THE ANCIENT MARINER'S CONVERSION:
COLERIDGE, RELIGION, AND THE RIME

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by
Meta Margaret Lale
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PREFACE

All underscoring within quotations is the original author's, unless otherwise noted.

Coleridge's statements are reproduced uncorrected. Foreign words have been deleted, their English counterparts substituted in brackets.
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CHAPTER I
THE RIME'S RELIGIOUS THEME
AND
COLO RIDGE'S METHODS OF CONDUCTING "TRUTH"

My thesis is that Coleridge employed universal images of the supernatural and traditional Christian symbols to illustrate the Mariner's religious conversion in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. The basis for this proposition is that Coleridge made religion the Rime's theme. The following validations of the religious theme proposal will be offered in this chapter:

1. The religious theme synthesizes two popular but unsatisfactory thematic statements: "estrangement" and "sacramental vision."

2. Coleridge's philosophical system is founded upon the postulation of a supernatural reality. The Mariner's conversion may be seen as his change from Aristotelian conceptualism (which recognizes one reality—nature) to Platonic dualism (which recognizes two realities—nature and supernature).

Critics who explore the Rime's theme usually describe it as either "estrangement" or "sacramental vision." The choice of either one denies the other and leaves only half a critical loaf on which to chew.

The point of view of those critics who see the Mariner as primarily an existentially estranged being in The Wasteland from which there is No Exit may be summarized by Walter
Jackson Bate's statement that "the theme is the nakedness of man's trembling existence before the vast unknown, an existence made the more vulnerable by what Coleridge in a later poem [The Rains of Sleep] called 'the unfathomable Hell within.'" To be sure, the Mariner's exile powerfully expresses "that inner exile in which all creation groans." Before his conversion, the Mariner is an isolated being, alive amidst dead men, in a strange incomprehensible world where simple cause/effect logic appears to have no validity. But the Mariner is not left feeling isolated, left "alone on a wide wide sea." The universal appeal of the Rime is not only the conjuring up of the archetypal feeling of estrangement, but also the relief from that feeling in the Mariner's conversion. The Rime's theme obviously must cover a larger area than "estrangement." Several critics who object to finding any religious implication within the Rime nevertheless indicate that religion is an appropriate thematic description. For example, Irving Babbitt said, "the poem lays claim to a religious seriousness that at bottom it does not possess." Babbitt feels the Rime's success lies in its ability to evoke emotion through the "main romantic motif of solitude," but fails to see the relationship between this emotion and religion even though he cannot illustrate his premise without using words borrowed from religion: "the soul is a state of the landscape, the landscape a state of the soul" and "in the house of art are many mansions." The universal use of religious language to describe the feeling of solitude indicates
religion's close connection to isolation. Because isolation is terrifying, man has always attempted to unite with a Supreme Being. The attempt is religion. Thus the estrangement theme is a part of the religious theme.

Finding the theme to be "sacramental vision" limits the Mariner's experience to "an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace" and denies his estrangement. Although Robert Penn Warren's equation of the "theme of sacramental vision [to] the theme of the 'One Life'" broadens the scope of "sacramental vision" and allows room for the estrangement element, the "One Life" as a thematic statement has also proved unsatisfactory because critics often neglect to point out that Coleridge's concept of the One Life is inextricably bound up with his belief in God. To Coleridge, the One Life means a joy in living things and a sense of relationship with God:

It is our joy in the beauty of the world that enables us to love the Law that governs it.

By removing the Law from the One Life, critics such as Leslie Stephen extract from the cause/effect chain of events a ridiculous moral:

People who sympathize with a man who shoots an Albatross will die in prolonged torture of thirst.

The Mariner's shooting the Albatross appears to be no more a crime than cutting his own toenails when critics overlook Coleridge's belief that a crime against nature also violates Supernature:

Each Thing has a Life of its own, & yet they are all one Life. In God they move & live, & have
their Being—not had, as the cold system of Newtonian Theology represents, but have.11

The "One Life" thematic statement is unsatisfactory because Coleridge's One Life concept is misunderstood to be pantheism despite his statement that "Tis God diffused through all/
That doth make all one whole."12

Religion as a thematic statement makes clear the moral aspect of the Mariner's actions. Although religion concerns man's relationship to God and morality concerns man's relationship to man, Coleridge believed religion implies morality. The brotherhood of man is imposed by the fatherhood of God:

No I without a Thou, no Thou without a Law from Him, to whom I and Thou stand in the same relation. Distinct Self-knowledge begins with the Sense of Duty to our neighbor; and Duty felt to, and claimed from, my Equal supposes and implies the Right of a Third, superior to both because imposing it on both.13

Before his conversion, the Mariner is unaware of God and so is unaware of the brotherhood of all life. He kills the Albatross without realizing he is killing his brother, "a Christian soul" (l. 65). That the Mariner's unconsciousness of God results in the lack of morality was foreshadowed by Coleridge in Religious Musings:

But we that roam unconscious, or with hearts Unfeeling of our universal Sire,
And that in His vast family no Cain
Injured uninjured (in her best-aimed blow
Victorious Murder a blind Suicide) (ll. 117-21).

When the Mariner becomes conscious of his "universal Sire," he loves all because God "views all creation; and he loves it all" (RM, l. 112):

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all (Rime, ll. 614-17).
The Rime's moral bears a close resemblance to the view of morality Coleridge presented in Religious Musings. Both are apparently religious poems.

Neither the estrangement theme nor the theme of sacramental vision adequately describes the Mariner's entire experience. Each is a part of the religious theme. Religion (from "religare, to bind back") encompasses both estrangement—the Mariner's separation from supernature—and sacramental vision—the Mariner is bound back to supernature. The Mariner's isolation from and return to supernature parallels the two elements common to all religions, as made evident by William James's analysis of universal religious experience:

There is a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all meet. It consists of two parts: stage one [is] an uneasiness [estrangement]; stage two [is] its solution [sacramental experience]. This uneasiness . . . is a sense that there is something wrong about us as we naturally stand. The solution is a sense that we are saved from the wrongness by making proper connection with the higher powers. . . . The wrongness takes a moral character [shooting the Albatross] and the salvation takes a mystical tinge [the Mariner's perception of the likeness between God and His creation is a mystic experience].

