has better cause for his wickedness than Goneril and Regan have, that being, ultimately, jealousy of God. So Edmund, and his jealousy of his brother's legitimacy of birth, and his desire to transcend, by any means, the "baseness" of his own conception:

> I grow, I prosper.
> Now, gods, stand up for bastards.
> (I,ii,21-22)

5

Coleridge cites Iago as a thoroughly wicked character whose wickedness is nevertheless redeemable by the fact that he was Shakespeare's own creation, an invention,
and thus "perhaps the most astonishing proof of his genius and the opulence of its resources" (CWS 181). However, in *King Lear*, in which Shakespeare was compelled to present a Goneril and Regan because of the demands of his historical source, "it was most carefully to be avoided" that their willful and corrupt power be coupled with their unaccountably wicked natures. Coleridge is mainly concerned to protect the integral nature of poetic truth, "for such are the appointed relations of intellectual power to truth, and of truth to goodness, that it becomes both morally and poetically unsafe to present what is admirable -- what our nature compels us to admire -- in the mind, and what is most detestable in the heart, as co-existing in the same individual without any apparent connection or any modification of the one by the other" (CWS 181). Just as the Thomist ethic posits that evil is the greater and greater deprivation of the good, Coleridge's ethic proposes that in the realm of good and evil, nothing comes of nothing -- *ex nihilo, nihil fit*. Edmund's baseness is traceable to the circumstances of his birth which are carefully articulated at the beginning of the play -- debasingly articulated, according to Coleridge, who furthermore assumes that Edmund overhears Gloucester's remarks about him in the first scene of the
play. Coleridge says that Edmund "hears his mother and the circumstances of his birth spoken of with a most degrading and licentious levity -- described as a wanton by her own paramour, and the remembrance of the animal sting, the low criminal gratifications connected with her wantonness and prostituted beauty assigned as the reason why 'the whoreson must be acknowledged' "(CWS 179). There is no similar accounting or first cause, Coleridge says, for Goneril and Regan; there is nothing. The something, the evil, proceeding from this nothing is contradictory to the nature of how things are created both divinely and humanly, in the world and in the play; and thus Coleridge is forced to conclude that Goneril and Regan comprise "the pure unnatural." I will refer to this later, but here return to Coleridge's concern with the operative methods of artistic judgment.

It is one of Coleridge's praises of Shakespeare's plays that events are prepared for, that is to say, "expectation in preference to surprize"(CWS 99). Coleridge declares, "God said, let there be light, and there was light, -- not there was light. As the feeling with which we startle at a shooting star, compared with that of watching the sunrise at the pre-established moment, such and so low is surprize compared with expectation"(CWS 100).
The juxtaposition applies as well to horrific events. Coleridge praises one of the beginning lines of *Hamlet*, "What, has this thing appeared again tonight?", noting that the word "again" has a "credibilizing effect."

Then the shivery feeling, at such a time, with two eye-witnesses, of sitting down to hear a story of a ghost, and this, too, a ghost that had appeared two nights before at about this very time. The effort of the narrator to master his own imaginative terrors; the consequent elevation of the style, itself a continuation of this effort; the turning off to an outward object, "yon same star." O heaven! words are wasted to those that feel and to those who do not feel the exquisite judgment of Shakespeare. (CWS 141)

Coleridge feels that since Shakespeare neglected to provide similar textual preparation for Goneril and Regan, our subsequent response to them is necessarily vulgar and insensible. But Coleridge is arguing from the premises of a much larger ground, that of organic form or harmony, which arises from the activity of methodical thought and which in turn presupposes a starting-point in the narrator and a principle of progression in the narrative. Coleridge seeks this fundamental principle of momentum in the beginnings of the plays and he usually finds it. This location of critical concentration has been noticed by many critics, Sylvan Barnet among them who chastizes
Coleridge's "half-hearted endeavours to study the tragic outcomes of the plays whose opening scenes he had found so fascinating."\(^6\) Barnet continues, "nor can this lack of attention to the catastrophes be explained away by invoking Coleridge's dilatory temperament, for that the problem is not that he never got to the ends of the plays, but rather that he preferred to talk -- on the platform and off -- about their beginnings."\(^7\)

My attention wanders from the statement to the word "dilatory" within it. Barnet is alluding to Coleridge's notorious procrastinations, but if he had used the word "dilating" instead of "dilatory" he might have said something useful about Coleridge's poetics. Dilating is expansion and circulation; it is a circumferentially defined movement outwards from a centre which contains, both potentially and actually, the content of its expanding shape. The image mirrors beautifully Coleridge's conception of what method is: continuous transition from a principle of progression, and what organic form is: essentially, "a self-witnessing and self-effected sphere of agency."\(^8\) When Coleridge discovers this activity of method (the presence of organic form) in Shakespeare's text, he asserts the equality of Shakespeare's genius and
his judgment. So, for *The Tempest*: "Here is exquisite judgment -- first the noise and confusion -- then the silence of a deserted island -- and Prospero and Miranda."

The romance opens with a busy scene admirably appropriate to the kind of drama, and giving, as it were, the keynote to the whole harmony. It prepares and initiates the excitement required for the entire piece, and yet does not demand anything from the spectators which their previous habits had not fitted them to understand. It is the bustle of a tempest, from which the real horrors are abstracted...and is purposely restrained from centering the interest on itself, but used merely as an induction or tuning for what is to follow. (CWS 203-04)

But the only overt mention made of Shakespeare's judgment in *King Lear* (and here it is described as "matchless") is when Coleridge remarks upon Shakespeare's handling of the improbability of Lear's conduct, and even here the praise of Shakespeare becomes an occasion to condemn Beaumont and Fletcher. "First, improbable as the conduct of Lear is, in the first scene, yet it was an old story, rooted in the popular faith -- a thing taken for granted already, and consequently without any of the effects of improbability. Secondly, it is merely the canvas to the characters and passions, a mere occasion -- not (as in Beaumont and Fletcher) perpetually recurring as the cause and *sine qua non* of the incidents and emotions" (CWS 182).

Coleridge abstracts himself from the text of *King*
Lear throughout this so-called "analysis of the play" and he is disposed to offer, almost as sanction, examples of certain "characteristics of Shakespeare's plays" which he had separately listed at about the same time (1813). I am forcing a distinction here between a critical intention which seeks to describe characteristics and one which discovers operative principles of method. Third and fourth on Coleridge's discrete list -- the first is "expectation in preference to surprize" which I have cited earlier -- are "independence of the interest on the plot" and "independence of the interest on the story as the groundwork of the plot" (CWS 100). The wording which accompanies "independence of the interest on the plot" is very similar to that which I have quoted above in reference to King Lear: "the plot interests us on account of the characters, not vice versa; it is the canvas only" (CWS 100). But contained within Coleridge's clarification of his fourth "characteristic" is a reference to King Lear which contributes much to an understanding of Coleridge's vision of that play:

Hence Shakespeare did not take the trouble of inventing stories. It was enough for him to select from those that had been invented or recorded such as had one or other, or both, of two recommendations, namely, suitableness to his purposes, and second, their being already parts of popular tradition -- names we had
often heard of, and of their fortunes, and we should like to see the man himself. It is the man himself that Shakespeare for the first time makes us acquainted with. Lear (omit the first scene, yet all remains). So Shylock. (CWS 101)

The parenthesized remark about King Lear -- "omit the first scene, yet all remains" -- finds somewhat fuller exposition in Coleridge's "analysis" of the play, and follows immediately the remarks about its improbability: "Let the first scene of Lear have been lost, and let it be only understood that a fond father had been duped by hypocritical professions of love and duty on the part of two daughters to disinherit a third, previously and deservedly more dear to him, and all the rest of the tragedy would retain its interest undiminished and be perfectly intelligible" (CWS 182).

Coleridge's logic is mechanically sensible with regard to the "characteristic" he has described but contradictory to the proposed particularity of Shakespeare's presentation of "the man himself," the man Lear whom Coleridge describes from what he has derived from that first scene of the play:

The strange yet by no means unnatural mixture of selfishness, sensibility and habit of feeling derived from and fostered by the particular rank and usages of the individual; the intense desire to be intensely beloved, selfish and yet characteristic of the selfishness of a loving and kindly nature -- a feeble selfishness, self-supportless and leaning for all pleasure on another's breast; the selfish craving
after a sympathy with a prodigal disinterestedness, contradicted by its own ostentation and the mode and nature of its claims; the anxiety, the distrust, the jealousy, which more or less accompany all selfish affections and are among the surest contradistinctions of mere fondness from love, and which originate Lear's eager wish to enjoy his daughter's violent professions, while the inveterate habits of sovereignty convert the wish into claim and positive right, and the incompliance with it into crime and treason; -- these facts, these passions, these moral verities, on which the whole tragedy is founded, are all prepared for, and will to the retrospect be found implied in, these first four or five lines of the play. (CWS 178)

And yet Coleridge says, "omit the first scene, yet all remains." The implications of this statement have a much wider range than the rather narrowly functionalist attitude which produced it. Coleridge is here using *King Lear* to defend his argument that Shakespeare's plots are merely the occasions of the characters and passions, and he postulates the nonexistence of the first scene of *King Lear* in order to protect the validity of a general characteristic. It is here that Coleridge's consummate interest in characters, producing remarkably astute and competent observations both here (as in his description of Lear) and elsewhere, result in a misapprehension of the metaphor of the play *King Lear*. Part of Coleridge's difficulty with this play arises from his failure to discover an ethical structure for the characters of Goneril and Regan, when the conventions of the play itself do not demand such
a structuring. And within the play the vices of Goneril and Regan do not, as Coleridge has it, walk in twilight, "by which wickedness may be made to appear as not wickedness" (CWS 99). I will return to this later but in the meantime I wish to concentrate upon that content of the first scene of King Lear which Coleridge feels is theoretically expendable. I should not wish to be misunderstood on this point, for Coleridge nowhere suggests that the first scene of King Lear is useless or superfluous.

The scene comprises generally what Coleridge says it does, but it also, and just as importantly, contains in its language the metaphorical elements of the action which not only follows but which has already inexorably begun. The action of this play is as continuously fulfilled in language as it is in gesture. Lear asks his daughters to tell him how much they love him, as if he had not seen the active forms of that love -- a pitifully gratuitous gesture on his part, perhaps, but that telling becomes the active agent of the story itself. Muthos: a story, a telling; so that Lear's involvement with language, with what he hears said, is the form of his story, the "myth" of King Lear. Thus Edgar's speech, the last of the play:

The weight of this sad time we must obey,
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most; we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

(V, iii, 324-27)
In the first scene of the play Lear's inability to see through his daughters' words to the heartlessness beneath them, and his accusation of heartlessness to Cordelia's saying "nothing," is an image of the abuses of love and of sight which constantly repeat themselves in the telling of King Lear. To Lear's command "Out of my sight!" his beloved Kent replies, "See better, Lear, and let me still remain / The true blank of thine eye" (I, i, 158-59). Kent is banished from Lear's sight and Lear is driven mad by what he subsequently sees and hears. The growing darkness of the play; the utter disappearance of love; Lear's madness; Gloucester's blindness; are germinally present in this first scene of the play. That Coleridge saw little in it but an introduction to the man Lear and the justification for Edmund's later behavior, forces me to suggest that Coleridge was mistaken when he included King Lear in his general assumption that Shakespeare's plots are merely the "canvas" upon which the characters are painted. It is a reversal of the Aristotelian assertion that the characters give color and interest to the action which is imitated by tragedy. Of all Shakespeare's tragedies, King Lear probably comes closest to being an imitation of an action, in the sense in which the characters, as human beings ("the man himself" as Coleridge
phrases it), are subordinated to and even dehumanized by the actions they are caught in. Thus Coleridge's description of Goneril and Regan as "the pure unnatural" and "monstrous." Lear: "convulsed nature." The Steward: "utter unredeemable baseness." Edmund: "base-born." The Fool: "an inspired idiot." All of these words carry a sense of what it is to be at once human and dehumanized. But the very existence of Goneril and Regan as Shakespeare has presented them in this play, is an utter perversion of and an outrage against Coleridge's assertion that "man's mind is the very focus of all the rays of intellect scattered throughout the images of nature." I will return to this issue in my concluding chapter in order to connect it with Kant's moral metaphysics.

Coleridge tells us in his essay "On Poesy or Art" that it is the artist's responsibility to imitate nature; not to copy the mere nature but to "master the essence, the natura naturans, which presupposes a bond between nature in the highest sense and the soul of man." Coleridge continues, "the wisdom in nature is distinguished from that in man by the co-instantaneity of the plan and the execution; the thought and the product are one, or are given at once; but there is no reflex act, and hence there is no moral responsibility. In man there is reflexion, freedom, and choice; he is, therefore, the head of the
So that Goneril and Regan become, in Coleridge's words, "pictures of...the pure unnatural" (CWS 177). His vocabulary reveals his suggestion that they are "copies of mere nature" (natura naturata) which produces "emptiness" and "unreality." But it is curious that Goneril's and Regan's actions in the play mirror faithfully Coleridge's description of the indifference of nature: in them there is no reflex act or conscience, and no moral responsibility. But Goneril and Regan are purely unnatural because they are human; their being contrary to nature is the form of their humanity, not their unnaturalness. When I move to The Tempest I will show that Coleridge's delighted response to Caliban is the reversal of the Goneril-Regan dilemma -- Caliban is neither human nor nonhuman; he is a creation, a symbolism, a "sort of creature of the earth." He is offensive, but he is natural.

