

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Coleridge , EH Ed. , The Complete Poetical Works. Oxford , 1912.
2. Colmer John . Coleridge : Critic of Society . Ox ford , 1959.
3. Cottle . Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey . London , 1847.
4. Davidson , Angus trans . The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction . Oxford , 1969 . ed WJ Bate .
5. Engell James Ed. Collected Works. Princetion, 1983 .
6. Everset , Kelvin . Colridge's Secret Ministry : The Context of the Conversation Poems 1795 - 1798. Brighton and New York , 1979.
- * 7. Fruman , Nerman . Coleridge : The Damaged Archangel . London , 1971 .
8. Griggs , E, Leslie . Collected Letters . Oxford , 1956.
9. Jasper , David , Coleridge as Poet and Religious Thinker . London , 1975.
10. Patton , Lewis . The Watchman . Collected Works . Princeton , 1970.
11. Rauber , DF. " The Fragment as Romantic Form" . Modern Language Quarterly . 30. 1969.
12. Wheeler , Kathleen . Sources , Processes and Methods in Coleridge's " Biographia Literaria" . Cambridge , 1980 .
13. White , RI ed. Collected Works VI . Princeton , 1972.

19. Fruman , op. cit p245.
20. See Collected Letters I, pp. 147 - 162.
21. See , David Jasper , Coleridge as poet and Religious Thinker (London , 1975) p. 44.
22. See I bid . pp. 44 - 8 .
23. Biographia Literaria Vol . II , p. 14.
24. I bid , Vol I , P. 124. See Kathleen Wheeler , Sources Processes and Methods in Coleridge's " Biographia Literaria" (Cambridge , 1980) pp 81 - 96.
25. Wheeler . OP. Cit . p. 154.
26. The Watchman . Prospectus. p. 6.
27. See , I Corinthian 2.21. Galatians 6.1. The Watchman . pp14 ,194.
28. Mario Praz , The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction. Trans . Angus Davidson . (Oxford , 1969) pp 39 - 41.
29. Everest , p. 38.
30. Collected Letters .I p208.
31. The Watchman pp 374 - 5.
32. DF . Rauber , " The Fragment as Romantic Form" , Modern Language Quarterly , 30 (1969) p. 221.
33. The Cambridge Intelligencer was edited by Benjamin Flower , a friend of Coleridge from cambridge days , who was imprisoned in 1799 for a libel against Bishop Watson .
34. The Watchman , p. 375.

NOTES:-

1. The Watchman . Collected Works It Ed. Lewis Patton (Princeton , 1970) pp 4 -5 .
2. See Cottle , Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey .
(London , 1847), pp 74 - 6 .
3. Biographia Literaria . Collected Work . VII . Ed. James Engell and W . Jackson
Bate (Princeton , 1938) Vol I . pp 179 - 87 .
4. John Colmer , Coleridge Critic of Society (oxford , 1959) p44.
5. Ibid , p45.
6. For example , his letter of 13th November , 1795 , to Southey : " Socthy ! have I
added your name ! You are lost to me , because you are lost to virtue"
Collected Letters . Ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (oxford 1956) I . p.164.
7. Biographia Literaria . , Vol I p. 180.
8. The Watchman . pp 16 - 26 .
9. I bid pp 272 - 3.
10. I bid p 14.
- 11 . Kelvin Everest , Coleridge's Secret Ministry . The Context of the Conversation
Poems 1795 - 1798 (Brighton and New Yourk , 1979) , p 19.
12. I bid p 19 .
13. See , Lay Seimons , Collected Works VI Ed. RI . White (Princeton 1972) p 30 .
14. See , The watchman Editor's Introduction , p.XIVII , and Collected Letters I pp
197 , 203 , etc.
15. The Complete Potical Works .Ed. EH. Coleridge (oxford 1912) Vol II pp 1135
-6 .
16. " The Present State of Society" . The Watchman , p 64 , See also Introduction ,
pp XIVII - XIVIII.
17. Norman Fruman , Coleridge , The Pamaged Archangel (London , 1971), pp
243 - 5 .
18. We wrote to Thelwall , " I have studied the subject deeply and widely ." Late
April , 1796 . Collected I p 205.

positions to which the two papers are directing their readers with such religious and intellectual tenacity are those to which the political journalism of The Watchman apparently tends and against which the textual grain of the writing acts deconstructively?