James's description of universal religious experience also describes the Mariner's, which "consists of two parts"—estrangement and sacramental experience. James's statement that "the essence of religious experience" occurs when "man identifies his real being with the germinal higher part of himself" also describes the Mariner's conversion, his change from nothingness to being. Coleridge's philosophy discloses his concept of being and will be examined in the following validation of the religious theme proposal.
Coleridge's philosophy is grounded upon the postulation of a supernatural reality; the Mariner's being begins with the postulation of a Supreme Being. Coleridge uses the ontological argument to affirm God:

Truth is correlative to being. Knowledge without a correspondent reality is no knowledge; if we know, there must be somewhat known by us (BL, I, 180).

Knowledge of Truth is dependent upon belief in God, for He is the one "absolute truth capable of communicating to other positions a certainty, which it has not itself borrowed; a truth self-grounded, unconditional and known by its own light" (BL, I, 181).

Coleridge's philosophy, based upon affirmation of the ontological and denial of the cosmological arguments for the existence of God, is evident in the Rime in the Mariner's conversion from Aristotelian to Platonic thought. The ontological argument echoes Plato's philosophy. If one thinks of God, there must be a God or one would never have been able to think of Him. The idea of God and God are identical. By the same logic, a denial of God affirms God, in that the idea of a God existed before one could deny it. The cosmological argument, that one logically arrives at a knowledge of the existence of God by observation of the natural world, reflects Aristotle's mechanistic philosophy. Coleridge scoffs at deductive logic with words of strongly Platonic import:

Did you deduce your own being? Even that is less absurd than the conceit of deducing the Divine Being. Never would you have had the notion, had you not had the Idea--rather, had not the Idea worked in you, like the Memory of a Name which we cannot recollect and yet feel that we have, and which reveals its' [sic ff.] existence in the mind only by a restless anticipation & proves its' prior actuality
by the almost explosive instantaneity with which it is welcomed and recognized on its re-emersion out of the Cloud, or its re-ascent above the horizon of Consciousness.\(^{15}\)

Coleridge affirms rather than deduces both knowledge of self and knowledge of God:

If we elevate our conception to the absolute self, the great eternal I AM, then the principle of being, and of knowledge, of idea, and of reality; the ground of existence, and the ground of the knowledge of existence, are absolutely identical. I am, because I affirm myself to be; I affirm myself to be, because I am (BL, II, 183).

The finite I AM resembles the infinite I AM. The Mariner's perception of that resemblance, i.e., his identification of "his real being with the germinal higher part of himself,"\(^{16}\) is mysticism:

Mysticism is defined as the experience of the identity of subject and object in relation to Being itself.\(^{17}\)

The Mariner's mystic experience allows his experience of Being and enables him to perceive Truth, the "correlative to being." From the recognition of the infinite I AM proceeds the power of perception:

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 (BL, I, 202).

Upon what faculty did the Mariner rely before his mystic experience? The reflective faculty, a compound of the "fancy" and the "understanding," which Coleridge found partook of Death:

The writings of the mystics gave me an indistinct, yet stirring and working presentiment, that all the products of the mere reflective faculty partook of Death . . . . Mysticism enabled me to
skirt, without crossing, the sandy deserts of utter unbelief (BL, I, 98).

The Mariner lives a "life-in-death" before his conversion, for he depends upon the reflective faculty that partakes of death to perceive reality. Coleridge partially described the faculty as the "Fancy which has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. . . . The Fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association" (BL, I, 202). These "fixities and definites" are objects of sense, whatever meets one as a sense object. Other men, nature, all things become objects when one's fancy is employed in greeting them. This faculty partakes of death because "all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead" (BL, I, 202). Employment of the fancy alone results in associationism, the theory that the development of the soul is reached through the association of ideas and especially through the medium of the senses. From the associative point of view "the will, the reason, the judgment, and the understanding, instead of being the determining causes of association, must needs be represented as its creatures, and among its mechanical effects" (BL, I, 76). The Mariner depends upon the fancy and so is subject to "the despotism of outward impression" which accumulates other impressions from his past experience until "absolute delirium" results (BL, I, 77). Coleridge speculates that such a state might be an individual's judgment day:

To bring before every human soul the collective experience of its whole past existence . . . is the dread book of judgment, in whose mysterious hieroglyphics every idle word is recorded (BL, I, 80).
The Mariner is led into his own judgment day by his reliance on the fancy when his accumulated experiences are revealed to him as the state of sin. The killing of the Albatross was the symptom of the state of sin. The state of sin is his living in the world of sense, unaware of the Supernatural reality. Suffering the extreme heat and dryness traditionally associated with the judgment of sinful souls, the Mariner is "crossing the sandy deserts of utter disbelief." Here the Mariner may be a product of Coleridge's projected "dissection of Atheism," for he is "an outcast of blind Nature ruled by a fatal Necessity--slave of an ideot Nature!" (See Appendix A, Item 1).

Living in a world of "mechanical effects"--fatal Necessities--among objects fixed and dead, the Mariner becomes fixed and dead:

We stuck, nor breath nor motion.
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean (ll. 117-18).

Perceiving only imperfect imitations without awareness of the perfect original, the Mariner becomes what Plato called an imitation of an imitation.

The understanding, the other portion of the reflective faculty, is related to the fancy in its concern with the imitations of this world, the reflections on the back wall of Plato's allegorical cave. As Coleridge, the avowed Platonist, puts it, "the understanding itself is but the shadowy abstraction of living and actual truth." Like the world Coleridge says the understanding makes visible, the Mariner's world is--reported only through the imperfect translation
of lifeless and sightless notions. . . . No wonder then, that he remains incomprehensible to himself as well as to others. No wonder, that, in the fearful desert of his consciousness . . . he bewilders himself in the pursuit of notional phantoms, the mere refractions from unseen and distant truths through the distorting medium of his own unenlivened and stagnant understanding (Bk. I, 168-9).

The distorting medium of the understanding causes the Mariner's distortion of perception. The Mariner's view of elements about him changes because he cannot distinguish between reality and shadow; hence the "ambivalence of the storm" and of "the land of ice . . . both beautiful and terrible."21

The Mariner's world, interpreted to him only through the medium of the senses, is an accumulation of parts without unity. Coleridge compares his own mind, that "had been habituated to the Vast," with the minds of men like the Mariner:

Those who have been led to the same truths step by step thro' the constant testimony of their senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess—They contemplate nothing but parts—and all parts are necessarily little—and the Universe to them is but a mass of little things.22

The watersnakes, which symbolize all creatures including the Mariner, are merely a mass of little things:

And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I (ll. 238-9).