Coleridge likens Caliban to the Fool in King Lear: "The Fool is as wonderful a creation as the Caliban -- an inspired idiot" (CWS 184). I would suggest that Coleridge is not using the word "idiot" in this context to mean mental deficiency alone. "Idiot" derives from idiotès, meaning a "private person," and William Willeford in The Fool and His Scepter notes that "the fool is often
a 'private person' who gives symbolic expression to the problems of human individuality in its relation both to rational norms and to what exceeds them."^{12} Willeford continues, and here we can see how Caliban's function is similar to that of the Fool's in the sense of "idiot" just described, "the Fool has antecedents and relatives among a wide range of people who in various ways violate the human image and who come to a modus vivendi with society by making a show of that violation."^{13} Coleridge, however, tends to underestimate the symbolic position of the Fool in *King Lear* by seeing him essentially as a character whose foolishness functions to contrast with and to exacerbate Lear's sufferings. He insists at the same time that the Fool is not simply a comic buffoon but a personage who is "brought into living connection with the pathos of the play, with the sufferings" *(CWS 184)*. Coleridge comments upon Shakespeare's use of the Fool, and to what effect:

While Shakespeare accommodated himself to the taste and spirit of the times in which he lived, his genius and his judgment taught him to use these characters [clowns and fools] with terrible effect in aggravating the misery and agony of some of his most distressing scenes. This result is especially obvious in *King Lear*: the contrast of the Fool wonderfully heightens the colouring of some of the most painful situations where the old monarch in the depth and fury of his despair complains to the warring elements of the ingratitude of his daughters. *(CWS 43)*
To Lear's "0, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!"

Coleridge comments that "the deepest tragic notes are often struck by a half sense of an impending blow. The Fool's conclusion of this act by a grotesque prattling seems to indicate the dislocation of feeling that has begun and is to be continued" (CWS 185).

She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.
(I, v, 45-46)

The Fool's prattle is indeed disengaging. Its cheerful impropriety to the event (Lear's enraged and wounded departure from Goneril, his paternal disengagement) at the same time that the event itself is an impropriety at every level, is what makes the couplet strangely appropriate. As a kind of riddle it requires, somewhere, an answer. The senses of it include violation, ridicule, castration and premature death. The answers, in language and event, are made "correctly" as the play continues to be infected by (dis-eased by) these conditions. Coleridge's words "dislocation...continued" offer much and are offered up to, later, the storm scene: "What a world's convention of agonies!...let it have been uttered to the blind, the howlings of convulsed nature would seem converted into the
voice of conscious humanity...derangement...full madness" (CWS 187). The disengaged language of the Fool show is transposed to the complete dislocation of Lear at every level. As King, Father and Man he is positionless, just as the Fool of the Tarot deck is positionless, numbered 0. The Fool says to Lear, "thou art an 0 without a figure -- I am a fool, thou art nothing" (I, iv, 180). And earlier, "Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?" (I, iv, 29). In The Fool and His Scepter William Willeford claims that the Fool and Lear together compose a "Sovereign Fool" which is to say the "total assimilation of kingship by folly."14

By the time the storm breaks on the heath, the Sovereign Fool rules the kingdom. The storm is Lear's madness, it is also the dissolution of cosmos in chaos and of reality in illusion.... But in the absence of a living order (based on justice and mercy) within the kingdom the power of his kingship can take only chaotic forms. He can no longer act in a kingly or heroic way; he can only try to realize that "when we are born, we cry that we are come / To this great stage of fools." And on that stage he can openly assume his foolish identity no longer the silly butt, duped by himself, by his Fool, by his evil daughters, and by the gods and forces of nature, but now an agent of folly in a fuller and deeper sense, of the wholeness that the kingdom has lost.15

The "sovereign fool" as a secular condition converges upon the realm of the Church with the inclusion of Edgar into the storm scene. Lear as a father, Edgar as a son, and
the Fool as the proper spirit of folly, together compose a kind of nonholy trinity whose authority refers to what Willeford calls a "structure in its fragmentation and of the fragments in their relation to the irrational centre that keeps them from being simply 'nothing'."¹⁶ Even though reduced to the most primal level, it is nonetheless an active resumption of authority and will, and is therefore (reducibly) redemptive. The "nothing" is also the composition of absences in human Being which as Coleridge has it, "presupposes a bond between nature in the highest sense and the soul of man."¹⁷ The heartlessness of Goneril and Regan, the blindness of Gloucester, the mindlessness of Lear combine to shape a negative human quantity, a kind of vacuum of soul. And it is to this quality of disorder, this "chaos," that the creative force of order addresses itself -- not as imposition but as a transforming, a becoming, a proceeding. Form is a "proceeding," Coleridge tells us. And in another way, "God said let there be light, and there was light -- not there was light." The dilating eye is a response to darkness; proceeding form is a dilating movement.

The centre of King Lear is located in the active condition of Sovereign Fool during the storm scene; a condition potentially present in the actions of any foolish
king and surely to be realized amid chaos. The authority of kingship provides an expanded image of ordinary human will; self-delusion or delusion involving a king is by definition extraordinary; and extraordinary delusion on the part of anyone is madness. Edgar's madness is not delusion, it is disguise. The Fool is simply a fool. Edgar is a sane nonfool. Lear is a mad king. "If the king completely abdicates in favor of folly, the psychic system of which he is symbolically the center breaks down ....The resulting state means renewed contact with sources of life and meaning, but it also means dispossession and ruin."\(^{18}\) Coleridge intuits that the play begins "as a stormy day in summer, with brightness; but that brightness is lurid, and anticipates the tempest"(CWS 178). That same lurid brightness is an image of the deluded state of both kingship and kinship at the beginning of the play, and is redeemable only by active admission of the darkness it so inadequately attempts to hide. Folly supersedes rational judgment as the redemptive force in *King Lear*, just as it does in various forms in other plays (e.g., *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*). And one is as moved by the reality of Gloucester's imagined leap from the cliff as one is by Lear's holding a mirror to the dead Cordelia's lips. The absolute form of redemption in the Christian
ethic is death, and Lear dies as much from a broken heart as he does from a longing to be redeemed.

Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight? I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity, To see another thus. (IV, vii, 52-54)

To which Coleridge adds the sympathetic gloss, "the affecting return of Lear to reason and the mild pathos preparing the mind for the last sad yet sweet consolation of his death" (CWS 188). Lear dies in the natural light of day and the combined death of Goneril, Regan and Edmund is the removal of the contamination of that light by spiritual darkness. The rite of passage is complete: it is the business of tragedy to concern itself with absolutes, ultimates. There are enormous losses but what remains of the process is ontologically sound, is "order" as I have described it earlier.

It was Shakespeare who transformed *King Lear* from a story with a happy ending to a tragedy of the most compelling order. The stories of one "Leir, son of Baldud" chronicled in Holinshed and told by John Higgins and Edmund Spenser alike end happily for Lear, who is reconciled to Cordelia and restored to the throne. But as Alfred Harbage tells us, "Shakespeare alone and in defiance of precedent
is all that inspires pleasure without, and aloof from, and even contrarily to, interest.  

When Coleridge contemplates a thing of beauty he considers "not only the living balance, but likewise all the accompaniments that even by disturbing are necessary to the renewal and continuance of the balance." This is the living picture of King Lear, a beautiful thing, its disturbances necessary. Keats' notion of "negative capability" comes to mind as active in this play/playing of beauty. The Sovereign Fool is the figure of negative capability at the outermost edge of poetic thought -- Coleridge: "[art] is the figured language of thought" which remains (is capable of remaining) in Keats' words, "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." Keats denies us his reasoning as he reaches the endpoint of his meaning: "with a great poet the sense of Beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration." This is the quality of a "Man of Achievement, especially in Literature," and Keats mentions only two names: Shakespeare and Coleridge. It was 1817, and a letter to his brother. The same year Coleridge published "The Specific Symptoms of Poetic Power" in the Biographia
Literaria and in 1818 "Method in Thought" appeared in The Friend and Coleridge himself appeared at the Hall of the Philosophical Society to lecture on Shakespeare. About Shakespeare, Keats says simply but with profound implication that he possessed negative capability "so enormously." Coleridge, however, becomes an example of a powerful intellect hovering on the edge of negative capability but drawing itself short of remaining there. Keats utter the characterization in epitomized Coleridgean phraseology: "Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetrallium of mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half-knowledge."26

Keats is distinguishing between the minds of Shakespeare and Coleridge. It is Shakespeare whose sense of Beauty obliterates all consideration and Coleridge whose sense of Beauty compels him also to consider what has been obliterated, as he did in his criticism of King Lear. He sees the terrible beauty of "Lear's despair and growing madness in the storm" and offers sublime analogies: "Take it but as a picture for the eye only, it is more terrific than any a Michael Angelo inspired by a Dante could have conceived, and which none but a Michael Angelo could have executed" (CWS 187). But Coleridge's response to the scene
in which Gloucester is blinded is only to the gratuitous cruelty of the act. Coleridge sees physical mutilation, an obliteration of the eyes, and his only recourse is to consider the demands of evil's credibility: "What can I say of this scene? My reluctance to think Shakespeare wrong, and yet it is necessary to harmonize their [Goneril's and Regan's] cruelty to their father" (CWS 187).
Synopsis

Coleridge's assertion that *King Lear* was Shakespeare's most tremendous effort as a poet is probably at the source of his ambivalence toward the play. In effect, Coleridge is saying throughout his criticism of *King Lear* that Shakespeare's dramatic judgment was subordinated to his poetic genius. Ideally, "passion imitates order" -- the two powers balance one another, so that the thing produced is both integrally real and real in the world. This is the equality, the balance, of genius and judgment. But *King Lear* is a play in which thought is placed back among the phenomena of expression, which is to say that neither the thought nor the language are simple "effects" of one another. I mentioned that the action of *King Lear* occurs as much (qualitatively) in language as it does in gesture -- that it is an "organism of words," to use Merleau-Ponty's phrase, which "brings the meaning into existence as a thing at the very heart of the text."27 Merleau-Ponty continues (and I will tie his thought to Coleridge's momentarily):

If we consider only the conceptual and delimiting meaning of words, it is true that the verbal form ...appears arbitrary. But it would no longer appear so if we took into account the emotional content of
the word, which we have called its 'gestural' sense, which is all-important in poetry, for example. It would then be found that the words, vowels and phonemes are so many ways of "singing" the world, and that their function is to represent things not... by reason of an objective resemblance, but because they extract, and literally express, their emotional essence.28

The emotional essence or gestural sense is what Coleridge calls the "connections of the moment" or what is "present and foremost in the mind." "As of higher worth, so doubtless still more characteristic of poetic genius does the imagery become, when it moulds and colours itself to the circumstances, passion or character, present and foremost in the mind. For unrivalled instances of this excellence... the Lear, Othello..."(CWS 63). However, this is an excellence both qualified and defined by poetic genius, the "coadunative" power of Imagination-Passion. The qualification (or indeed warning) which Coleridge introduces is the necessity of the "guiding Thought," the "connective" power which is at once the source and the product of Method. Essentially, Coleridge wishes to rescue poetic language from the danger of incoherence by giving form to substance and substance to form (cf. the "grotesque prattlings" of the Fool).

We have seen that from the confluence of innumerable impressions in each moment of time the mere passive memory must needs tend to confusion -- a rule the
seeming exceptions to which (the thunder-bursts in Lear, for instance) are really confirmations of its truth. For in many instances the predominance of some mighty Passion takes the place of the guiding Thought, and the result presents the method of Nature rather than the habit of the Individual. (CWS 80)

When order imitates passion, the result is confusion. But on the other hand, if the thought utterly replaces the passion the result is mere formality, and Coleridge hastens to point out that "confusion and formality are but the opposite poles of the same null-point" (CWS 81). But to continue, "for Thought, Imagination (and we may add Passion), are, in their very essence, the first, connective, the latter, coadunative; and...if the excess lead to Method misapplied and to connections of the moment, the absence, or marked deficiency either precludes Method altogether, both form and substance; or...retains the outward form only" (CWS 80).

I think that this is prototypal of Coleridge's remonstrances against King Lear, which is to suggest that he feels that at the ethical level the play precludes the form of method. Nowhere does Coleridge indicate that he finds Shakespeare actually deficient in Method in his composition of King Lear. Rather, Coleridge's dismay is with regard to the seemingly paratactic nature of disclosures within the text -- the connections of the moment, the method of nature
-- but which Coleridge nevertheless declares to constitute an awesome work of "poetic genius." It is an ambivalent compliment and I suspect that Coleridge would have been happier with *King Lear* as an epic poem rather than a play. "Omit the first scene, yet all remains" indicates Coleridge's primary interest in the narrative (connective) wholeness of this play, as well as his sense of dramatic language as dialogue; both of which are frustrated at every turn by the persistence of the coadunative metaphor of the telling of *King Lear*. 
If King Lear represents for Coleridge the largest effort of Shakespeare's poetic genius, The Tempest is a demonstration of the power of poetry itself. Coleridge characterizes Shakespeare's works as "romantic poetry revealing itself in the drama"(CWS 51) and he refers consistently to The Tempest as a "romance" -- The Tempest therefore epitomizing and at the apex of Shakespeare's dramatic canon. Coleridge will tell his audience that "The Tempest...has been selected as a specimen of the romantic drama; i.e., of a drama, the interests of which are independent of all historical facts and associations, and arise from their fitness to that faculty of our nature, the imagination I mean, which owns no allegiance to time and place, -- a species of drama, therefore, in which errors in chronology and geography, no mortal sins in any species, are venial, or count for nothing"(CWS 203). The occasion offered by The Tempest to the principles and activities of imagination and method articulated throughout Coleridge's critical writings, is one to which Coleridge attends with profound delight. Coleridge's approval of
The Tempest is clear and deep, unmuddied by the kinds of moral and aesthetic doubts he had about the apparent arbitrariness of King Lear's tragic passion. The Tempest corresponds, without ambivalence or excess, to Coleridge's sense of beauty -- there are no obliterations to irritably consider in the Keatsian sense; only harmonies to be exhibited and praised. Coleridge is at ease with this play and his critical prose has a richness and fullness which while illuminating events and characters, irradiates and gives credence to the principles of poetic thought which inform them. It is reverential (i.e. respectful and honorific) criticism, in the sense in which Coleridge declares that "the task [of criticizing the works of Shakespeare] will be genial in proportion as the criticism is reverential" (CWS 199). And the object of Coleridge's "genial" task is "to prove that in all points from the most important to the most minute, the judgment of Shakespeare is commensurate with his genius -- nay, that his genius reveals itself in his judgment in its most exalted form" (CWS 199).