As so often in Coleridge, one feels in his concluding sentence that his intention is not precisely clear, his messaging with a disturbing freedom.

And it must be attributed to defect of ability, not of inclination of effort, if the words of the Prophet be altogether applicable to me. "O Watchman! thou hast watched in vain!" (34)

It is precisely this element Literariness which characterizes the writing of Coleridge not only in his great poetry and criticism, but in the early political exclamations of The Watchman.

“Address to the Readers of The Watchman”⁽³¹⁾ the sense remains of an irony within the writing or rather “the illusion of the cut short rather than the stopped”⁽³²⁾ I am not suggesting that The Watchman is fragmentary as a deliberate exercise of the imagination in the manner of “Kublakhan”. The journal did need grind to an unhappy halt. But in conclusion, Coleridge continues to involve his reader within a deliberate rhetorical unease which suggests that nothing is quite what it grammatically may seem, and that freedom actually is preserved in the failure of the journal which epitomises the reader’s failure to find repose in “Public” convictions from “the mind’s self - experience in the act of thinking”.

In his final “Address”, Coleridge states as the reason for his journal’s demise, one that is “short and satisfactory - the work does not pay its expenses”. Here is no purely rhetorical or political deficiency. With rather heavy irony, Coleridge identifies two rival newspapers whose particular virtues may have robbed The Watchman of its readers. The Cambridge Intelligencer⁽³³⁾ is identified as a “journal of weekly events”, fighting against tyrant and faithful to that religion “whose service is perfect freedom”; The Monthly Magazine may be read by those who expect “much and varied original composition”, writing in the cause of “rational liberty”. Coleridge actually borrowed material from the Monthly Magazine on several occasions for use in his own journal. Beside such virtuous publications, it would seem, The Watchman could not hope to survive; or may it be that precisely the

but nor is what Everest calls "the familial community life in nature as a social model" (29) ever free from the textual tendencies of resistance and question.

What needs to be recognised is this perpetual play of textual activity in The Watchman, as perceived also in the later poetry ("Kubla Khan") and criticism (Biographia Literaria). The rhetoric of Coleridge's journalism and poetical poetry continually creates a fictive world which it is folly to objectivize or read in any sense "literally". The inter-relation of public and private in the ten numbers of the journal is shaped by a desintegrative textuality which undercuts all attempts to abide, even critically, in a false view of the world. Freedom is preserved in the active recognition that it is in and by language that we must resist the tendency of language to create false beliefs and to give definitive meaning to its own rhetoric.

On 5th May, 1796, Coleridge, in despair, wrote to Thompson Poole. The toil given to The Watchman was apparently given in vain, ending in financial chaos and debt, while "meantime Mrs. Coleridge asks about baby-linen..." (30)

O Watchman! thou hast watched in vain said the
Prophet Ezekiel, I suppose, he was taking a prophetic
glimpse of my sorrow-s allowed cheeks - .

Undoubtedly the journal, almost inevitably, collapsed under the chronic inability of Coleridge to sustain a project under pressure or adequately organise his business affairs. Yet even in his final "

“ The Present State of Society” achieves most pointedly what seems to be going on throughout the political rhetoric of The Watchman . Texts confront the reader with violent political responses , “ to proclaim the State of the Political Atmosphere , and preserve Freedom and her Friends from the attacks of Robbers and Assassins !”⁽²⁶⁾ But in order to preserve freedom , the textual play of rhetoric and irony conspires to shake the reader into a perpetual unease with Coleridge’s “ public” voice - an unease felt by Thompson in Essays On His Times , but without the necessary awareness of the nature of the textuality.