The Mariner cannot deduce the universal from the particular; he cannot deduce the "Divine Being" or his "own being" (see Coleridge's statement, p. 6). Without a postulation of God, the universe is incomprehensible, meaningless, blank. This "repressed horror of modern Aristotelianism"23 leads the Mariner to despair. He is unable to relate to anyone or anything without first establishing a relationship to God.
He despises himself:

He despiseth the creatures of the calm (Gloss, p. 17).

He says No to all life, including his own:

And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I (ll. 238-9).

And yet I could not die (l. 262).

Without a postulation of "the Law which controls Nature, and gives her Reality, yea, which constitutes (what without its presence would be Chaos, Hades, blind, blank and void Multeity) Nature," the Mariner becomes blind and the universe blank and void:

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye (ll. 248-51).

Not acknowledging "the Truth which is very Life," the Mariner perceives only death and decay:

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay (ll. 240-3).

The Mariner lives a "life-in-death" when depending upon the faculty which partakes of death, the fancy and the understanding.

Life, or being, begins with the postulation of God. The higher faculty, which enables one to perceive reality, becomes operative when the idea of God reascends "above the horizon of Consciousness" and the Mariner remembers his "native country"--the world of Truth or ideal form. When he becomes related to God, he recognizes the universal
By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm (Gloss, p. 19).

He participates in the universal himself, for the established link between the Mariner and the snakes makes him one of "God's creatures" also. Now the Mariner "exists in a participation of a common spirit" which enables him "to live in the universal," to "find a reflex of himself . . . in the mystery of being." The Mariner is no longer dependent upon the Fancy, the power to see only the Many. The faculty higher than the Fancy is the Imagination, "the power by which one image or feeling is made to modify many others and by a sort of fusion to force many into one." When the Mariner converts to a belief in God, the higher faculty which brings Life is born. The Imagination "is essentially vital" (BL, I, 202). The postulation of God results in his saying Yes to life:

O happy living things! (l. 282).

The Mariner is no longer dependent upon the Understanding, the "shadowy abstraction of living and actual Truth" (BL, I, 168). The faculty higher than the understanding is reason. Reason is the power to know truth. To Coleridge, truth is "a species of revelation." In his poem "Reason," Coleridge shows reason to be synonymous with revelation:

Finally, what is Reason? You have often asked me: this is my answer:

Whene'er the mist, that stands 'twixt God and thee, Defecates to a pure transparency,
That intercepts no light and adds no stain—
There Reason is, and then begins her reign. 31

Reason is revelation; Imagination is "a repetition in the
finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite
I AM" (BL, I, 202). Coleridge's system of philosophy is
dependent upon the assumption of a supernatural reality.
Coleridge assumes both the real existence of nature and
of supernature. His method by which man knows both realities
is through the imagination and the reason which become
operative only when a God is postulated. Coleridge shows
the Mariner before his conversion to be dependent upon the
"reflective faculty" which results in his inability to
comprehend the reality of nature and supernature. When the
Mariner postulates a God, he comprehends the reality of both
nature and supernature through his "higher faculty"—a
compound of reason and imagination. The Mariner's being
"bound back" to God enables him to realize his Being. One
must conclude that, to Coleridge, religion is knowledge:

Religion is the only knowledge that truly
is (BL, I, 94).

Because Coleridge's philosophy is inherent within the
Mariner's experience, one might say that "religion is the
ultimate aim of the Rime" just as Coleridge said that "religion
is the ultimate aim of philosophy." 32

Coleridge not only made religion his aim in philosophy,
but also attempted to reconcile his philosophy to a specific
religion—Christianity. 33 This narrower perspective impeded
his progress on the proposed Magnum Opus, as J. Shawcross
points out:

In the free development of his philosophical
views Coleridge was inevitably hampered by his desire to adopt them to a particular body of religious doctrine.\textsuperscript{34}

Coleridge's adopting Christian doctrine within his poetry was more fortunate, for the \textit{Rime} was the result. From the wealth of evidence indicating the \textit{Rime}'s Christian framework is Coleridge's statement that when writing the \textit{Rime} he was "directing his endeavours to the supernatural."\textsuperscript{35} Supernaturalism is defined as "the doctrine of a divine and supernatural agency in the revelations recorded in the Bible, and in the grace which renews and sanctifies men." Coleridge presents the case for supernaturalism in the following notebook entry written while he was reworking the \textit{Rime} for the 1834 edition of \textit{Poetical Works}:

More and more strenuously to impress on myself and render intelligible to others the great principle—that all truths of religion are\textsuperscript{practical,} and by their practicability not their intellectual conceivability to be tried and judged of. Thus: I not only believe, that by Faith alone can I be justified, and that if I live at all, except the life-in-death under the curse of a most holy but for me impracticable law, it is not I, but Christ that liveth in me and that this faith is not mine but of Grace—the faith of the Son of God, who communicates it to me, and whose righteousness is the alone righteousness by which I can be saved—and yet there must be an act of receiving on my part.\textsuperscript{36}

Coleridge here repeats the doctrine of Christianity and of supernaturalism: man is renewed (saved) by grace (the faith of Christ in man); however, man must have a corresponding faith in Christ.\textsuperscript{37} The life-in-death curse, the idea of communication between man and God (mystical union through inward perception of mind), and the ontological nature of Coleridge's belief in Christ all bear directly upon the
Rime. Of main concern to the Rime's explication is that Coleridge's Christian faith is akin to his philosophical postulation of God as a first premise; both require a metaphysical leap rather than "intellectual conceivability." Both a postulation of God and faith in Christ express an assumption without proof. Coleridge shows the Mariner's conversion to be both universal religious experience (his postulation of a supernatural reality) and Christian religious experience (his faith in Christ). In Chapter Two, I shall examine the Mariner's universal experience, his change from conceptualism to dualism. In Chapter Three, I shall examine the Mariner's Christian experience, his change from faithless to faithful.