These are some of the introductory statements in Coleridge's notes for a lecture on The Tempest as one of the London Philosophical Society series (1818). At this
time there was controversy concerning Coleridge's plagiarisms from A. W. Schlegel, and in these notes there is an urgency to defend both the primacy and the integrity of Coleridge's own ideas. Thus his immediate assertion of his qualifications as an intellectually patriotic critic of Shakespeare's works: he is an Englishman who cannot utter the name of Shakespeare without "a proud and affectionate reverence" (CWS 199). These are clearly not the qualifications of August Wilhelm Schlegel, a German philologist, despite his intellectual ability. This is the careful preparation to a rhetorical utterance which acknowledges Schlegel and disqualifies him implicitly, and at the same time solicits sympathy for the injustice done to both the originality and dedicated sensitivity of Coleridge's critical response to Shakespeare: "However inferior in ability to some who have followed me, I am proud that I was the first in time who publicly demonstrated to the full extent of the position that the supposed irregularity and extravagances of Shakespeare were the mere dreams of a pedantry that arraigned the eagle because it had not the dimensions of the swan" (CWS 199). It is a similar pedantry, one assumes, that would arraign Coleridge for not having the dimensions of a Schlegel. But Coleridge continues by citing the critical intention whose "first
attempt at the Royal Institution" (1811-12) remains his final attempt, that is, to prove the judgment of Shakespeare to be commensurate with his genius. Coleridge's aptitude is reiterated, now in terms of his reputation as a critic generally, for "to judge aright...the works of Shakespeare implies the power and the means of judging rightly of all other works, those of abstract science alone excepted" (CWS 199). That Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare is judgment is a concern I will take up later.

The Tempest is the play Coleridge selects as the worthy prototype, both of the works of Shakespeare and of Coleridge's criticism of those works. So that this lecture of 1818 is informed by a conscious spirit of defense; a spirit less urgently but nevertheless present in the earlier Royal Institution lecture which we are fortunate to possess in the form of J. P. Collier's transcription. The two lectures together compose a defense of poetry -- that it is occasioned by The Tempest is Coleridge's recognition of the defense of poetry contained within the play itself, and particularly in the person of Prospero. I am attributing this recognition to Coleridge as intuitive, and not deriving it from any specific or consciously stated source in the critical text. The spirit of defense is demonstrably present within a range of Coleridgean imaginative thought
which includes intellection, precise knowledges, a sense of wonder, and even petulance. And which are also, precisely and curiously, the forms taken by Prospero's thought in *The Tempest*. Coleridge notes that this play "addresses itself entirely to the imaginative faculty" -- meaning the imaginative faculty of its audience -- and Coleridge is concerned that the sort of assistance to the imagination offered by "the complicated scenery and decorations of modern times" is dangerous because it fosters sensory illusion:

For the principal and only genuine excitement ought to come from within, -- from the moved and sympathetic imagination; whereas, where so much is addressed to the mere external senses of seeing and hearing the spiritual vision is apt to languish, and the attraction from without will withdraw the mind from the proper and only legitimate interest which is intended to spring from within. (CWS 203)

I cannot help but to see this statement as a summary of Prospero's teachings in *The Tempest*, and while I do not wish to dwell on these and other coincidences of thought between Prospero-Shakespeare and Coleridge, I do wish to call attention to the way in which the content of *The Tempest*, itself a complex assertion of the power of poetry, invisibly and pervasively enters Coleridge's criticism of the play. The point, in short, is that
Coleridge's criticism of *The Tempest* is actually a repetition of its central assertions.

Coleridge says, on behalf of Shakespeare's picturesque injection of "Me, and thy crying self" into Prospero's description of his hurried midnight flight from Milan with Miranda in his arms, "the power of poetry is, by a single word perhaps, to instil that energy into the mind which compels the imagination to produce the picture. . . . Here, by introducing a single happy epithet, 'crying,' in the last line, a complete picture is presented to the mind, and in the production of such pictures the power of genius consists" (CWS 212). The power of poetry that Coleridge is here ascribing to Shakespeare's genius is the same power that is given in and by Prospero, in the sense in which Prospero's power is the realization of image (transformation) activated by Ariel and by the donning of the "magic garments" of Poetry. When Prospero is Poetry he need only imagine a tempest and a tempest occurs; and when he puts aside his magic garments he says "Lie there, my art" (I, ii, 24). "The power of poetry is...to instil that energy into the mind which compels the imagination to produce the picture." So Prospero compels Ariel to produce the picture, the tempest, which is pictured by the audience
through Miranda's narration. It requires no violent effort of transposition to hear Prospero's dramatic voice in Coleridge's critical voice, but the curiosity is that Coleridge shows very little interest in the character of Prospero, preferring to concentrate upon Miranda, Ariel and Caliban. And even this apprehension of character is given over to context -- to how they are prepared for and to issues of their credibility both within and without their structural placement. Coleridge is concerned to explicate The Tempest primarily in terms of "the astonishing scheme of its construction" (CWS 216) and instances of Shakespeare's scheme are often compared to those which would be devised by a hypothetical "ordinary dramatist." An ordinary dramatist would, for example, have had Gonzalo responding in some other way to the Boatswain's command that unless Gonzalo could do something useful, he should get "out of our way." The assertion of the Boatswain's authority within his own element leads Gonzalo to say "I have great comfort from this fellow." Coleridge says,

An ordinary dramatist would...have represented Gonzalo as moralizing or saying something connected with the Boatswain's language, for ordinary dramatists are not men of genius; they combine their ideas by association or by logical affinity; but the vital writer, who makes men on the stage what they are in nature, in a moment transports himself into the very being of each
personage, and, instead of cutting out artificial puppets, he brings before us the men themselves.

(CWS 209)

Gonzalo is, after all, on a boat on the high seas in the midst of a tempest, and he fears for his life, "meditating with himself and drawing some comfort to his own mind by trifling with the ill expression of the Boatswain's face, founding upon it some hope of safety"(CWS 209). Coleridge's description of the way in which Shakespeare (as a man of genius, a vital writer) "brings before us the men themselves" is a rewording of what it is to imitate nature as opposed to copying it. The act of imitation presupposes an active interaction with an evolving nature (\textit{natura naturans}) which includes human nature. However, "if the artist copies the mere nature, the \textit{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, as in Cipriani's pictures!"

In order to speak particularly of the drama, Coleridge transposes "nature" to "reality," so that the "drama is an imitation of reality, not a copy..."(CWS 200). The reality which Shakespeare imitates is both a human and a world
reality, the "reality" of the play itself lying precisely within the involvement of each with the other; "there is both the person, and the circumstances acting upon the person" (CWS 210). Thus the "reality" of Gonzalo's response to the Boatswain during the tempest; this man on the stage is what he would be in nature. But what he is on the stage is yet a sublime form of what he would be in nature; by watching the play we are choosing to see the sublime form, the transformation: "the glory round the head distinguishes it from a mere vulgar copy" (CWS 87). Coleridge says, "in Shakespeare, every form is true, everything has reality for its foundation; we can all recognize the truth, but we see it decorated with such hues of beauty and magnified to such proportions of grandeur that, while we know the figure, we know also how much it has been refined and exalted by the poet" (CWS 87).

Shakespeare's characters are literally the figurations of his thought, and in The Tempest Prospero discovers Ariel and Caliban, figured languages of his own, and Shakespeare's thought. Ariel's refinement and exaltation, his transcendence of mere corporeal form, his transforming activity, make him analogue to the spirit of nature which Coleridge says is present in the artist's act of imitating it. "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...for so only can he hope to produce any work truly natural in the object and truly human in the effect."

This is Prospero's design which is fulfilled in The Tempest whose "scheme of construction," that is to say, Shakespeare's design, Coleridge was astonished by. So that Ariel, the spirit of nature, obeys Prospero's commands in order to produce their truly human effect, i.e., the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand. But at the same time it is Ariel whom Prospero imitates: Ariel as the continually transforming spirit or essence of nature, Coleridge's natura naturans. To continue the analogue of Prospero-Ariel and to bring it back to the context of how Coleridge judges Shakespeare's genius, I quote the following passage from "On Poesy or Art" and symbolically inject it with Ariel's relationship to Prospero in The Tempest: "The idea which puts the form together cannot itself be the form. It is above form and is its essence, the universal in the individual, or the individuality itself, — the glance and exponent of the indwelling power." To see this form as the play itself, and the forms within it as the acting figures or characters, is to see the idea behind Coleridge's
critical direction with regard to Shakespeare's works, particularly as it involves explication of the creation of characters. The Tempest accommodates itself well to Coleridge's twofold concern: how a character is made to exist, and how that character derives evolved being (ethos or individuation) within the action of the play, that is, both its integral (coadunative) and its externally functional (connective) nature: "the person, and the circumstances acting upon the person." First, the person:

Shakespeare's characters are all genera intensely individualized; the results of meditation, of which observation supplied the drapery and the colours necessary to combine them with each other. He had virtually surveyed all the great component powers and impulses of human nature, -- had seen that their different combinations and subordinations were in fact the individualizers of men, and showed how their harmony was produced by reciprocal disproportions of excess or deficiency. (CWS 207-08)

Coleridge introduces the notion of mechanic and organic regularity to promulgate the issue of copy versus imitation within the realm of character. In Shakespeare's plays the characters possess organic regularity or harmony, in which all the parts conform themselves "to the outward symbols and manifestations of the essential principle" (CWS 208). Coleridge has told us earlier that a "certain quantum of difference" is essential to imitation and "an indispensable condition and cause of the pleasure we derive from it" (CWS
200). Such are the ways of nature itself, and Coleridge points to an "organic" example -- the growth of trees: "trees of the same kind vary considerably, according to the circumstances of soil, air or position; yet we are able to decide at once whether they are oaks, elms or poplars" (CWS 209). So, in The Tempest we are presented with a particular Boatswain in a particular circumstance, and yet we recognize at the same time his essential and generic boatswainness. Shakespeare's characters, then, are neither falsifications nor caricatures because "every form is true, everything has reality for its foundation." But in The Tempest, two of the three central characters are not even human, and the other is preternatural. Prospero, says Coleridge, is a "being possessed of supernatural powers," Ariel is a "sort of creature of the air" and Caliban is a "sort of creature of the earth" (CWS 215). And these three personages have been Miranda's only company since her early childhood and are the circumstances, literally speaking, of soil, air and position which have contributed to her variance within the genera of woman. Coleridge feels that it is precisely this anomaly of circumstance, of environment, which forms in Miranda the "tenderness of her feelings" and allows the possibilities of ideal womanhood to emerge. Her human environment contains the
purest and most distilled forms of informative and shaping behaviours: Prospero's wisdom, Ariel's intelligent obedience, Caliban's primitive energy. And while the island itself, as nature, provides the elemental source for Ariel (air) and Caliban (earth), the tempest which Prospero creates demands further purification by fire and water of its "civilized" and ordinary human visitors. So the anomaly of the island as a child's environment consists in its purity, a purity which is yet not sacrificed to a pastoral and elusive simplicity. We are engaged by Miranda and the island because of the clear demarcation of its included complexities; its virtu becomes the way of her innocence. Coleridge draws attention to "the exquisite feelings of a female brought up in a desert but with all the advantages of education, all that could be communicated by a wise and affectionate father. She possesses all the delicacy of innocence, yet with all the powers of her mind unweakened by the combats of life" (CWS 210). To compare the names of Miranda in The Tempest with Perdita in The Winter's Tale is, by way of example, to distinguish between the conditions of discrete containment and pastoral exclusion: Miranda, as in miroir: to wonder; Perdita as in perdre: to lose, to forget. Two kinds of innocence; two kinds of "good" women. So, Miranda: "O brave new world,
that has such people in't," and Prospero's recognizant reply, "'Tis new to thee"(V, i, 184). Coleridge sees the character of Miranda as perhaps the most exquisite instance of Shakespeare's judgment, both as a person, and as a person responsive to the circumstances of the play. He claims that Miranda is Shakespeare's "favourite character"(CWS 210) -- a remark-in-passing which can probably be traced to Coleridge's assertion that The Tempest addresses itself entirely to the imaginative faculty. In response to Miranda's grief about the shipwreck:

Had I been any god of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth or ere
It should the good ship so have swallowed and
The fraughting souls within her. (I, ii, 8-13)

Coleridge remarks, "She still dwells upon that which was most wanting to the completeness of her nature -- these fellow creatures from whom she appeared banished, with only one relict to keep them alive, not in her memory, but in her imagination"(CWS 210). Moments later, when Miranda is telling Prospero what she remembers of her infancy, she says, "'Tis far off, and rather like a dream than an assurance / That my remembrance warrants"(I, ii, 44-46). Coleridge finds the entire passage in which this sentence occurs exemplary of "Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature and generally of the great laws of the human mind"(CWS 211),
The thing that Miranda remembers "far off...like a dream" is expressed interrogatively: "Had I not / Four or five women once, that tended me?" (I, ii, 47). Prospero replies,

But how is it
That this lives in thy mind? What seest thou else
In the dark backward and abysm of time?
(I, ii, 49-51)

But the question is lost on Miranda, because her remembrance is a re-collection of images and not a memory as such. Coleridge has told us that the imaginative faculty "owns no allegiance to time or space" and his gloss to this passage reveals the way in which an image, an imagining, is a particularized and experienced kind of knowledge:

She might know men from her father, and her remembrance of the past might be worn out by the present object, but women she only knew by herself, by the contemplation of her own figure in the fountain, and she recalled to her mind what had been. It was not, that she had seen such and such grandees, or such and such peeresses, but she remembered to have seen something like the reflection of herself; it was not herself, and it brought back to her mind what she had seen most like herself. (CWS 212)

Thus the knower and the known combine to create a common principle in the act of knowing. The mind does not passively receive static impressions as a kind of tabula rasa, but rather acts as the vital agency of itself and of the known
to affirm the presence of the universal in the particular. So Miranda -- both created by Shakespeare and experiencing of herself as "genera intensely individualized." What we share are our particularities.