Coleridge perpetually recalls his reader to self-assessment in the act of reading , subverting dogma and party politics in a return to “Principles” and in the manner of St. Paul seeking “ Truth in the spirit of meekness” .⁽²⁷⁾

This process of literary comment upon the “ Public” utterances of Watchman journalism does not precisely compare with what Mario Praz identified as a retreat from political enthusiasm into a “defensive , christian ideal” identified by him most clearly in “Fears in Solitude” (1798).⁽²⁸⁾ Kelvin Everest has rightly criticised Praz’s analysis as too straightforward in suggesting a pure retreat into privacy and domesticity.

The “ Vast Family of Love , Rais’d from the common earth by common toil” (“ The Present State of Society”) was never more than an ideal possibility perceived by the “ good Man , in his lonely walk” ,

In these concluding lines of "The Present State of Society", the poet carefully characterises his attitude - a heart seized by a vision, immature and eager for a bright future, The rationality and maturity of age are carefully reserved in the deliberate poetic enthusiasm of the unrealised pantisocratic dream. It is not simply that the language of the second half of the poem is exaggerated and inflated Miltonic rhetoric. There is also an underlying irony which undercuts the generalised and abstracted enthusiasm.

The last thirty six lines of the poem insistently call for a return to "Pure Faith" and "Meek Piety", in counter point to a list of present evils described in images large drawn from the Book of Revelation. The biblical reference of the passage is in fact, twofold; not only Revelation 17, but also Matthew 5, the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount.

Return, pure FATTH; return meek PIETY!

The Kingdoms of the World are yours:

The line is both ironic and perfectly straightforward; the whole poetic vision of "the vast Family of Love" is passionately earnest, overstated - and under cut by a subversive irony which, as it plays disturbingly upon familiar scriptural references, like the person from Prolock, warns against a false objectifying of the fictive processes of the poem.

imagination that it cannot be known merely discursively, and must be recreated - but by whom, if not by the reader? ⁽²⁵⁾

Rightly, Kathleem Wheeler perceives this activity in Coleridge's prose to be similar to those modern critical developments represented by such thinkers as George Poulet, R.H. Jauss, Stanley Fish and Wolfgang Iser, with theory which includes the reading as an essential part of the unity of a text.

Such processes are similarly at work in the rhetoric and poetry of The Watchman, and as essential to a proper understanding of Coleridge's strategy in these early political writings as in his later poetry and criticism. In "The Present State of Society" the pervasive influence of Milton and the pantisocratic convictions are the fundamental elements in Coleridge's "public" voice, creative of an atmosphere of particular audience response. Like the fictitious person from Prolock, they are creative of a fictive world of politics and social interaction - that world of national sentiment and inflated principles which is described by E.P. Thompson - and which Coleridge knew to be fictive even though a vision which was necessary to establish the confidence of and in society. The rhetoric, however, acts as a warning.

And such delights, such strange beatitude, Have
seiz'd my young anticipating heart, when that blest
Future rushes on my view;

power ; or like the path of sound through air; at every step he pauses and half recedes , and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. (23)

Kathleen Wheeler in her splendid book Souras , Processes and Methods in Coleridge's " Biographia Literaria" analyses another similar metaphoric "emblems of the mind's self - experience in the act of thinking" in the Biographia (24): the water - fly which " wins" its way upstream by alternate pulses of activity and passivity - for the reader , moments of thought and attention the ruined stairway for which ascending thought supplies the missing steps. (In a remarkable way Coleridge here looks forward to the theoretical work of Wolfgang Iser whose " implied reader" completes the " gaps" existing within the virtuality of the text).