Although the Rime is founded upon the archetypal belief in the reality of the supernatural, which is the basis of every religion, it is a poem rather than a religious treatise. How does Coleridge portray rather than explain the Mariner's change from conceptualism to dualism? The motto Coleridge prefixed to the Rime suggests his use of images to portray the Mariner's relationship to the supernatural world. The motto from Burnet directs attention away from the natural world, the realm of sense perception inherent in Aristotelian conceptualism, toward the supernatural world, the realm of ideas presented in Platonic dualism:

I readily believe there are more invisible beings in the universe than visible.

The motto expressly states that the memory of the supernatural world is strengthened by contemplating images
of the supernatural world:

Yet there is profit, I do not doubt, in sometimes contemplating in the mind, as in a picture, the image of a greater and better world: lest the intellect, habituated to the petty details of daily life, should be contracted within too narrow limits and settle down wholly on trifles.38

How does the poet image supernature so that the reader recognizes the image as a picture of the "greater and better world?" Although Coleridge's advancement of the imagination as the power to image God may be accepted in theory, it is superficial in practice. The power used in literary creation is assumed to be a repetition of the creative power of God.39 Those of us who do not assume the existence of God will have to look deeper into Coleridge's beliefs to find the possible birthplace of the Rime's images.

Coleridge thought of the mind as composed of a series of levels grounded upon the unconscious:

This region of unconscious thoughts, often the more working the more they are indistinct, may . . . be conceived as forming an ascending scale from the most universal associations of the motion with the functions and passions of life up to the half perceived, yet not fixable resemblance of a form to some particular object of a diverse class.40

What is buried deep within the unconscious? Coleridge answers:

The same 'timeless truth' of myth and revealed religion is to be found deep in the unconscious of every individual.41

The idea of an innate Truth within man is a logical assumption to anyone who holds that God created the universe according to perfect patterns and ideas existing in His
own mind. The creation must partake of its Creator in some way, and what ideas more evidently resemble the eternal ideas of God than those "truths" which have been reiterated throughout time? Coleridge's wide range of study is well known. His "inquiring spirit" sought the timeless truth in various philosophical systems and religious myths. The truth is expressed similarly in images. The body of images universally used to picture the supernatural world impresses itself as an indicator of the relationship between the truth grounded in the unconscious and the eternal Truth. My opinion is that Coleridge employed universal images of the supernatural in the Rime to help scrape away the top layers of the mind in order to reveal the timeless truth buried within. The Mariner's conversion to dualism, portrayed by universal images of the supernatural, will be discussed in Chapter Two.

What specific words did Coleridge use to portray the Mariner's change from faithless to faithful? When the answer is again sought from Coleridge's writings, it becomes apparent that he employed the traditional Christian symbols which were particularly strong during the Gothic period.

In his study of various myths, Coleridge covered the same ground as the early Christian philosophers whose purpose, he said, was "to reduce the mythic into Laws, sometimes openly, oftener at first in the vest[ure] of Symbols." Coleridge admired the system of symbols these philosophers constructed. He felt that these symbols could penetrate into that truth latent in the unconscious because the system resulted from
numerous men's higher faculties—-the imagination and the reason:

[The Scriptures] are the living educts of the imagination; of that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the reason in images of the sense, and organizing (as it were) the flux of the senses by the permanence and self-circling energies of the reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths of which they are the conductors. 45

The symbols conduct the truth because they are "consubstantial with" it. The truth which resides within Scripture also resides within other myths; all are projections of the truth residing in the unconscious. 46 The early Christian philosophers (also called Church Fathers or exegetists) recognized the truths inherent in the images found in myths and in the Bible and, therefore, were able to systematize and interpret these truths. Coleridge confirms the Church Fathers as the proper ground for judgment of Scripture:

I do not mean to condemn the exercise or deny the right of every individual, competent and incompetent, to interpret Scripture in a sense of his own. . . . ; and where the interpreter judges in ignorance or in contempt of uninterrupted tradition, the unanimous consent of Fathers and Councils, and the universal faith of the Church. It is not the attempt to form a judgment, which is here called in question; but the grounds, or rather the no-grounds on which the judgment is formed and relied on. 47

If Coleridge drew upon this body of traditional Christian symbols, the Rime can be viewed as a specimen of medieval Christian art. In the Gothic Image, Emile Male describes the symbols used by the medieval artists:

 Are we in the presence of an ordered system, an ancient tradition? The answer is found in the most cursory reading of the works of the Fathers and the mediaeval doctors. Never was doctrine
more closely knit or more universally accepted. It dates back to the beginning of the Church, and is founded on the words of the Bible itself. In the Scriptures, indeed, as interpreted by the Fathers, the material world is a constant image of the spiritual world. In each word of God, both the visible and the invisible are contained. 48

The medieval artists employed the system of symbols interpreted by the Fathers as a means to pass from the visible to the invisible world. The medieval artists believed that symbols "penetrated into the inner meaning" of the natural world and revealed the supernatural world:

The world therefore may be defined as "a thought of God realised through the Word." In each being is hidden a divine thought; the world is a book written by the hand of God in which every creature is a word charged with meaning. The ignorant see the forms—the mysterious letters—understanding nothing of their meaning, but the wise pass from the visible to the invisible. 49

Coleridge uses the same word/book metaphors to express the same thought—that seeing nature as a symbol of supernatural constituted religious enlightenment:

Then will the other great Bible of God, the Book of Nature, become transparent to us when we regard the forms of matter as words, as symbols, valuable only as being the expression, an unrolled but glorious fragment, of the wisdom of the Supreme Being. 50

Coleridge felt that men, as a part of nature, were "words of the Word" 51 and were "valuable" only as spiritual rather than as sensual beings. Coleridge believed that Gothic art "rendered the mind intuitive of the spiritual in man;"

Gothic art depended on a symbolical expression of the infinite,—which is not vastness, nor immensity, nor perfection, but whatever cannot be circumscribed within the limits of actual sensuous being. 52
Coleridge evidently believed that the "Great Invisible (by symbols only seen)" (RM, ll. 9-10) became visible in Gothic art. Coleridge's belief that the Gothic artist's use of the symbol penetrated to that inward region of "timeless truth" would persuade him to use that same system of symbols to accomplish his objective in the Rime: "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth" (BL, I, 6).