In the essay "On Poesy or Art" Coleridge points with care to what he means by "the human mind," confining himself to "the effect produced by the congruity of the animal impression with the reflective powers of the mind; so that not the thing presented, but that which is re-presented by the thing shall be the source of the pleasure. In this sense nature itself is to a religious observer the art of God; and for the same cause art itself might be defined as of a middle quality between a thought and a thing, or... the union and reconciliation of that which is nature with that which is exclusively human. It is the figured language of thought, and is distinguished from nature by the unity of all the parts in one thought or idea." In The Tempest the union of the natural and the human is given active expression in Prospero's symbiotic relationship with Ariel and Caliban. But human relationship is not art, and in its highest form relationship can only correspond to art; and this in turn is Prospero's design for Miranda and for the play. His human relation to Ariel and Caliban is irreconcilable at the moment Prospero abrogates his magical powers
and takes leave of his art: Ariel is released to the elements and Caliban is simply dismissed. But as images of the contrarities of light and darkness in both nature and the human mind, they remain invisibly and potentially present as figured languages of poetic thought. Ariel's bright language, "I flamed amazement...I flame distinctly" (I, ii, 200) is synthesized into a texture of "organic" harmony by the darkly terrestrial language of Caliban, "And I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts"(II, ii, 175). Caliban's "profit on" language is the ability to curse; Ariel's is the ability to express delight. Prospero includes both Caliban and Ariel when he says he wants "Spirits to enforce, art to enchant"(V, i, 14), which is to demand validation in the world of his own teleological design in the play. The content of this design is not discussed by Coleridge, but it is acknowledged briefly in the formal terms of method: "In reference to preparation, it will be observed that the storm and all that precedes the tale, as well as the tale itself, serve to develop completely the main character of the drama as well as the design of Prospero"(CWS 212).

Coleridge's observations of Caliban and Ariel are primarily for purposes of illustrating Shakespeare's
management of their gross improbability; but his prose reveals a sympathetic and enchanted comprehending of the contrary natures of these creatures. Caliban, Coleridge says, "is in some ways a noble being: the poet has raised him far above contempt: he is a man in the sense of the imagination: all the images he uses are drawn from nature, and are highly poetical; they fit in with the images of Ariel. Caliban gives us images from the earth, Ariel images from the air" (CWS 215). And Ariel "assumes the airy being, with a mind so elastically correspondent that when once a feeling has passed from it, not a trace is left behind" (CWS 214). Both Caliban and Ariel are "wonderfully conceived" but just as wonderful as their conception is the manner in which Shakespeare presents them to our collective faculty of imagination. First, Coleridge declares that we come to watch a play because "we choose to be deceived" and the rule of method or judgment to be inferred from this is: "Whatever tends to prevent the mind from placing itself or from being gradually placed in this state in which the images have a negative reality must be a defect" (CWS 202). Coleridge finds The Tempest to be utterly without defect in this way -- an "almost miraculous" play, he says. A reading of its criticism reveals again and again the focus-sing of Coleridge's thought upon the way in which the
wholeness and the credibility of the play (and by extension, art itself) is achieved. The events and characters discussed at any length are without exception circumscribed by or referential to the modality of their being. It is as if Coleridge attempts to implant himself within the organizing processes of Shakespeare's methodical intellect with prior knowledge of both *The Tempest* as a thing of beauty and of the operations of the human mind when it is in the presence of art. These "operations" are as active in the personages who populate the play as they are in the audience; so that Coleridge, holding criteria for the presence of the universal in the particular, is eager to demonstrate the visible and active presence of these criteria. The particularities of the play are seen by Coleridge to consist of the characters acting, speaking and being acted upon, and these particularities are shared by and correspond to a deducible generality called the "human mind" of the audience, the generic "you" who has chosen to be deceived, but not duped or brutalized. Coleridge, as an artist and as a possessor of a human mind, in this sense identifies both with Shakespeare and the spectators, and assumes the responsibility of spokesmanship for both. But while his sympathies lie mainly with the work of art as belonging to Shakespeare, the simultaneity of his concern
with both the artist and with his public places Coleridge's thought as that "middle quality between a thought and a thing," and as mediator between subject and object.

I have spoken earlier of Coleridge's criticism of The Tempest as constituting a kind of defense of poetry, and what Coleridge is defending is the reality of art, of poetry, both as a process and as a visible extraction from the beauty of nature. In order to recapitulate my preceding statements in the form of Coleridge's critical diction, I will list the characters and events in the way Coleridge sees them as factors contributing to the organic wholeness of the play, and to which Shakespeare most clearly applied his "exquisite" judgment and his intuitively methodical intellect. It is "mere painful copying" but my purpose is to show how Coleridge conceives of the characters as events in themselves.

(a) The tempest: "...prepares and initiates the excitement required for the entire piece....is purposely restrained from concentrating the interest on itself, but used merely as an induction or tuning for what is to follow" (CWS 203-04).
(b) Miranda: "...the simplicity and tenderness of her character are at once laid open; -- it would have been lost in direct contact with the agitation of the first scene"(CWS 204).

(c) Prospero-Miranda: "...any thing that might have been disagreeable to us in the magician, is reconciled and shaded in the humanity and natural feelings of the father"(CWS 204).

(d) Prospero-Miranda (exhibition of "earliest and mildest proof of magical power"): "Prospero, having cast a sleep upon his daughter...stops the narrative at the very moment when it was necessary...in order to excite curiosity and yet to give the memory and understanding sufficient to carry on the progress of the history"(CWS 211).

(e) Ariel: "The manner in which the heroine is charmed asleep fits us for what follows, goes beyond our ordinary belief, and gradually leads us to the appearance and disclosure of a being of the most fanciful and delicate texture, like Prospero, preternaturally gifted. In this way...Ariel...was foreshewn by the writer"(CWS 213).
(f) Ariel: "...has an interest in the event, looking forward to that moment when he was to gain his last and only reward -- simple and eternal liberty" (CWS 215).

(g) Caliban: "He is not seen at once: his voice is heard; this is the preparation; he was too offensive to be seen first in all his deformity, and in nature we do not receive so much disgust from sound as from sight" (CWS 215).

(h) Ariel-Caliban: "[Caliban] does not enter until Ariel has entered like a water-nymph. All the strength of contrast is thus acquired without any of the shock of abruptness" (CWS 215).

(i) Ferdinand-Miranda: "...it is love at first sight... and it appears to me that in all cases of real love, it is at one moment that it takes place" (CWS 205).

(j) Miranda-Ferdinand: "The whole courting scene... between the lovers is a masterpiece; and the first dawn of disobedience in the mind of Miranda to the command of her father is very finely drawn, so as to seem the working of the Scriptural command, Thou shalt leave father and mother, etc. O! with what exquisite purity this scene is conceived and executed!" (CWS 206).
(k) Antonio and Sebastian: "...the tendency in bad men to indulge in scorn and contemptuous expressions as a mode of getting rid of their own uneasy feelings of inferiority to the good...without any sense of admiration for the excellent truths they heard delivered, but giving themselves up entirely to the malignant and unsocial feeling...the imagination and fancy are first bribed to contemplate the suggested act and at length to become acquainted with it" (CWS 206 & 216).

(l) Stephano-Caliban-Trinculo: "...the counterpart of [Antonio-Sebastian] in low life...the same essential characteristics" (CWS 207).

Coleridge is saying throughout that we the audience participate as the structure of the play achieves itself according to the laws arising out of Shakespeare's own nature. I mentioned earlier Coleridge's defense of the improbability of the tale itself, and particularly of Ariel. Of the tale itself, as a species of romantic drama, Coleridge states that its "errors in chronology and geography, no mortal sins in any species, are venial, or count for nothing" (CWS 203). This is a different kind of improbability than that which confronts us in Shakespeare's recreation of King Lear, where we "have little historic
evidence to guide or confine us, and the few facts handed
down to us, and admirably employed by the poet, are suf-
ficient while we read to put an end to all doubt as to the
credibility of the story" (CWS 213). But The Tempest, in
addressing itself entirely to the imagination, enacts and
confirms Coleridge's theory that procreative method means
that idea and law are always correlative. Coleridge sees
the presence of this correlating activity particularly in
the way Shakespeare has presented Ariel, for "if a doubt
could ever be entertained whether Shakespeare was a great
poet acting upon laws arising out of his own nature, and
not without law...that doubt could be removed by the charac-
ter of Ariel" (CWS 214). Coleridge continues, and I wish
to draw attention to the way in which he offers contain-
ment to the creation of Ariel as pure idea within the
lawful continuum of nature:

The very first words uttered by this being introduce
the spirit, not as an angel, above man; not a gnome,
or a fiend, below man; but while the poet gives him
the faculties and advantages of reason, he divests
him of all mortal character, not positively, it is
true, but negatively. In air he lives, from air he
derives his being, in air he acts; and all his colours
and properties seem to have been obtained from the
rainbow and the skies. There is nothing about Ariel
that cannot be conceived to exist either at sunrise
or at sunset; hence all that belongs to Ariel belongs
to the delight the mind is capable of receiving from
the most lovely external appearances. (CWS 214)
As an imitation of nature Ariel comprises an absolute extraction from the beauty in nature, that which Coleridge says the artist must imitate, and to which the "agreeable" refers only notionally. The beautiful in nature, Coleridge says, is its "essence," its continually transforming and self-creating synergy. The artist's act of imitating it makes (poesis: a making) "nature thought, and thought nature" and this is the making whose synthesized embodiment is Ariel in The Tempest. Coleridge's highly poetic sensibilities are so enchanted with Ariel that he offers a glimpsed moment in nature whose sustained correspondence is captured in Ariel:

Is there anything in nature from which Shakespeare caught the idea of this delicate and delightful being, with such child-like simplicity, yet with such preternatural powers? He is neither born of heaven nor of earth, but, as it were, between both, like a May-blossom kept suspended in air by the fanning breeze, which prevents it from falling to the ground, and only finally, and by compulsion, touching the earth. (CWS 215)

This is the tenuous grace of which Ariel is artifact. The imagination operates independently of time and place, Coleridge tells us, and his glimpse of a suspended May-blossom reappears a century later in the realm of ancient China whose orders are transformed into the world of Ezra Pound's thirteenth Canto which ends with the image
of a man's effort to be known:

The blossoms of the apricot
blow from the east to the west,
And I have tried to keep them from falling. 6

So Shakespeare, Prospero, Coleridge, Pound, and their efforts
to know and be known by the agency of poesis. Coleridge
says that the poet's own spirit, which has the same ground
with nature, "must learn her unspoken language in its main
radicals before he approaches to her endless compositions
of them." 7 Shakespeare's composition of Caliban is the
spoken ("figured") language of another of nature's main
radicals: "Caliban...is all earth, all condensed and gross
in feelings and images..."CWS 205). Caliban's power in
the play is like the power of the earth's gravity which
compels the drifting May-blossom to the ground. As Ariel's
contrary, Caliban participates equally within nature and
according to the laws originating within his own corres-
pondent being. Coleridge says,

The character of Caliban is wonderfully conceived.. .He partakes of the qualities of the brute, but is
distinguished from brutes in two ways: -- by having
mere understanding without moral reason; and by not
possessing the instincts which pertain to absolute
animals....Still...he is a man in the sense of
imagination: all the images he uses are drawn from
nature, and are highly poetical; they fit in with
the images of Ariel. (CWS 215)
So that Ariel and Caliban are principles of reconciliation in the making of thought nature, and nature thought: the magic wrought by the transformational power of Prospero's artistry in *The Tempest*.