Coleridge's concern in Biographia Literaria is to encourage not merely the performance of thought, but to experience a conscious attention to the processes of thought . As Dr. Wheeler expresses it:

... the Biographia contains a level of discourse which involves a consciousness of the reading process as a subject matter of the work in addition to the more explicit subject matter, which is the analysis of imagination ... Such a submerged level of discourse is necessary if even the explicit level is to be properly understood . For it is the avowed character of

the poet's reverie. Properly read, the gentle irony of this preface serves to shake the reader of the poem out of a literal reading which fails to perceive that the dream and the fragment of verse are metaphors for what is happening to him. The almost certainly fictitious intruder is an invention within a deliberate exercise of the imagination, a perpetual warning to the reader that his own limited vision and reductive rationality will supply a person from Prolock to cut short the poetic "dream". Coleridge's concern perpetually is to draw us back into a consciousness of the reading process, and that which the poem describes would not be were it not for the poem - as - it - is - read. (22)

The same effect is achieved in the later prose gloss of "The Ancient Mariner", and perhaps most significantly of all in the method of Biographia Literaria (1817). In each case, the commentary or discourse serves as a fictitious warning against the "objectifying" of the text into a false pattern of meaning, the commentary itself in the case of the "Mariner" exemplifying (like the person from Prolock) such a false rational tendency. On the surface of the text itself, Coleridge writes in the Biographia :

The reader be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution, but by the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual

in full some five weeks after the second number of The Watchman in Poems On Various Subjects (1796). In these lines, Fruman, following the work of John Livingston Lowes and Herbert Piper, indicates Coleridge's considerable debts to Erasmus Darwin and Joseph Priestly and his failure to acknowledge his mentors. In fact, in Fruman's view, the matter of British intervention in the French Revolution was a commonplace of thought, and Coleridge was actually claiming a great deal and adopting a posture of intense research, ⁽¹⁸⁾ while his utterance is merely abstract unoriginal banality, aesthetically "sunk in a kind of Miltonic rigor mortis". ⁽¹⁹⁾

The straightforward political reading of Lewis Patton, and the criticism of Norman Fruman need radical correction. An initial point of crucial significance is Coleridge's public claim in the title of "Religious Musings" that the poem "was written on the Christmas Eve of 1794", a clear untruth as it was, in fact, written over almost a two-year period. But Coleridge continues to refer to it as his "Nativity", with its thematic reminiscences of Melton's "Nativity Ode". ⁽²⁰⁾ Now this curious public strategy, in introducing a poem is not unique to "Religious Musing", or even just to his poetry.

The prose preface to "Kublakhan", contains a similar free rendering of the historical facts of the incident in the Farm House between Porlock and Linton in Autumn 1797 ⁽²¹⁾, introducing the reader to the notorious "person on business from prolock" who fractures

benevolent law of our nature from intellectual activity
a pleasure results which is gradually associated and
mingles as a corrective with the painful subject of the
description. ⁽¹⁵⁾

This beneficial activity is described by Lewis Patton the editor
of The Watchman in the Collected Works in entirely public terms. In
Patton's reading the poem is a straightforward statement that the evils of
society derive from the institution of property. that the few in England
oppress the " numberless / Whom foul OPPRESSION'S ruffian
gluttong / Drives From Life's plenteous feast ;" ⁽¹⁶⁾ The Revolution in
France and Scripture combine to announce that the day of oppression
is almost at an end:

Return, Pure FAITH ; return , meek PIETY; The
Kingdom of the World are yours; each heart self-
govern'd the Vast Family of Love , Rais'd from the
common earth by common toil, Enjoy the equal
produce.

In short, it would seem that Coleridge is still a pantisocrat as
when he and Southey were dreaming of their community on the banks
of the Susquehanna river.

Norman Fruman , as one might expect , roundly condemns this
early poetic "Public" utterance ⁽¹⁷⁾ "The Present State of Society"
Comprises lines 279 - 378 of "Religious Musings" which was
published

perpetual contemporaneity" and his acute sensitivity to his particular audience as a journalist, a poet, a philosopher, a critic arises from his symbolic ⁽¹³⁾ sense of the universal in the particular, and that through the specific claims of any situation or debate are to be perceived those general "principles" which it is the poet's duty both to discern and maintain The Watchman is to be understood, therefore, as the product of Coleridge's poetic intelligence, the political rhetoric deliberately veiling (and therefore revealing) a sub-text which is serious and entirely responsible. As always, Coleridge demands a high degree of critical activity on the part of his readers as he generates an entirely fictive world, which relates only in extremely complex ways with the "real" world of the political observer, and within which principles of personal freedom are expounded and defended.