Other evidence that the Rime be considered as Gothic art is more readily discernible. The Rime's setting is the late Gothic period. Coleridge's advertisement in Lyrical Ballads (1798) places the Rime about 1500:

The Rime of the Ancient Marinere was professedly written in imitation of the style, as well as of the spirit of the elder poets; but with a few exceptions, the Author believes that the language adopted in it has been equally intelligible for these three last centuries.

Before publication, Coleridge was concerned that the Rime's style might not be understood; after publication, he was concerned that its spirit had not been understood. In his addition of the marginal gloss in 1817, Coleridge explains some of the symbols within the text to direct the reader's awareness of his spiritual intention. For example, the religious implication of the following lines may be unclear if one is not aware that dew and rain are symbols of grace:

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained (ll. 297-300).
The gloss clearly indicates that "rain, if not immoderate, and dew, and living water [symbolize] the graces and doctrine of the spirit."55

By the grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain (Gloss, p. 21).

Thus the gloss was not added "to credibilize the marvels,"56 but to revivify those symbols which had become dead to Coleridge's readers who, even if Christians, were certainly not medieval Christians.

During the same year the marginal gloss appeared, Coleridge expressed the wish that his readers might become familiar with the traditional Christian symbols which shaped the Gothic York Cathedral in order to understand the spiritual sense of his writings:

Beauty [is] the subjection of matter to spirit so as to be transformed into a symbol, in and through which the spirit reveals itself; and I declare that the most beautiful, where the most obstacles to a full manifestation have been most perfectly overcome. I would that the readers for whom alone I write . . . might be warm from the admiration of . . . the exterior and interior of York Cathedral! (BL, I, 239).

Explication of these same symbols which shaped the Rime helps "overcome obstacles to a full manifestation" of the poem's beauty. In Chapter Three, I shall examine the Mariner's change from faithless to faithful using critical tools appropriate for Gothic art.

CONCLUSION

Coleridge's famous statement of his objective when writing the Rime suggests that the reader's objective
should be "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith" (BL, I, 6). As I. A. Richards has pointed out, this statement is not expressed "quite in the happiest terms, for we are neither aware of a disbelief nor voluntarily suspending it when reading well. It is better to say that the question of belief or disbelief, in the intellectual sense, never arises when we are reading well."57 One can read the Rime well either believing, with Sigmund Freud, that "the unconscious was taken as a model in the construction of a transcendental reality"58 or, with Coleridge, that the idea of God in the unconscious corresponds to the reality of God. To read well one must only recognize that Coleridge presents the Mariner's experience as being the communication between the unconscious mind and God. Coleridge has endowed the Rime with universal images of the supernatural representing the widest perspective of the collective unconscious and with symbols of God representing the narrowest perspective of the Christian collective unconscious. I shall discuss the Mariner's conversion from the widest view in Chapter Two and from the narrowest view in Chapter Three in an attempt to see the Rime through Coleridge's eyes.
CHAPTER II

UNIVERSAL IMAGES OF THE SUPERNATURAL

IN THE MARINER'S CONVERSION FROM

CONCEPTUALISM TO DUALISM

All universally recurrent images of a Supernatural
Being appear in the *Rime*. Coleridge knew that these images
result from man's attempts to depict a future happiness,¹
causing man to image God² as both remote and familiar. Man
in his practicality has always imaged a remote God to prevent
his disappointment; man in his loneliness has always imaged
a familiar God to prevent estrangement. The remote and
familiar ambivalence is evident in the six groups of images
common to all religions depicting God as infinite, eternal,
authoritarian, potent, loving, and the source of light.³
Although an image often refers to more than one attribute of
God, the remote images still remain separate from the familiar
images. For example, the sun images God as both infinite and
radiant; both concepts are remote from man who neither exists
in all space nor gives light. God imaged as a father brings
Him nearer to earthly life, for man can impose authority, give
life, and love others.

Coleridge shows the Mariner's increasing awareness of
God and his ultimate unification with Him by gradually
progressing from images of remoteness before the Mariner's
conversion to images of nearness after his conversion.

INFINITE GOD

All religions depict an infinite God with images of
height and depth. A God who exists throughout space is remote from man who exists within a specific space. Coleridge indicates the Mariner's separation from God before his conversion by including only the remote images of height and depth—sun, moon, stars, and Polar Spirit; no reference to a familiar God is included. Furthermore, the Mariner's relationship to the height/depth images changes when he becomes "raised" into the "higher state" of Platonic dualism. Coleridge's description of Aristotle describes the sensual Mariner before his conversion:

He was a conceptualist, and never could raise himself into that higher state which was natural to Plato. The height/depth images are less remote when the Mariner converts to Platonic spiritualism.

In every religion, progress toward the Spirit is depicted as a struggle upwards, and freedom from dependence upon the senses is necessary to begin the upward climb. Coleridge indicates the Mariner's relationship with the supernatural world with references to spatial relationships and directional words such as above—below, north—south, and up—down. The Mariner's leaving his native home is his sensual birth which duplicates Plato's idea of earthly life as the plunge from the archetypal world of the Fathers into the shadow world of the flesh. The Mariner's "native country" (Gloss, p. 31) is that same country Coleridge describes in his "Greek Ode on Astronomy:"

I may not call thee mortal then, my soul! Immortal longings lift thee to the skies.
Love of thy native home inflames thee now,
With pious madness wise.
Know then thyself! expand thy wings divine!
Soon mingled with thy fathers thou shalt shine
A star amid the starry throng,
A God the Gods among.  

When the Mariner leaves his native home, the archetypal world of the Fathers, he drops downward:

Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top (ll. 23-5).

The supernatural world, now imaged by the Sun, becomes progressively more remote: "higher and higher every day" (l. 29). He is furthest from his native home when he becomes trapped in ice (an image of his sensuality).  
Supernature—the Albatross—rescues him from the senses, but he kills the bird.  
His action represents his choice between the supernatural and the sensual. In all religions, choice of the sensual results in weightiness, i.e., in being chained to the sensual and unable to be "raised into a higher state." For examples, in Plato's "Myth of the Charioteer," the aspiration of the soul toward apprehension of Reality is prevented by the appetite of the senses and the soul is plunged back to earth; in the Judeo-Christian, "original sin" is imaged as "the Fall."  