I will mention by way of contrast Coleridge's unhappiness with Goneril and Regan in *King Lear*. The actions represented by Goneril and Regan are, according to Coleridge, contrary to nature itself; whereas Caliban and Ariel represent contrarities within the continuum of nature, inasmuch as they are polar opposites of one another. Goneril and Regan are not even villainous in the sense in which they exist and derive their meaning from their polar opposition to the charitable, like Antonio and Sebastian, or even Caliban. In reference to Caliban's ingratitude Prospero angrily declares,

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost;
And as with age his body uglier grows,
So his mind cankers. (IV, i, 191-95)

But Lear's embittered vituperation against his daughters' ingratitude is a vision of their monstrosity that is all the more horrifying because unlike Caliban they are not "born devils" (Caliban's mother is a witch; his father an
animal) but born humans, Lear's own flesh and blood:

Down from the waist they are centaurs,
Though women all above;
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiends;
There's hell, there's darkness, there is the sulphurous pit....(IV, vi, 124-28)

Prospero's frustration in the comedy is Lear's madness in the tragedy. And at the end of The Tempest Caliban slouches toward Prospero's cell avowing that "I'll be wise here-after, and seek for grace"(V, i, 295). In King Lear Goneril and Regan murder each other and their deaths clear the way for the restoration of grace.
Coleridge's criticism of *The Tempest* is the product of a methodical intention carefully delineated and consciously informed by a necessity to defend poetry, to defend Shakespeare, and to defend his own reputation. As far as *The Tempest* itself is concerned, Coleridge makes apparent the fact that the play's structure is a deliberately achieved process and not a happy result of an accident of genius. In this way Coleridge fulfils his promise to "prove" that Shakespeare's judgment is "commensurate with his genius -- nay, that his genius reveals itself in his judgment in its most exalted form." But this is also an accurate description of the powers of Prospero in *The Tempest* and Coleridge remarks parenthetically that Prospero is "the very Shakespeare himself, as it were, of the tempest" (CWS 204). And in another way, "the tale itself serve[s] to develop completely the main character of the drama as well as the design of Prospero" (CWS 212).

The shadows of Shakespeare and Prospero can be perceived, palimpsest-like, beneath Coleridge's writing about them, and I have stated earlier that Coleridge's criticism
of *The Tempest* is a repetition or a re-tracing of its central assertions. It was clearly not Coleridge's conscious intention to repeat the central assertions of the play he was judging, and the minimal interest he displays in the character of Prospero, as well as the language of the text, attests to this. Essentially, the forms of Shakespeare/Prospero which emerge in Coleridge's writing are their modalities, the forms extended from a content Coleridge leaves unsaid. This was the half-exclusion so noticeable in Coleridge's criticism of *King Lear* and which I deduced, from the quality of the extant fragments, to be a failure to come to terms with the metaphorical content of the play. While the writings on *The Tempest* comprise a much richer collection of critical apprehensions, there yet remains a vacancy at the level of the text itself. Coleridge brings forward very succinctly the nature of character as event, but he does not allow the same discrete aliveness and eventful presence for language, except by proxy: "Shakespeare has evinced the power which above all other men he possessed, that of introducing the profoundest sentiments of wisdom where they would be least expected, yet where they are most truly natural. One admirable secret of his art is that separate speeches frequently do not appear to have been occasioned by those which preceded and which are
consequent upon each other, but to have arisen out of the peculiar character of the speaker" (CWS 208). Coleridge is here approximating to a notion of the language of a character as his persona, but he succumbs to his consuming interest in equalities and balances and the modalities consequent to their achievement. Coleridge offers no example here from The Tempest except to cite, somewhat later and in connection with organic regularity, the scene in which the Boatswain intimidates Gonzalo. He might just as easily have quoted Caliban's lovely speech in Act III that when he wakes he cries to dream again, since Coleridge is after all referring to "separate speeches" and to unexpected sources of "profound sentiments of wisdom." But the fact is that Coleridge almost always apprehends the language of the text either as dialogue (verbal exchanges between the events that are characters) or words as those "minute touches" which convey the picturesque -- e.g., "Me, and thy crying self." Coleridge's concern is contextual and not textual, and his engagement with the text disappears into "the wonderful balance between the progressive action and the immediate interest of the dialogue" (CWS 102). As a self-appointed mediator between Shakespeare and his audience, Coleridge also assumes the task of mediating between and disclosing the presence of the universal in
the particular at every level of imaginative thought. So that Coleridge becomes the voice and proponent of methodology itself: Shakespeare possesses judgment, and Coleridge possesses judgment of what it is to properly judge, and of judgment itself as an activity of method. The verb to criticize derives from krino, to judge; and in this sense it has radically nothing to do with exegesis. In his judgment of The Tempest Coleridge concedes that there are "many, indeed innumerable, beautiful passages [which] might be quoted from this play, independently of the astonishing scheme of its construction. Everybody will call to mind the grandeur of the language of Prospero in that divine speech where he takes leave of his magic art; and were I to indulge myself by repetitions of the kind, I should descend from the character of a lecturer to that of a mere reciter" (CWS 216). That Coleridge sees the act of quoting "beautiful passages" from the text as descent to mere recitation, probably explains his reluctance to do so. Further explanations include the limitations imposed by Coleridge's continually restated intention "not...so much to point out the high poetic powers of Shakespeare but to illustrate his exquisite judgment" (CWS 218). Coleridge points out what he assumes has been already taken for granted -- Shakespeare's high poetic powers -- in his
lecture and writings on "Venus and Adonis," a poem, and having done that, he proceeds to the drama, and Shakespeare's judgment.

It is digressively noteworthy that Coleridge's criticism of The Tempest inspires him at several instances to take future critical notice of the poems of Milton, particularly with regard to Milton's incorporation of scriptural text into his own poetic diction; and yet at the same time Coleridge desists from a similar exegetical response to Shakespeare's language. It is typical of Coleridge to allude to Shakespeare's diction as being equal to, or better or worse than, someone else's. In the third act of King Lear the power of Shakespeare's language is declared to be equal to the powers of Dante and Michaelangelo combined; in The Tempest Shakespeare is favorably compared to Milton and Dante; and Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, and the French dramatists together compose that hypothetical "ordinary and vulgar dramatist" who would have a character doing or saying something other than -- and therefore inferior to -- what Shakespeare has him saying or doing.

Finally, there is the limitation imposed by the easy comprehensibility demanded of the lecture form, as well as Coleridge's self-admitted spontaneity (others have seen it
as disorganization) as a style of lecturing. Apart from this is Coleridge's genuine concern to present a brightly ethical and alternative vision of Shakespeare to an intellectually demoralized English public. These are simply not the conditions informing his written and literary criticism of his colleague Wordsworth, in which there is a painstaking engagement with the text. But again, when Coleridge is criticizing Wordsworth he is criticizing poems; and the drama presents Coleridge with a much different set of circumstances. The characters in a drama are not merely talented reciters of poetic language, Coleridge suggests, but personages who act and are acted upon and who use language. But even the validity of this distinction does not explain what I perceive as Coleridge's half-exclusion of the text of *The Tempest*. This is not simply to concur with Sylvan Barnet's accusation that Coleridge omits half the text by concentrating on the beginnings of the plays and preferring not to discuss their endings, although Barnet's sense of the limitations are implicit in my own concern.

I have repeatedly stated that Coleridge's criticism of *The Tempest*, regardless of its consciously stated intentions, is a defense of poetry and a repetition of the play's central assertions, in the sense in which Coleridge's
descriptions of the power of poetry and the method of imaginative thought are precisely those powers and that methodology demonstrably possessed by Prospero, the central character and active agent of the play itself. Coleridge is fleetingly aware of this, but he stops short of a fully perceived awareness of the character of Prospero as the wholeness of poetic activity not only personified but also made answerable to the uses made of this magical power. Prospero's making himself answerable in this way to the "human mind" of the audience is the absolutely moral concern which informs the content of his final speech, the play's epilogue. For Prospero's powers approximate the powers of the divine and imitate the powers of the divine, whose first actions are to create; but Prospero himself is mortal and, divested of his magical garments, he stands in need of grace as much as any mortal does. So that when I speak of Coleridge's half-exclusion of the text of The Tempest, I mean to say that Coleridge apprehends only a small portion of the wholeness that is Prospero, and by extension the language of the text which belongs or refers to this wholeness. And this inadequacy of vision on Coleridge's part amounts to an artificial partitioning of the reality that is The Tempest. The manner in which Coleridge passes over Prospero's epilogue
is closer to a failure of love than of intellect, since it is not the grandeur of a language that Shakespeare is displaying for our collective pleasure but the profoundly authentic appeal of an artist for human love and mercy, and the kind of grace which that love bestows on art itself.

Now I want
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant;
And my ending is despair
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so, that it assaults
Mercy itself and frees all faults.
As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.
(V, i, 13-20)

If not, his project fails, "which was to please." We know, even if Coleridge didn't, that this is the voice of the man Shakespeare at the end of his playwriting career. But Coleridge says in another context and in the form of an indulgence, that "Shakespeare is of no age -- nor, may I add, of any religion, or party, or profession. The body and substance of his works came out of the unfathomable depths of his own oceanic mind"(CWS 106). The source of Coleridge's awe and admiration, the real astonishment whose presence one continues to feel in Shakespearean criticism everywhere, is simply the wonderful competence of a profoundly creative intellect. Such recognition is not bar-dolatry but inspired humility.
Chapter Four

GENIAL CRITICISM AND THE NECESSARY STATEMENT

"The critical necessity is to keep the moral structure of immediate knowledge from damage during its transition..."  
Jeremy Prynne

In the autumn of 1814, a Bristol newspaper published Coleridge's "Principles of Genial Criticism," two three essays which were meant to review a contemporary exhibit of Allston's paintings but which remained confined to a statement of aesthetic principles -- what Coleridge called his "metaphysical Preliminaries." The first of these essays proposes as its subject "the Fine Arts in general, which as far as the main principles are in question, will be realized in proportion to the writer's ability; yet the application and illustration of them will be confined to those of Painting and Statuary, and of these, chiefly to the former." As in his essay "On Poesy or Art" Coleridge proposes in the Genial Criticism essay that "all the fine arts are different species of poetry. The same spirit speaks to the mind through different senses by manifestations of itself, appropriate to each." Coleridge's definition of the Fine Arts in general in "On Poesy or Art" is muta
poesis, mute poetry, "where mute is taken as opposed not to sound but to articulate speech." The common essence of all, Coleridge says, "consists in the excitement of emotion for the immediate purpose of pleasure through the medium of beauty" and the remainder of his "Principles of Genial Criticism" is an attempt to define beauty, and the kinds of emotions elicited by the presence of beauty. Coleridge's "most general" definition of beauty in this essay is "Multeity in Unity," itself a recapitulation of the Pythagorean definition of beauty as "THE REDUCTION OF MANY TO ONE." Coleridge offers as periphrasis:

The sense of beauty subsists in simultaneous intuition of the relation of parts, each to each, and of all to a whole; exciting an immediate and absolute complacency, without intervenence, therefore, of any interest, sensual or intellectual.

The "Principles of Genial Criticism" ends with an imagined debate between the poet Milton and "some stern and prejudiced Puritan" who are both standing in front of York Cathedral. Milton is expressing his admiration of the cathedral's beauty while the Puritan insists that its beauty is not only useless, but exists at the expense of the good and therefore "it delights not me." Milton's final reply to his companion, "But I did not call it good" merges into Coleridge's own defining voice: "The GOOD consists in the congruity of a thing with the laws of
the reason and the nature of the will...and it is always discursive. The Beautiful arises from the perceived harmony of an object...with the inborn and constitutive rules of the judgment and imagination: and it is always intuitive."\textsuperscript{10}

In the preceding chapters of this paper I have attempted to elucidate the nature of these "inborn and constitutive rules of the judgment and imagination" as Coleridge applies and illustrates them in his criticism of Shakespeare's plays. His primary intention was to prove that Shakespeare's judgment was equal to his genius, but I have preferred to draw upon the corollary stated in Coleridge's criticism of \textit{The Tempest}, that Shakespeare's "genius reveals itself in his judgment as in its most exalted form." The implications of this statement become the fundamental concern of the whole critical canon inasmuch as it includes and presupposes the revelatory and correlative principles of method and imagination which Coleridge had articulated outside the specific context of the Shakespearean criticism. This is also the deliberate and pedagogical quality of what Coleridge himself declared to be his "style" of public address. In a letter of 1819 which replies to a request that another series of lectures be undertaken, Coleridge insists that "I would not lecture
on any subject for which I had to acquire the main knowledge, even though a month's or three months' previous time were allowed me; on no subject that had not employed my thoughts for a large portion of my life since earliest manhood, free of all outward and particular purpose."

In his lecture notes for The Tempest he similarly declares his stance as a "genial" critic: "And the more gladly do I recur to the subject from the clear conviction that to judge aright and with the distinct consciousness of the grounds of our judgment concerning the works of Shakespeare implies the power and means of judging rightly of all other works, those of abstract science alone excepted" (CWS 199). The "Principles of Genial Criticism" were meant to apply to the art of painting, but that Coleridge confined himself to defining the principle of beauty in "the fine arts in general" provides this essay's relevance to the works of Shakespeare as a "species" of the fine arts. Coleridge's "genial" criticism of Shakespeare is the self-declared task of judging Shakespeare's genius as a revelatory content inclusive of the processes of judgment. Genius, and what might be described as judgment, reside, according to Coleridge in the unconscious and the conscious respectively; and we must remember that Coleridge preceded Freud in the recognition of the functional aspects of the unconscious.
in conscious activity. "He who combines the two," Coleridge says, "is the man of genius; and for that reason he must partake of both. Hence there is in genius itself an unconscious activity; nay, that is the genius in the man of genius." Coleridge's "genial" criticism therefore directs itself toward the terms which describe the sources of the sense of beauty -- to repeat, "the Beautiful arises from the perceived harmony of an object, whether sight or sound, with the inborn and constitutive rules of the judgment and imagination; and it is always intuitive."

Coleridge continues, and here I wish to call attention to the response of "genial" criticism to the works of "genius:"

As light to the eye, even such is beauty to the mind, which cannot but have complacency in whatever is perceived as pre-configured to its living faculties. Hence the Greeks called a beautiful object [ingenious but without foundation], i.e. calling on the soul, which receives instantly, and welcomes it as something connatural.