The key to The Watchman is the poem in the second number entitled "The present state of society", which Coleridge had begun as early as December 1794 and which was eventually to form a substantial part of his "Religious Musings", considered by him at this early point in his career not only his most significant poem, but probably also his most important production. ⁽¹⁴⁾ Into this philosophical verse he poured his learning and his passion, appealing to David Hartley's associationism in his preface to Poem (1796):

The communicativeness of our nature leads us to describe our own sorrows in the endeavour to describe them intellectual activity is exerted; and by a

Coleridge's change of attitude towards revolutionary France is a response to a deeper loyalty to principles. Typically, and in the "introductory Essay" to The Watchman, he expressed "my bias ... in favour of principles, not men: and though I may be classed with a party, I scorn to be of a faction"⁽¹⁰⁾. Throughout his life and in his manifold intellectual pursuits, political, philosophical, the logical or literary, Coleridge remained firm in his endeavour to establish the principles upon which particular attitudes and actions should be based. Typically in The Watchman, the rhetoric which Thompson so heavily criticizes is employed to that end.

In the passage just quoted, Coleridge warns that as the legislators of France forget the principles upon which their Revolution was founded, so by degrees, not only will they forget "the proud duties of Citizens "but also" become callous to the softer claims of domestic life".

It was in response to such claims that Coleridge, upon the demise of The Watchman, retired to the domestic seclusion of Nether Stoway, and, as Kelvin Everest has pointed out in his book Coleridge's Secret Ministry (1979), one of the keys to understanding him is "the special resonance ... of the public in the private"⁽¹¹⁾. In all his writings, including his letters and even his private notebooks, Coleridge was profoundly conscious of his audience, conscious that is, of the rhetorical qualities of his utterances. As Everest puts it, "We ... have to decide what statements are reliable evidence, and we meet this problem often in trying to trace the development of Coleridge's mind"⁽¹²⁾. His "

negotiations with France, and his respect for the better principles and strength of the Directory . This clear contrast , however , was confused in April 1796 , both because of Bonaparte's Italian campaign crecooded in The Watchman , IX and X) which posed a dangerous threat to security, and, more important, because France now seemed to be rejecting English overtures of peace . Later numbers of the journal thus reflect his growing disappointment with the course of the Revolution . Number VIII opens with a "Remonstrance to the French Legislators" , deploring France's increasing military ambition .

If ... you persevere in your intentions, will your soldiers fight with the same enthusiasm for the Ambition as they have done for the liberty of their country? Will they not by degrees amid the stern discipline of arms and the horrors of War, forget the proud duties of Citizens , and become callous to the softer claims of domestic life ? ... May not the evils of Despotism but have felt the horrors of a revolutionary Republic , imbibe sentiments favourable to Royalty ? Will not the multitude of discontented men make such regulations necessary for the preservation of your Freedom , as in themselves destroy Freedom ? Have not some of your supposed Patriots already deemed it expedient to limit the liberty of the Press? ⁽⁹⁾

Thompson or, notoriously, Norman Fruman in *The Damaged Archangel* (1971), and castigate Coleridge's political journalism as the egocentric outpourings of adishonest and deluded mind given to fantasizing. Despite his disgraceful treatment of personal friends and sponsors like Cottle and Southey⁽⁶⁾, with an immaturity and neglectfulness of people which Coleridge never altogether outgrew, he is revelly less than serious in The Watchman, where his political views are expressed in the context of a subtle literary structure which was even looking forward to the poetry of "Kubla Khan" and the criticism of Biographia Literaria. Despite his dismissal of his early journalism in that work of 1817, Coleridge nevertheless remained convinced of his "talents" as a serious (rather than a "popular") writer, and continued to display moral satisfaction, he wrote, "I was most sincere, most disinterested."⁽⁷⁾ Both Colmer and Thompson, in their different ways have misread The Watchman and underestimated it, with all its faults, as an expression of Coleridge's extraordinary and consistent mind. But this consistency is not to be sought in his political attitude or his prima facie arguments. For example, having been awakened to political consciousness in 1794, until the Spring of 1796 Coleridge remained substantially convinced of the propriety of revolutionary France as a model for the kind of society towards which all societies should be evolving. The first number of The Watchman in its "Review of the Motions in the Legislature for a peace with France"⁽⁸⁾ indicates his disdain of weak English ministry's refusal to enter into peace