Coleridge describes the soul that chooses the sensual as "sick," the soul that chooses the supernatural as "healthy," and the conversion process as "salvation" ("to be healed or whole"). After the Mariner's choice of the sensual, the Rime's high/deep images picture those "necessary medicines to the sick, the motives of fear" that Coleridge thought
should be prescribed for sensual men. Fear is a medicine for sick souls. The Mariner's fear of the bloody Sun and the Polar Spirit causes his intimation of the minuteness of self and the vastness of space. Seeking to understand reality through his senses, the Mariner perceives only chaos. The chaotic high/deep images instill the fear of not being able to rely upon his own senses. The appearance of the sun, moon and stars changes so rapidly that he begins to doubt his ability to comprehend any "something in the sky:"

> It seemed a little speck,  
> And then it seemed a mist (ll. 148-50).

Objects on high become increasingly unreal until finally he sees the impossible rising "horned Moon, with one bright star within the nether tip" (ll. 210-11). The Mariner realizes his "understanding--the faculty judging by the senses" has failed him. He negates one sense by blinding himself to space:

> I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
> And the balls like pulses beat;  
> For the sky and the sea and the sea and the sky  
> Lay like a load on my weary eye (ll. 248-51).

The Mariner understands that his dependence upon the senses is weighting him down; sensuality results in depression. The Mariner wishes to negate all his senses by death:

> And yet I could not die (l. 262).

By admitting his inability to "make proper use of his senses," he rids himself of the dependence upon the senses which kept him from awareness of the supernatural. The Mariner's death wish kills his Aristotelian self and makes way for the birth
of his Platonic self.

In his depressed and static state the Mariner becomes aware of the supernatural world in images of height and motion. His separation from God has resulted in his becoming isolated, motionless and despairing. By contrast, his desire to become reunited with God is expressed in images of height having attributes of unity, motion, and joy:

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival (Gloss, p. 19).

Coleridge depicts the Mariner's conversion as his desire to return to his native home by using the same images employed in his "Greek Ode:"

He yearneth toward the journeying Moon=
Immortal longings lift thee to the skies.

The blue sky belongs to the stars and is their . . . native home. The stars are lords that are certainly expected=
In thy native home . . . thou shalt shine/
A star amid the starry throng,/A God the Gods among.

Coleridge's "Greek Ode" resembles Plato's Phaedrus myth where "theia mania" (Coleridge's "pious madness") aids the soul's flying upward to its native home among the Gods. After his conversion, the Mariner remains in this world, Plato's world of Becoming, but proceeds toward the world of Being above space. The upward motion of the soul in its Becoming God-like is a series of reincarnations--a series of
deaths of the sensual self, births of the spiritual self. In all religions, the transmigration of the soul toward God is a gradual progression incorporating purification through denial of the senses and aspiration through affirmation of the spirit. Coleridge images this lightening process immediately after the Mariner's conversion. The soul is purified when the mark of his sensual self frees him of its weight:

And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea (ll. 289-91).

The soul becomes light and begins the ascent:

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light--almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost (ll. 305-8).

After this first indication that the Mariner is traveling upwards, the height/depth images take over the purification/aspiration aspect of the Mariner's return to his native home. The progress of the soul toward God is further imaged by Coleridge as the "curative process." The height/depth images still inspire "the motives of fear" which result in purification and, in addition, inspire hope which results in aspiration:

It is part of the curative process to induce the patient, on the first symptoms of recovery, to look forward with prayer and aspiration to that state, in which perfect love shutteth out fear.

At the "first symptom of recovery," i.e., immediately after his conversion, the Mariner glimpses Heaven so that he will
hope to achieve as well as fear not to achieve that state. As Coleridge puts it, God does "not withhold the idea of health, or conceal [from a recovering soul] that the medicines for the sick are not the diet of the healthy." The Mariner's glimpse of a healthy diet is imaged by sounds and sights in motion around a height object:

Around, around flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.  
Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning! (ll. 354-62).

The up and down motion of images between the Sun (supernature) and the ship (human nature) adumbrates the Mariner's future complete communion with God. Like a carrot before the horse, this glimpse of Heaven keeps the Mariner on the track toward the supernatural world. However, the Mariner does not participate in this mystical union because human life is regarded in every religion as a purificatory process. Coleridge images a series of purifications in the Rime with height/depth objects motivating fear. The fear of alienation from the supernatural world causes another death of the sensual being. Two examples make clear the death/rebirth pattern.

The Sun and the Polar Spirit cooperate to recreate the stasis alternating with chaotic motion which occurred before the Mariner's conversion. The Sun fixes the ship "to the ocean;" the Polar Spirit lets the ship go and there is a
"sudden bound" (ll. 380-92). The Mariner's sensual self dies again:

But ere my living life returned (ll. 395).

His death during a "fit" (ll. 393) recapitulates his previous death during sleep. The Mariner's spiritual self is reborn and the "angelic power" (height image) speeds the Mariner upward (northward) toward his native country (Gloss, p. 25).

The Mariner is again stunned, this time by noises which recapitulate the "fearful" and "dreadful" noises of previous purifications. The sounds emanate from the heights and the depths:

Under the water it rumbled on (ll. 546).

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote (ll. 550-51).

The mark of sensuality, the Albatross, had sunk "like lead into the sea" (ll. 291); now "the ship went down like lead" (ll. 549). The Mariner's sensual self dies again:

Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat (ll. 552-3).

The Mariner is reborn and returned to his "own countree" (ll. 570).

If the *Rime* ended with the Mariner flying around with a "troop of spirits blest" (ll. 349), empathy with him as a human would be lost. Coleridge shows the Mariner's relationship with God to be such as can be achieved in this life. For example, the moon (height) images God; the ocean (flatness) images the Mariner. Knowing he has no power of his own (the
"ocean hath no blast"), the Mariner submits to the power of God and is "still as a slave before his lord" (ll. 413-14). The Mariner looks to God for direction:

His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—
If he may know which way to go
For she guides him smooth or grim (ll. 415-18).

God gives grace to the Mariner:

How graciously/She looketh down on him (ll. 419-20).

As the moon determines the ocean's tides, the supernatural being imaged as the moon determines the Mariner's direction toward his spiritual home.