The principle to which genial criticism addresses itself, then, is beauty, and the sense of beauty is at the source of genius. Coleridge's welcoming of Shakespeare's art as "something connatural" is what I described in the first chapter as Coleridge's platonic love or philos for the poetry of Shakespeare. But the criticism of Shakespeare's plays as an activity of judgment, displaces the
complacency of beauty's effect on the mind to a discursive
realm which by Coleridge's definition, is contained in the
sense of the good. "The GOOD consists in the congruity of
a thing with the laws of the reason and the nature of the
will" and Coleridge places judgment, and specifically
Shakespeare's judgment, within the actions of the will,
insofar as it is the faculty of choice. I have proposed
throughout my thesis that Coleridge's criticism of Shakes-
peare is an ethology, and here I wish to develop further
the presence of the ethical in this ethology, and its
relation to the apprehension of beauty as the primary act
of "genial" criticism. Specifically, I wish to redefine
Coleridge's difficulty with King Lear in this context.

In the "Principles of Genial Criticism" Coleridge
distinguishes between the beautiful, the good, and the
agreeable. His summary is this: "The BEAUTIFUL is thus
at once distinguished from the AGREEABLE, which is beneath
it, and from the GOOD, which is above it; for both these
have an interest necessarily attached to them; both act on
the WILL, and excite a desire for the actual existence of
the image or idea contemplated: while the sense of beauty
rests gratified in the mere contemplation or intuition,
regardless whether it be a fictitious Apollo, or a real
Antinous." In The Tempest Coleridge sees the character
of Miranda as a composite of the beautiful, the agreeable and the good, and he deems her Shakespeare's "favourite character." In that same play, Ariel, as a spiritual being in the sense of a genie, is an extraction from and an image of the beauty of nature, "hence all that belongs to Ariel belongs to the delight the mind is capable of receiving from the most lovely external appearances" (CWS 214). Thus Ariel himself personifies the sense of beauty as well as the beautiful itself, and Prospero's own description of his discovery of Ariel in the play literally enacts Coleridge's etymology of the Greek word for a beautiful object as a "calling on the soul, which receives instantly, and welcomes it as something connatural." Prospero refers to Ariel's former confinement in a pine tree "where thou didst vent thy groans / As fast as millwheels strike" (I, ii, 278-79).

Thou best know'st
What torment I did find thee in; thy groans
Did make wolves howl....

It was mine art,
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape
The pine, and let thee out.

(I, ii, 286-94)

One of Coleridge's principles of beauty in the fine arts is the "balance, the perfect reconciliation, effected between the two conflicting principles of the FREE LIFE, and of the confining FORM," a balance personified in Ariel, and
whose conflicting principles are articulated throughout the play as conflict. But The Tempest also contains another creature, Caliban, whom Coleridge describes as the contrary of Ariel, and as wonderful a conception (on Shakespeare's part) as Ariel. While Ariel possesses "the faculties and the advantages of reason" (CWS 214), Caliban, on the other hand, "partakes of the qualities of the brute, but is distinguished from brutes in two ways: -- by having mere understanding without moral reason; and by not possessing the instincts which pertain to absolute animals" (CWS 215). Coleridge adds that Caliban is "a man in the sense of imagination: all the images he uses are drawn from nature, and are highly poetical; they fit in with the images of Ariel" (CWS 215) -- Ariel, whom Coleridge describes as being neither above man nor below man. Coleridge's exegesis of the characters of Caliban and Ariel derives from an apprehension of these two beings as representations of two kinds of metaphysic in which certain ethical principles are active or inactive. Their removal from the human order is metaphorical and not existential -- Ariel is a metaphor of spirit and Caliban is a metaphor of body. Just as the human body partakes of the bestial in its physical functions and at the same time is conscious of this participation; and just as the human spirit partakes of the divine in its
physical creation of artifice; so Caliban imitates Ariel and so Ariel transcends Caliban. Coleridge tells us that "body is but a striving to become mind,-- that it is mind in its essence" and the relationship between Caliban and Ariel in *The Tempest* provides him with a paradigm of this metaphysic. And the metaphysical is the exclusive realm within which the ethical can be posited as principle. As representations of ethical principles (as opposed to models of ethical behaviour) Ariel and Caliban are therefore abstract correlatives within which the good, as a consequential activity, is inert; and within which the beautiful, as a form of inertia, becomes consequentially alive. This of course is my own extrapolation from Coleridge's various observations about *The Tempest* and the assumptions underlying them, and I can only suggest here that the implications lend themselves to contemporary theories such as those proposed by Alfred North Whitehead.

Coleridge has told us that the "GOOD consists in the congruity of a thing with the laws of the reason and the nature of the will, and in its fitness to determine the latter to actualize the former: and it is always discursive." Ariel then possesses fitness for the good since he has all the faculties and advantages of reason, but his
will is nevertheless a response to the will of Prospero. Caliban does not possess fitness for the good because he is "without moral reason," and his relationship to the will of Prospero is reactive and not responsive. Coleridge tells us that Caliban's "advance to the intellectual faculties, without the moral sense, is marked by the appearance of vice," and within the play the antithetical qualities of Caliban are desperately expressed by Prospero as the distance between "nature" and "nurture:"

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost,
(IV, i, 191-93)

In his criticism of King Lear, however, Coleridge warns against the presentation of "what is admirable -- what our nature compels us to admire -- in the mind, and what is most detestable in the heart, as co-existing in the same individual without apparent connection or any modification of the one by the other"(CWS 179) as they do in Goneril and Regan. The reason, possibly, that Coleridge can acknowledge the presence of vice in Caliban and still refer to him as a "wonderful conception" is because Caliban is an imagined synthesis and balance of "discordant qualities," i.e. those of brute instinct and human imagination.
The human heart and the human mind are not, however, antithetical qualities and it has been pointed out that Coleridge's whole system of thought must stand or fall with his critique of the Cartesian mind-body dualism. Coleridge, in effect, accuses Shakespeare of dividing the human being against itself in his presentation of Goneril and Regan, and they are therefore "monstrous" and "pictures of the pure unnatural." In reference to Shakespeare's presentation of Caliban, Coleridge notes that "it is in the primacy of the moral being only that man is truly human; in his intellectual powers he is certainly approached by the brutes and, man's whole system duly considered, those powers cannot be considered other than means to an end; that is, to morality" (CWS 205).

In my discussion of King Lear I stated that Coleridge was caught in an ends-means dilemma in his criticism of King Lear and that the play itself troubles the Kantian categorical imperative. In his Metaphysics of Morals, Kant's sense of ends and means in the human realm re-echoes in Coleridge's statement above. Kant says:

In the realm of ends, everything has either a value or a worth. What has a value has a substitute which replaces it as its equivalent; but whatever is, on the other hand, exalted above all values, and thus lacks an equivalent....has no merely relative value,
that is, a price, but rather an inner worth, that is, dignity. Now morality is the condition in accordance with which alone a reasonable being can be an end in himself, because only through morality is it possible to be an autonomous member of the realm of ends. Hence morality and humanity, insofar as it is capable of morality, can alone possess dignity.21

The categorical imperative which follows from this is, "so act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means merely."22 I suggested in my discussion of King Lear that the play was an imitation of an action inasmuch as the characters were reduced and dehumanized by the actions they were caught in. The sense in which the characters of the play are dehumanized is the progressive loss of dignity each character suffers as the action of the play proceeds. And it is only because humanity alone can possess dignity that we, as humans, are moved to pity and terror at the sight of Lear's madness or Gloucester's blindness. The pure unmotivated evil of Goneril and Regan, that is, their function as only and purely the means of evil, excludes them from the realm of ends or morality which, as both Coleridge and Kant declare, is the autonomous realm of the human. According to this system of morality, the human and Goneril-Regan are mutually exclusive conditions and not antithetical conditions.
Thus Coleridge's conclusion that "Regan and Goneril are the only pictures of the unnatural in Shakespeare -- the pure unnatural; and you will observe that Shakespeare has left their hideousness unsoftened or diversified by a single line of goodness or common human frailty, whereas in Edmund, for whom passion, the sense of shame as a bastard, and ambition, offer some plausible excuses, Shakespeare has placed many redeeming traits" (CWS 177). It is precisely Edmund's motivation for evil which redeems him in Coleridge's eyes, because his actions participate in and are directed toward the realm of ends. That they participate wrongly in the realm of ends makes Edmund villainous and flaws his humanity. Lear's humanity is flawed because of his misconception of the realm of ends and his blindness to the undignified quality of his own motives. But Goneril's and Regan's seemingly motiveless evil, combined with their very human ingenuity, produces monstrosity because of their humanity.

At the time of this writing it has been suggested to me that Coleridge's description of Goneril and Regan as "the pure unnatural" might be a concession to Shakespeare's genius, and not an admonition to Shakespeare's judgment, as I have been inclined to propose it in my discussion of
King Lear. It is clear to me now that Coleridge's difficulty with King Lear, and specifically with Goneril and Regan, lies precisely in his aesthetic concession (as a genial critic) to Shakespeare's genius at the same time that his judgment, his sense of ethics and metaphysics, was outraged by the actions represented in Goneril and Regan. In other words, both the concession and the admonition are actively present, and equally valid, in what I have described earlier as Coleridge's profound ambivalence toward King Lear. Coleridge repeatedly states that King Lear is Shakespeare's most tremendous effort as a poet, and he remarks upon the high degree to which the poet and the dramatist are "blended" in this play. And yet a reading of the criticism itself reveals only a dismayed struggling between Coleridge's ethical and his aesthetic sensibilities.

Goneril and Regan are obviously not exemplary of proper human conduct, and neither is Edmund nor the Steward; but Coleridge nowhere suggests that the function of art is to be explicitly didactic. Coleridge does believe, however, that the function of art is moral inasmuch as art is a human creation: "all its materials are from the mind and all its products are for the mind."
It is, therefore, the power of humanizing nature, of infusing the thoughts and passions of man into every thing which is the object of his contemplation; color, form, motion and sound, are the elements which it combines, and it stamps them in unity in the mould of a moral idea.24

Coleridge has stated that art acts through the medium of beauty and the sense of beauty "not originating in the sensations, must belong to the intellect." Coleridge's use of the term "moral" clearly derives from Kant when he declares that the human intellect "cannot be considered other than means to an end, that is, to morality," for "it is in the primacy of the moral being only that man is truly human"(CWS 205). Thus the apprehension of beauty itself presupposes an immanence of morality; art, which acts via the medium of beauty, is then by definition moral. By virtue of the manner in which art states what is, it also, implicitly, and simultaneously, states what ought to be. Coleridge says "virtue consists not simply in the absence of vices, but in the over-coming of them. So it is in Beauty. The sight of what is subordinated and conquered heightens the strength and pleasure; and this should be exhibited by the artist either inclusive-ly in his figure, or else out of it, and beside it to act by way of supplement and contrast."25 This correlative and self-revelatory order that Coleridge ascribes
to the activity of art as a moral proposition, is in this way the containment by and the revelation of the ethical by ethology. The ethical proposes itself more visibly in Coleridge's special concern to place acts of villainy within a relative and self-revelatory order -- relative, that is, to the good. Having dispensed with Goneril and Regan as best he could, Coleridge moves to the other atrocities of *King Lear*. He finds a motive for Edmund and declares that the Steward's "utter unredeemable baseness" was a proper act of judgment on Shakespeare's part, for "What could the willing tool of a Goneril be? Not a vice but this of baseness was left open to him" (CWS 184). Coleridge is dismayed by the blinding of Gloucester ("my reluctance to think Shakespeare wrong, yet...") but in the *Literary Remains* reprint, Coleridge proposes "poetic justice" as Gloucester's proper due for his continuously insensitive treatment of Edmund:

Add to this that with excellent judgment, and provident for the claims of the moral sense, for that which relatively to the drama is called poetic justice; and as the fittest means for reconciling the feelings of the spectators to the horrors of Gloster's after sufferings -- at least of rendering them somewhat less unendurable (for I will not disguise my conviction that in this one point the tragic has been urged beyond the outermost mark and ne plus ultra of the dramatic) -- Shakespeare has precluded all excuse and palliation of the guilt incurred by both the parents of the base born Edmund by Gloster's
confession that he was at the time a married man and already blest with a lawful heir of his fortunes. (CWS 180)

Coleridge is not forced to invoke "poetic justice" in The Tempest in order to provide a moral framework for otherwise arbitrary acts of villainy, but then neither is The Tempest a tragedy, and the evil within it is not of the same passionate quality as that within King Lear. The bad characters in The Tempest exist as complement, supplement and contrast to the good characters in The Tempest and the evil characters in other plays.

In this play are admirably sketched the vices generally accompanying a low degree of civilization; and in the first scene of the second act Shakespeare has, as in many other places, shown the tendency in bad men to indulge in scorn and contemptuous expressions, as a mode of getting rid of their own uneasy feelings of inferiority to the good....Shakespeare never puts habitual scorn into the mouths of other than bad men....The scene of the intended assassination of Alonzo and Gonzalo is an exact counterpart of the scene between Macbeth and his lady, only pitched at a lower key throughout....(CWS 206).