remained a critical following which has been prepared to take seriously the political voice and ambitions of The Watchman. John Colmer, in his book Coleridge Critic of Society (1959), admits the weakness of Coleridge's "intrinsic literary and polemical merit"⁽⁴⁾ in his journal and his fatal inability to sustain "watch drudgery" over a long period, resulting in the steady decrease in the amount of original material as the weeks went by. (The Watchman ran only from 1st March to 13th May). He recognises the problem that the journal never really focused upon a specific audience and that Coleridge found great difficulty in establishing a satisfactory relationship with his public. But he never takes the young radical less than seriously, tracing his expressed attitude to politics and political philosophy with a touching belief that Coleridge means exactly what he says.

In the essay On the Slave Trade (Watchman IV), for example, while Colmer admits that the young author is naive not to recognise sufficiently "the reciprocal relationship that exists between legislative act and the force of public opinion",⁽⁵⁾ his fundamental thinking "Struck at the heart of the problem". Innocent in practical terms, Coleridge's political journalism invariably strikes to the heart of the matter and is valuable on its own terms.

My contention is that it is dangerous to imagine even with so youthful as Coleridge, that he means exactly what he says, aware as he is that literature is not by nature attuned to that happy state of literalism. The necessary alternative, however, is not to adopt the attitude of E.P.

Full of missionary zeal, Coleridge set off on a tour of the Midlands and the North on 9th January, 1786, to procure subscribers for The Watchman, an energetic journey which he described in a series of detailed letters to Josiah Wade. History, however, has tended to view the numbers of The Watchman through the apparent prejudices of two reporters. The first is Joseph Cottle, whose Early Recollection (1837) and Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey (1847) reflect the hurt of what he feels to be Coleridge's ingratitude after his own kindness and patronage. Heedless of Coleridge's fervour, Cottle condemns him as a procrastinator, lacking perseverance or self-knowledge and quite incapable of supporting the effort required to maintain regular and extended publication.⁽²⁾ The second is Coleridge himself, writing years later in Biographia Literaria (1817), in which, seemingly anxious to play down his early radicalism and attribute the brief appearance of The Watchman to his youthful naivety, he dismisses the episode in his "Advice to young Authors" (chap. 10). There he describes his youthful "lack of worldly knowledge" and writes in the patronizing tones of middle age of the fervour of his political rhetoric. "I argued, I described, I promised, I prophesied; and beginning with the captivity of nations I ended with the near approach of the millenium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state out of The Religious Musings".⁽³⁾

But if, in retrospect, Coleridge recognised that it was not his vocation to be a "popular" political writer and journalist, there has

“ ST Coleridge’s Watchman:

A Poetic Intelligence”

***Ghada Bakr Marie**

Coleridge’s periodical The Watchman (1796) was a reaction of his failure to share Robert Southey on a journal to be called the Provincial Magazine . The prospectus which was circulated was straight forward the press played an important role in the provision of information . Such population might make a change in the state of government for the preservation of “ Freedom and her friends” . He wrote:

A PEOPLE ARE FREE IN PROPRTION AS THEY FORM THEIR OWN OPINIONS. In the strictest sense of the word KNOWLEDGE IS POWER. Without previous illumination a change in the forms of Government will be of no avail . These are but the shadows, the virtue and ration a lity of the people at large are the substince of Freedom ; and where Corruption and I gnorance are prevalent , the best forms of Government are but the “ Shadows of a Shade” ! We actually transfer the Sovereignty to the people , when we make them susceptible to it. In the present perilous state of our constitution the Friends of Freedom , of Reason , and of Human Nature , must feel it their duty by every mean in their power to supply or circulate political information. ⁽¹⁾

College of Physical Education / University of Mosul.