When the Mariner's relationship to God in space is confused, height/depth images of God inspire fear. After the finite Mariner establishes a relationship with his infinite God, the images inspire fear and hope so that the Mariner can progress from indirection to direction. When the Mariner finds his place in the world by directing himself toward the Power which encompasses all place, he travels a steady course toward his native home. He is "raised into that higher state," the state of Being which is the finite counterpart of the supernatural native home.

ETERNAL GOD

The concept of transcendent al eternity found in all religions places an eternal God at a great distance from man, who is limited to a specific time. Eternity is incomprehensible to man because his temporal frame of reference is short. Nevertheless, the desire to live prompts man to posit the possibility of eternal life by alignment with an eternal power not subject to the aging
process. Man's wish to escape degeneration and death results in describing every transcendental power with "the widely recurrent metaphor . . . of duration through time, or a kind of exemption from change denoted by saying that something is above or beyond time or change." God is described as eternal, but no body of images pictures eternity. Coleridge's problem is to picture the Mariner becoming related to "something beyond time" which must result in his becoming concerned not with the death of his body, which is subject to time, but with the death of his soul, which is exempt from time. Even without a body of images of eternity from which to draw, Coleridge solves the problem of picturing the Mariner's relationship to an eternal God and his change in life-view. Coleridge evokes the concept of eternity in the Rime by a lack of time specificity and by an unreal, dream-like quality.

Coleridge creates a feeling of timelessness in the Rime. Words ordinarily indicative of specific time only serve to heighten the indefiniteness of the journey's time span:

Day after day, day after day (l. 115).
A weary time! a weary time! (l. 145).

How long in that same fit I lay
I have not to declare (ll. 392-3).
At an uncertain hour (l. 582).

The rising and setting of the heavenly bodies by which time is usually marked are merely reminders of an existence outside of time. The sun rises "higher and higher every day" (l. 29), but the number of times it rises is not specified.
Thus the journey cannot be recorded in a logbook: June 1, 1490—ship becalmed; Sept. 15, 1493—arrived port. The series of events can be established as relative to time only in their cause/effect relationships: Mariner kills the Albatross and brings the bloody sun; Mariner blesses the snakes and the Albatross falls off. Coleridge believed that when time is understood only in relation to cause and effect, an eternal God is "revealing" himself to an "afflicted soul:"

The sense of Before and After becomes both intelligible and intellectual when, and only when, we contemplate the succession in the relations of Cause and Effect, which, like the two poles of the magnet manifest the being and unity of the one power by relative opposites, and give, as it were, a substratum of permanence, of identity, and therefore of reality, to the shadowy flux of Time. It is Eternity revealing itself in the phenomena of Time: and the perception and acknowledgment of the proportionality and appropriateness of the Present to the Past, prove to the afflicted soul, that it has not yet been deprived of the sight of God, that it can still recognize the effective presence of a Father, though through a darkened glass and a turbid atmosphere, though of a Father that is chastising it (BL, II, 207-8).

Coleridge created the Rime's "sense of Before and After" as "intelligible only relative to Cause and Effect" to show the Mariner becoming aware of "the effective presence of a Father." What Coleridge is saying here is that the unreality of time leads to the postulation of a higher reality as a reference point.

The many references to dreams, trances, fits, sleep, and the sleep of death also contribute to the Rime's sense of separation from time. Charles Lamb correctly observed
that the ancient Mariner's state is "like the state of a man in a Bad dream, one terrible peculiarity of which is: that all consciousness of personality is gone." In the dream state, all sense of time is also gone. Coleridge made dreams a central idea in the Rime to obliterate the reality of self and of time, a technique he observed was used by the mystics to depict a soul's separation from God:

The Mystics have joined in representing the state of the reprobate spirits as a dreadful dream in which there is no sense of reality, not even of the pangs they are enduring--an eternity without time, and as it were below it--God present without manifestation of his presence (EL, II, 208).

My suggestion that Coleridge consciously employed the dream state to picture the Mariner as a reprobate soul conflicts with those critics who see the Rime as an expression of Coleridge's repressed hatred of his mother, hatred of his wife, sexual desire for Sara Hutchinson, and fear of losing his creative powers. Perhaps the Rime's creation did provide Coleridge with a wet blanket to smother the flames of his rapacious Id, but this is neither relevant to the reader's response to the poem nor consistent with Coleridge's interpretation of the dream state.

In order for the Mariner to be "at once himself, Coleridge and all humanity," his tale must reflect an archetypal response to existence. The questions raised by the Rime's dream state motif reflect this archetypal response: What constitutes reality? What is the meaning of life, of death? How is existence known? Philosophers
have wrestled with these questions for centuries. The questions raised by the poem's dream state motif jar readers out of complacency into contemplation and provide motivation to think rather than consolation for emotional dissatisfaction.

Coleridge interprets his own dreams as nightmares counterfeiting Hell:

While I am awake by patience, employment, effort of mind, and walking, I can keep the fiend at Arm's length; but the night is my Hell, Sleep my tormenting Angel. . . . Dreams with me are no shadows, but the very Substances and foot-thick Calamities of my life.23

While asleep, Coleridge is unable to repress the guilt of sin (the "fiend") and his dreams are of alienation from God:

The guilt of sin constitutes the essential pain of Hell. It is one's self-created state of eternal alienation.24

While alive, Coleridge dreams of the death of his soul. His nightmares constitute life-in-death. The Nightmare LIFE-IN-DEATH of the Rime symbolizes the Mariner's state of sin (see Appendix A, Item 4). The nightmare figure shows the Mariner the death of his soul during his bodily life. The Mariner is cursed by his own sinful state to a life-in-death existence. The prospect of eternal life becomes a curse to the Mariner, as it was to Cain and the Wandering Jew, because it means an eternity of separation from God. When "the curse is finally expiated" (Gloss, p. 31), the prospect of eternal life becomes a happy one. Thus the Rime incorporates the religious belief
that eternity with God is good, but an "eternity of exclusion from God implies the sum and utmost of punishment" (*Literary Remains*, p. 448).

But the Mariner must view the self as dual, having both body and soul, before he can either hope for eternal life with God or fear eternal life without God. Coleridge illustrates the Mariner's belief in duality by comparing being awake to bodily life, being asleep to bodily death:

> Oh! dream of joy! (l. 464).
> O let me be awake, my God!
> Or let me sleep alway (ll. 470-71).