As poetic justice is to King Lear; poetic faith is to The Tempest. Justice in tragedy and faith in comedy are the prevailing methodologies of harmony restored or declared by dramatic art. The activities of justice and faith in dramatic art share the poetic as definition, not as adjunction. Similarly, King Lear does not provide the setting
for tragic action but rather is the expression of it. The
ethical apart from the order of *ethos* which is the whole-
ness of poetic synthesis, is the merely agreeable and
the merely good which refer only notionally to beauty.
Coleridge's definition of beauty as "multeity in unity"
germinally enters his sense that "the object of art is
to give the whole [of nature] ad hominem; hence each step
of nature hath its ideal, and hence the possibility of
a climax up to the perfect form of a harmonized chaos."²⁶
Similarly -- and here we enter the realm of the ethologi-
cal as *natura naturans* -- "each thing that lives has its
moment of self-exposition, and so has each period of
each thing, if we remove the disturbing forces of accident.
To do this is the business of ideal art....And each thing
that only appears to live has also its possible position
of relation to life, as nature herself testifies, who
where she cannot be, prophesies her being in the crystal-
lized metal, or the inhaling plant."²⁷

The human mind in the presence of art can feel any
number of things depending upon any number of circumstances,
but what it is essentially responding to, is Beauty, or
the absence of it. Beauty is created when the artist
imitates the beautiful in nature, "for so only can he hope
to produce any work truly natural in the object and truly
human in the effect." Coleridge contends that the true drama is imitation, which for him implies the presence of both likeness to and unlikeness from the reality which is imitated -- and not copy, in which any dissimilarity is a defect:

...with respect to a work of genuine imitation you begin with an acknowledged total difference, and then every touch of nature gives you the pleasure of an approximation to truth. The fundamental principle of all this is undoubtedly the horror of falsehood and the love of truth inherent in the human breast. The Greek tragic dance rested on these principles, and I can deeply sympathize in imagination with the Greeks in this favorite part of their theatrical exhibitions.

The feeling of pleasure coincident with the sense of beauty is coincident also to "the love of truth inherent in the human breast." Thus the act of aesthetic judgment is itself built upon the intuitive and truth-loving sense of beauty, for we judge the dramatic art good or bad, Coleridge says, according to whether the representation is a correct or an incorrect imitation. And it is the prerogative of men of genius to create "correct" imitations. One example will suffice -- in Herbert Read's words, "the blinding sword which he drives between the talents of Beaumont and Fletcher and the genius of Shakespeare."

What had a grammatical and logical consistency for the ear, what could be put together and represented by
the eye, these poets Beaumont and Fletcher took from
the ear and eye, unchecked by any inward intuition of
an inward impossibility, just as a man might fit to-
gether a quarter of an orange, a quarter of an apple,
and the like of a lemon and a pomegranate, and make
it look like one round diverse fruit. But nature,
who works from within by evolution and assimilation,
according to a law, cannot do it. Nor could Shakes-
peare, for he too worked in the spirit of nature, by
evolving the germ within by the imaginative power
according to an idea -- for as the power of seeing
is to light, so is an idea in mind to a law in nature.
They are correlatives that suppose one another.31

This is another statement of what I have called the prin-
ciple of ethology in Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare,
and in order to avoid redundance, I let it stand as peri-
phrasis and recapitulation. Ethology is a principle which
at once informs the beauty of those forms created by
Shakespeare's genius, and to which Coleridge's "genial"
criticism, his inspired sense of beauty, responded. The
enthusiasm, and at times almost hyperbolic energy, of
Coleridge's critical diction -- "O! with what exquisite
purity this scene is conceived and executed! Shakespeare
may sometimes be gross but I boldly say that he is always
moral and modest. Alas! in this our day decency of man-
ners...[etc.]" -- is clearly a function of the pleasure
he derives from his mental occupation with Shakespeare's
art. The term "Shakespeare's art" can only be used
generically, because for Coleridge it is the apex configu-
ration of the synthesizing imagination, inseparable from
the ideas of form, imitation, beauty, morality and genius. Coleridge's undisguised pleasure therefore cannot be perverted to bardolatry as such, if only because such pleasure is so firmly rooted in the intellect, and is so clearly an intelligent act. And I need not add that Coleridge's dismay is as undisguised as his pleasure, and as intelligent as his pleasure. For "in order to derive pleasure from the occupation of the mind, the principle of unity must always be present, so that in the midst of the multeity the centripetal force be never suspended, nor the sense be fatigued by the predominance of the centrifugal force. This unity in multeity I have elsewhere stated as the principle of beauty."

It has been stated, and I fully concur, that Coleridge's critical concerns cannot be fairly separated from his metaphysical concerns; and indeed one critic, also in full concurrence, speaks of Coleridge's "metacriticism." Having confined myself to Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare, and in particular to Coleridge's criticism of King Lear and The Tempest, I have proposed ethology in an attempt to bridge the gap between aesthetics and metaphysics, and to give coherence to the methodology of Coleridge's criticism, inasmuch as Coleridge made the criticism of method
the basis of his aesthetics. I have shown how method itself, as Coleridge conceives it, is present in the principle of ethos; and how ethos itself, as the discrete figurations of Shakespeare's thought in the characters of his plays, is present as individuation. Since Coleridge's criticism of King Lear problematically enters the realm of the ethical, I have attempted in this concluding chapter to demonstrate the morality of the ethological both as a principle of beauty and as a principle of "genial" criticism. Such a demonstration, however, is doomed to inadequacy because it is finally within the realm of metaphysics, and not literary criticism, that the relationship between the good and the beautiful can be posited as principle. The Tempest provides Coleridge with a metaphysical paradigm in the forms of Caliban and Ariel, and I have excoriated Coleridge's remarks about that play in an attempt to reveal a mainstream philosophy of art which, needless to say, Coleridge himself did not construct as a self-contained and definitive statement. I have found, in Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare and in a limited field of his aesthetic writings, only examples on which to base certain conjectures within the boundaries I have declared as ethology. Herbert Read, in reference to Coleridge's metaphysics, speaks of a "mansion of thought whose foundations
were laid by Kant and whose glittering pinnacles were completed by Coleridge, Novalis and Kierkegaard. And it is in deference to the sublimity of a scholarly concern which would enter this mansion of thought that I refer the reader to Owen Barfield's invaluable contribution to Coleridgean scholarship entitled *What Coleridge Thought*.

Apart from the forms and principles of metaphysics as such is the relationship between theory and practise; the propositional and the actual. It is within this relationship that we are able to gather a sensibility of the functional aspects and limitations of Coleridge's critical writings. The propositional and the practical are not often as mutually referential as critical convenience would desire, for artists construct theories according to a projected sense of what they themselves would be ideally capable of producing, and there is much that coheres in the realm of the ideal. A critic who would expound as a matter of integrity the wedded fidelity of theory to practise, forgets that the relationship is fundamentally one of expedience and vision. However, in a context in which "illustration of principles" is the definitive intent, as it is in Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare, the relation between theory and practise must be approached as a central issue. Parallel with its often illuminative
and sublime qualities are the internal and functional disturbances of a criticism which takes Shakespeare, and not his plays, as its starting point. As a criticism of method, Coleridge's concerns pivot upon the propositional, and propositions are entities which guide the potential into the realm of the actual; the invisible into the visible. Apart from the discrete and innately truthful intent of the propositional is the enclosure of practise by theory, and I have shown that when Coleridge's adherence to the theoretical principle sometimes enfeebles the criticism it is not because the theory is wrong but because it obstructs his vision of the obvious. The central proposition to which the Shakespearean criticism refers is organic form, but Coleridge's illustration of the organic form of *King Lear*, for example, derives from an imposed ordering of content: poetic justice as the guardian of the ethical. Indeed Coleridge's structuring of *King Lear* stands upon an arguable assumption -- that Edmund overhears the remarks Gloucester makes about him in the first scene of the play. Gloucester's remarks would presumably have a history of insensitivity behind them, but the play itself begins where it begins and ends where it ends: a small loop in the thread of a speculated linearity of events. Linear
cause-and-effect reality is mechanical form in its most seductive aspect, and Coleridge's tireless motive-hunting for Shakespeare's villains is a relatively harmless capitulation.

The dialectic intellect incorporates both illustration and principle, proposition and actuality as the images and not the referees of one another. For Coleridge the actual is itself the first principle of actualization: "existence is its own predicate." But his refusal to predicate the existence of evil on the same grounds and within the realm of artifice only gives assent to his conviction that the artist is required to impose the categories of moral reflection upon the images of nature: to make thought nature, and nature thought. Coleridge's map of the process remained a map. Herbert Read tells us that "it was left for Kierkegaard to pronounce the absolute Either/Or -- either the aesthetical or the ethical. The final beauty, for Coleridge and Schelling no less than for Kierkegaard, was the beauty of holiness; but it was left to Kierkegaard to point out...that in the state of holiness we have passed beyond the spheres of nature and of art and are in the sphere of freedom, of the ethical." 36

Coleridge is well within the realms of nature and of
art when he speaks of the two fundamental conflicting principles of the "Free Life" and the "Confining Form."

It has been the concern of this paper to propose the ethological as a synthesis of these two principles, keeping in mind as much as possible that it is only in the retaining of the opposite energies of each that it can be called a synthesis; and only in the compromising of the opposite energies of each that it can be called a Thesis.
APPENDIX

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's criticism of William Shakespeare's dramatic art has been collected into a composite edition by Terence Hawkes and titled Coleridge's Writings on Shakespeare (New York, 1959). In 1969 the book was reissued as part of the Penguin Shakespeare Library and its title emended to Coleridge on Shakespeare -- this edition would be of interest primarily to students of Shakespeare. Hawkes' 1959 edition of Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism is the text I have consulted throughout my thesis and primary additional material has been brought forward from the Biographia Literaria and The Friend. Hawkes' edition also draws on relevant sources outside the Shakespeare criticism proper, which is composed of lecture notes, marginalia, newspaper reviews, auditors' transcriptions and fragments from essays.

The most complete text of the Shakespeare criticism that we possess relates to John Payne Collier's transcription from shorthand notes of the 1811-12 series of lectures, which included Shakespearean criticism within its prospectus. (Between 1808 and 1819 Coleridge presented eight series of lectures which included Shakespeare in its topics.) There were seventeen lectures given in the 1811-12 series and Collier attended eight of them. He transcribed
lectures 1, 2 and 3 almost immediately after hearing them; the others were transcribed at some later date. But the text that Collier published in 1856, entitled *Seven Lectures on Milton and Shakespeare*, was constructed from notes he said he found in a bureau drawer in 1854, forty-five years after his attendance at the lectures (see *Notes and Queries*, July and August 1854, for Collier's announcement of his "discovery.") The text he produced is available in the two-volume *Shakespearean Criticism* edited by Thomas Middleton Raysor -- the standard text of Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism.

R. A. Foakes, in his edition of the 1811-12 lectures entitled *Coleridge on Shakespeare* (London, 1971), documents certain suspicions regarding the reliabilities of both Henry Nelson Coleridge, who produced the heavily edited *Literary Remains*; and of John Payne Collier, who adored Coleridge and whose resurrection of shorthand notes in 1854 and their subsequent publication aroused enough suspicion to send Collier to court. Collier maintained that he had destroyed these notes after transcribing them. The text that R. A. Foakes gives us is Collier's original longhand transcription, together with Foakes' own transcription of what survives of the original shorthand notes. Foakes is concerned to determine what was actually said
in these lectures and what was possibly fabricated by Collier. Overt fabrication would be difficult to prove, but there are enough discrepancies between the original notes and the transcribed versions to warrant some concern. Contemporary newspaper accounts of Coleridge's lectures bear out the general content of the lectures as recorded by Collier; and Coleridge himself, in keeping with his desire for spontaneity, wrote out his lectures on only a very few occasions, and of these only fragments remain. The discrepancies I have referred to are mainly linguistic and syntactical, so that the danger lies not so much within alteration of meaning as within perversion of sense. A single example should suffice for comparative purposes. As follows, quotation (a) is from Collier's original transcription of Lecture 9 (1811), and quotation (b) is the same sentence as it appears in the Terence Hawkes edition, which is the edition I am using. Hawkes' source for the lecture material is the T. M. Raysor edition which in turn is the text Collier produced in 1856 as Seven Lectures on Milton and Shakespeare.

(a) ...Shakespeare has shown that power which above all other men he possessed, that of introducing the profoundest sentiments of wisdom just where they would be least expected, and yet where they are truly natural; and the admirable secret of his drama was that the separate speeches do not appear to be produced the one by the former, but to arise out of the
peculiar character of the speaker.1

(b) Shakespeare has evinced the power which above all other men he possessed, that of introducing the profoundest sentiments of wisdom where they would be least expected, yet where they are most truly natural. One admirable secret of his art is that separate speeches frequently do not appear to have been occasioned by those which preceded and which are consequent upon each other, but to have arisen out of the peculiar character of the speaker.(CWS 208. My italics.)

A truly verbatim report was of course a mechanical impossibility, and one can understand Collier's impulse to polish both his own and Coleridge's prose. But apart from the more richly latinate texture of the prose of the second version, is the alteration I have noted in italics. The difference between "the admirable secret of his drama" and "one admirable secret of his art" is a little more than academic, since the "secret" itself is contingent upon the location of language in Shakespeare's plays, that is, whether the language is born of the characters or whether it is prior to them. In this context it makes a large difference to know if Coleridge was referring to Shakespeare's "drama" or to his "art;" and to know if Coleridge was speaking of "the admirable secret" or simply "one admirable secret" among many.

Two different kinds of motives have been designated to account for Coleridge's failure to publish his lectures. Norman Fruman, in Coleridge, The Damaged Archangel (New
York, 1971) would have us believe that Coleridge felt guilty about his plagiarisms from Schlegel, and moreover that such feelings of guilt were highly warranted. I shall return to Fruman's concerns momentarily. In *Method and Imagination in Coleridge's Criticism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), however, J. R. de J. Jackson proposes a view based on the outward circumstances of Coleridge's life as well as his habits of work. The outward circumstance was the financial need which determined Coleridge's acceptance of the lecture-ships, and Jackson points out that Coleridge himself regarded these lectures as a type of hackwork. This is not to suggest that their content was thereby degraded, but rather to confirm Coleridge's own reluctance regarding their publication. Jackson quotes a letter of Coleridge's where he mentions having received an application from the Royal Institution for a course of lectures. Coleridge felt that this was "something...I must do, & that immediately, to get money -- & this seems both the most respectable, & the least unconnected with my more serious literary plans."\(^2\) Nor had Coleridge's financial situation improved by 1811, when the London Philosophical Society made its offer. The origin of *The Friend* at this time was similar, and Coleridge's first reference to it was to "a plan, which secures from 12 to 20 [pounds] a week."\(^3\) In both cases, Coleridge
continued to insist upon the verity of his long-standing intellectual preoccupations and his intention to produce more systematic works in the future. In Jackson's words,

Coleridge's books, like his lectures, represent temporary diversions from the main stream and selected topics relevant to it. It was the existence of this main stream that made him confident of having something new and important to say. He was coerced by circumstances into being satisfied with peripheral communication of his ideas, and he was no doubt comforted in this predicament by the conviction that his ideas were growing things and not yet ready to be presented formally and systematically.

As far as the lectures are concerned, Jackson claims that Coleridge "is seeking to communicate seriously with the public those parts of his thought which seemed relevant to issues of the time and on which he might be considered specially qualified to speak." Coleridge's own assertions about the quality of his criticism and his pedagogical methods are sympathetically reiterated by Jackson, and the remainder of Jackson's book draws from the mainstream of Coleridge's thought in order to disclose the nature of Coleridge's critical methodology and its conceptual basis.

On the other hand, some recent scholarship has endeavoured to determine that any direction taken by a student of Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism must proceed from an accounting of Coleridge's "debt" to A. W. Schlegel. Such indebtedness has been relentlessly pursued in the
intellectual claims court presided over by Norman Fruman in *Coleridge, The Damaged Archangel* (New York, 1971). Fruman is concerned to explain that a pathological condition of Coleridge’s personality accounts for the extensive, and for the most part unacknowledged, borrowings. What emerges is a picture of Coleridge as magnificently pitiable. That the book is as much character analysis as it is a work of scholarship ought to be an important factor when one is to consider the difference between amateur psychoanalysis and literary criticism; and between personal pity and aesthetic compassion. Fruman’s own largesse in these matters is urged upon the reader this way:

Only by the reflected lights and insights that every aspect of his career casts upon every other can we make sense of this tragic and immensely important life. Only by understanding the power and the tumult of the forces contending for mastery within this tormented being can we cease to be astonished at the spectacle of deception, evasion, and all manner of falsehood in a man with exalted moral principles.6

More to the point, however, is a chapter of the book entitled "The Shakespearean Criticism." Here Fruman's competent and relentless scholarship produces an exhibition of facts which are hardly to be argued with, as facts. A case might be made against the absolute value of unforgiving scholarship as an activity blind to the consequences of its motives -- consequences such as the devaluation of
greatness that is real and profound. Fruman claims a "profound respect" and a "deep personal affection" for Coleridge, but these must become empty sentiments to an intellect which, for example, consistently confuses originality with novelty. Owen Barfield made the valuable distinction between originality and novelty in his Introduction to What Coleridge Thought, but throughout The Damaged Archangel we are asked to suspect Coleridge's ideas where Fruman has found that similar ideas were active in the thought of others. And in his eagerness to corroborate the assumptions he has made about Coleridge's character, Fruman is consistently inclined to select passages from Coleridge's writings which are intended to point to an ineptitude or an ignorance where neither really is actual. For instance, in the chapter about the Shakespearean criticism, Fruman responds to a statement of Coleridge's about the integral correctness of words within Shakespeare's text, by charging that these are "astonishing claims to anyone who knows the actual history of an accurate Shakespearean text."? (Fruman seems to be "astonished" by much.) The implication is that Coleridge had no cognizance of these matters, and yet Coleridge said in his ninth lecture of the 1811 series:
I say nothing here of the state in which his text has come down to us, farther than that it is evidently very imperfect; in many places his sense has been perverted, in others, if not entirely obscured, so blunderingly represented, as to afford us only a glimpse of what he meant, without the power of restoring his own expressions. But whether his dramas have been perfectly or imperfectly printed, it is quite clear that modern inquiry and speculative ingenuity in this kingdom have done nothing; or I might say, without a solecism, less than nothing (for some editors have multiplied corruptions) to retrieve the genuine language of the poet. (CWS 89)

Fruman questions the profundity of insight usually ascribed to Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism, and he attempts to prove that very little remains of that body of criticism that is neither borrowed, stolen nor incorrect. The crucial concern is the "influence" of A. W. Schlegel's series of Shakespeare lectures collected in Vorlesungen uber dramatische Kunst und Literatur (1810) and presented to Coleridge on or about 12 December 1811, after his having delivered the eighth of the London Philosophical Society lectures. There is conflicting evidence as to the exact date and manner in which Coleridge came into contact with Schlegel's ideas about Shakespeare, but the fact remains that there are remarkable similarities with, if not direct translations of Schlegel's writings beginning particularly with the twelfth lecture of that series, and permeating remarks peripheral to the lectures.
Among the appropriated ideas are the differences between organic and mechanical form; the titling of Shakespeare as a romantic dramatist; the defence of Shakespeare's morality; the certain laws of poetic creation; and some ideas about the creation of characters. Coleridge, however, insisted that he had proposed ideas similar to Schlegel's in his own lecture series of 1808, before publication of the *Vorlesungen* in 1810. And in 1811, when Coleridge mentions in lecture the work of a "German critic," it is not so much to praise Schlegel, except as the "sentiments and opinions are coincident with those to which [Coleridge] gave utterance" (CWS 88), as it is to disparage the stupidity and short-sightedness of English critics. "Providence has given England the greatest man who ever put on and put off mortality, and has thrown a sop to the envy of other nations by inflicting upon his native country the most incompetent critics" (CWS 88), Coleridge declares. And in his concern to introduce competence to English Shakespearean criticism, he introduces the ideas of Schlegel. But by incorporating them into his own remarks, or into the fabric of his own thought, he left himself vulnerable to charges of plagiarism.

There are a few main points I wish to make in regard to the issue of the plagiarisms. The first is that they
cannot be denied, and it is not my intention to demean the seriousness of intellectual theft or the historical injustice done to Schlegel, if indeed both constitute the case, as Fruman insists. Nor is it my intention to either make cheerful excuses for Coleridge or to join a chorus of condemnation. Rather, I contend that the issue of the plagiarisms is more effectively placed in a larger context of thought, one that includes the possibilities of coincidence and intention. I have spoken of Coleridge's contempt for the critical work of the English scholars, and, as if to explain such a regrettable condition, Coleridge states that "the English have become a busy commercial people" (CWS 88). The Germans, on the other hand, "unable to distinguish themselves in action, have been driven to speculation; all their feelings have been forced back into the thinking and reasoning mind" (CWS 88). In 1799 Coleridge was drawn to this speculative Germany strongly enough to attend for a short time the University of Gottingen, where both the Schlegels were academically present. By aligning himself with A. W. Schlegel's thought, and in his concern to claim Shakespeare for the England that Shakespeare had loved, Coleridge is proposing that a particular critical method be at the vanguard of all
that is newly excellent in English Shakespearean criticism. I feel, therefore, that it is this larger context of an alignment of thought, or an allied sensibility, which should be the concern of those who are anxious to discover where Schlegel's ideas end and Coleridge's ideas begin. If the Coleridge/Schlegel critical canon is seen as a parallelism or a contiguity holding to a commonly discovered philosophical tradition, then the issue of the plagiarisms can take its place within that structure and become the definition of it and not the economics of it.

The differences between Coleridge and Schlegel are as remarkable as the similarities are. I must disagree with Fruman's rather crude suggestion that Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism is merely a second-rate copy of Schlegel's. The principal difference is that Schlegel wrote a series of essays whose effort of thought was formally sustained. Coleridge gave an oral, and more or less spontaneous, presentation of ideas. Schlegel was a dedicated philologist and a translator of Oriental poetry. Coleridge was primarily a teacher, and his own poetry, criticism and conversation were informed by eclectic knowledges. Both were known for their learned and elegant discursiveness; each gave intellectual assent to the other.
An antidote to Fruman's kind of scholarship is that of Owen Barfield in *What Coleridge Thought* and an exemplum of the possible scope and geniality of a scholarship which concern itself with the contiguity and coincidence of thought is *The Pound Era* (Berkeley, 1971) by Hugh Kenner. A work of such magnanimous imagination is needed for the Coleridge era, especially when the scholarship has degenerated to disparate opinions about the relative wickedness of plagiarism. The forthcoming *Collected Works* under the general editorship of Kathleen Coburn, should at least partially serve that demand.
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE


2 BL II, 232.


5 Barbara Hardy, "'I have a smack of Hamlet': Coleridge and Shakespeare's Characters," Essays in Criticism, 8 (1958).

6 Hardy, p. 246.

7 Hardy, p. 246.

8 BL II, 254.


11 BL II, 254.

12 BL II, 254.

13 BL II, 262.


15 BL I, 180.

NOTES to Chapter One, cont'd.

17 BL II, 259.


20 Hardy, p. 240.

21 Quoted by Hardy, p. 239.

22 Hardy, p. 242.

23 Hardy, p. 229.

24 See *Coleridge's Writings on Shakespeare*, p. 140.

25 Hardy, p. 244.

26 Hardy, p. 246.

27 Hardy, p. 243.


29 Badawi, p. 152.

30 Badawi, p. 158.

31 Badawi, p. 162.

32 Badawi, p. 159.


34 BL II, 202.

35 BL II, 262.

36 BL II, 12.

37 BL II, 235.

38 See Barfield, p. 31 and p. 201n.
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE, cont'd.

39 Barfield, p. 36.
40 BL II, 254.
41 BL II, 256.
42 BL II, 257.
44 BL II, 254.
45 Dr. Johnson on Shakespeare, p. 74.
48 BL I, 202.
49 BL ii, 259.
51 BL II, 254.
52 BL II, 258.
54 BL II, 6.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1 I use the negative prefix "ir" to form "irreal" in order to protect the word from the aesthetic and genre connotations of "surreal" and the negative enthusiasm of the current use of "unreal." The word "irreal" suggests a self-consuming reality, and Rene Gilson has used the word in a commentary entitled Jean Cocteau (New York: Crown Publishers, 1969) to describe the effect Cocteau sought in his films.
NOTES to Chapter Two, cont'd.


4 Barnet, p. 10.


6 Barnet, p. 11.

7 Barnet, p. 11.

8 BL II, 262.

9 BL II, 258.

10 BL II, 257.

11 BL II, 257.


16 Ibid, p. 217.

17 BL II, 257.

18 Willeford, p. 213.


20 BL II, 257.

21 BL II, 257.

22 BL II, 250-51.

23 BL II, 255.
NOTES to Chapter Two, cont'd.


25 Ibid.

26 Ibid. Keats may have attended some of Coleridge's lectures on Shakespeare or have subscribed to The Friend -- it is probable that Keats was in some way directly exposed to contemporary Coleridgean thought.


28 Merleau-Ponty, The Essential Writings of Merleau-Ponty, p. 199.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1 BL II, 257.

2 BL II, 259.

3 BL II, 259.


5 BL II, 254-55.


7 BL II, 258.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR


2 BL II, 246.

3 BL II, 221.

4 BL II, 220-21.
NOTES to Chapter Four, cont'd.

5 BL II, 255.
6 BL II, 221.
7 BL II, 231.
8 BL II, 238.
9 BL II, 239.
10 BL II, 243.
11 Quoted by J. R. de J. Jackson, Method and Imagination in Coleridge's Criticism, p. 9.
12 BL II, 258.
13 BL II, 243 and 314n.
14 BL II, 243.
15 BL II, 239.
16 BL II, 243.
17 BL II, 235.
18 BL II, 258.
19 A. H. Johnson, Whitehead's Theory of Reality (New York: Dover Publications, 1962). Johnson's delineation of Whitehead's relation to other philosophers such as Kant, Descartes, Spinoza and Liebnitz, is particularly illuminative with regard to the derivations and extensions of Coleridge's thought.
20 All quotations from Kant are taken from Ernst Cassirer, Rousseau, Kant and Goethe (New York: Harper & Row, 1963). Cassirer's source is his own collected edition of Kants Werke, 11 volumes (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer Verlag, 1912).
21 Ernst Cassirer, Rousseau, Kant and Goethe, p. 11.
22 Cassirer, p. 32.
23 BL II, 254.
NOTES to Chapter Four, cont'd.

25 BL II, 263.
26 BL II, 262.
27 BL II, 259-60.
28 BL II, 259.
29 BL II, 256.
32 BL II, 262.
34 Herbert Read, p. 599.
36 Herbert Read, pp. 618-19.

NOTES TO APPENDIX

2 J. R. de J. Jackson, Method and Imagination in Coleridge's Criticism, p. 8.
3 Jackson, p. 3.
4 Jackson, pp. 10-11.
5 Jackson, p. 10.
6 Norman Fruman, Coleridge, The Damaged Archangel, p. 420.
7 Fruman, p. 162.
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Hardy, Barbara. "'I have a smack of Hamlet': Coleridge and Shakespeare's Characters." Essays in Criticism. 8 (1958), 238-55.