The Mariner is conscious of approaching his native home, but does not know if he is alive or dead. The Mariner's existence, his consciousness, is not dependent upon bodily life. Therefore, his soul can exist after bodily death. The Mariner's awareness of the separate existence of his soul is apparent immediately after his conversion:

> I thought that I had died in sleep,
> And was a blessed ghost (ll. 307-8).

The Mariner thinks he is dead, yet is thinking. Thinking, i.e., existing, is independent of the bodily functions. If the Mariner can affirm the self in his "dreams" (l. 303), he can also affirm the self in death.25

In the theory of dualism, three types of existence can be found: (1) corporeal life—life of the body without the soul; (2) spiritual life—life of the soul without the body; and (3) duality—life of both body and soul.26 Those who are unaware of a higher reality fear death because they view reality in terms of corporeality only. If man's existence is limited to the corporeity common to all nature, death is
as final to man as it is to the "brown skeletons of leaves" (l. 533). But if man's existence is viewed as dual, death is not feared but actually welcomed, for then the soul can be freed to ascend to the spiritual life. Like Plato, Plotinus, and literally all men who believe in a higher reality, Coleridge considers the body to be a weight which holds one away from God. When Coleridge composed his own epitaph in 1833 he termed corporeal life "Death in Life," that is, separated from God by being chained to a body, and corporeal death "Life in Death," that is, life of the soul after death of the body:

Lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C.
That he, who many a year with toilsome breath
Found Death in Life, may here find Life in Death.27

The annihilation of the body releases the soul for existence in the spiritual life where "time is no more" (RM, 1. 395):

Till by exclusive consciousness of God
All self-annihilated it shall make
God its Identity; God all in all!
We and our Father one! (RM, ll. 41-4).

To reach this "pure soul" state, the body must be repeatedly annihilated. Every religious doctrine includes the necessity of purification of the soul through denial of the senses before reaching the eventual cessation of change in the supernatural world. The Mariner undergoes a series of annihilations, but his soul must be further purified:

"The penance of life falls on him (Gloss, p. 39).
At the end of the Rime, the Mariner is still chained to his body which is subject to change and to time. He is not cursed by the nightmare Life-in-Death, so his soul is alive. Existing dually, the Mariner fears only the death of his
soul which would entirely annihilate his existence.

The Mariner's change in life-view is indicated by the dream motif. In Coleridge's dream mentioned earlier, "the fiend" is the guilt of sin. Sin is, theologically, pride—the choice of self-love over Divine-love. Coleridge repeats the same account of his nightmare in another letter, and adds that guilt is caused by "tempestuous pride, vain-glorious Vaunting." The Mariner's killing the Albatross may be described as his choice of senses/nature/self over Spirit/Supernature/God. The fiend that plagued Coleridge in his dreams also plagues the Mariner. Coleridge meshes the fiend and the sin together:

God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?—With my cross-bow
I shot the ALBATROSS (ll. 79-82).

The "fiends" (RM, l. 142) begin "hiding the present God" (RM, l. 144) and the Mariner becomes "a sordid solitary thing, /Mid countless brethren with a lonely heart" (RM, ll. 149-50). He remains isolated until the fiend is externalized as a Visitation, i.e., his sin is presented to him in the form of the Nightmare Life-in-Death. Coleridge believed his fiendish nightmares were such visitations:

These horrid Dreams . . . have been sent upon me to arouse me out of that proud & stoical Apathy into which I had fallen. 29

What can the fiend's visitation do to arouse one out of apathy after pride causes the fall? Inspire fear:

And first by Fear uncharmed the drowsed Soul
Till of its nobler nature it 'gan feel
Dim recollections; and thence soared to Hope (RM, ll. 34-6).
The Mariner's soul is aroused by fear of the Nightmare Life-in-Death before it can feel its nobler nature:

Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip! (ll. 204-5).

The Mariner realizes that his heart (his soul) is being drained of its life by his own sin. His recognition that he has a soul marks the beginning of his changing life-view. The Mariner is now, like Coleridge, "less concerned with temporal death than with sin, the death of the soul." Coleridge has the Wedding-Guest interrupt the Mariner to show the difference in life-view between the Mariner, who fears the soul's death, and the Wedding-Guest, who at this point fears the body's death (imaged in the Rime by "brown skeletons"): I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.
I fear thee . . .
And thy skinny hand, so brown (ll. 224-9).

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance (Gloss, p. 17).

The Mariner's "horrible penance" is his bodily life:

And the penance of life falls on him (Gloss, p. 39).

His heavy load of sin keeps him chained to the body:

Penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit (Gloss, p. 27).

The load is lightened by a series of types of death.

The Mariner wishes to annihilate the body:

And yet I could not die (l. 262).

The heavy Albatross falls off (ll. 290-91); the body begins
to be annihilated:

Oh sleep! [death] it is a gentle thing (l. 292).
in my dreams (l. 303).

I thought that I had died in sleep (l. 307).

Bodily death is "a gentle thing," a "dream of joy" (l. 464).

In all the Mariner's types of bodily death, gentleness prevails. For example, while lying in a "fit" he hears soft voices (ll. 393-411). Bodily death is not fearful, but spiritual death is. The body's death is a dream of joy; the soul's death is a nightmare of horror.31

Coleridge has set up the recurrent pattern. Fear of death of the soul is expressed as fear of the fiend. This fear results in a type of sensual death. The Mariner walks "in fear and dread . . . /Because he knows, a frightful fiend/ Doth close behind him tread." (ll. 496-51). Then he has the senses knocked out of him again: "stunned . . . /Like one that hath been seven days drowned" (ll. 550 & 52).

Other men in the Rime repeat the Mariner's experience. The Mariner and his ship have taken on a fiendish look, i.e., they bear the mark of sin. The pilot also fears death of the soul:

Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look--
. . . I am afeared (ll. 538-9).

The Pilot experiences a type of bodily death:

The Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit (ll. 560-61).

The Pilot's boy goes "crazy"--his mind (a bodily organ separate from the soul) is broken when he sees the Mariner
as "the Devil" (ll. 564-9).

The Hermit, more closely related to the spiritual life than his companions, experiences sensual death in prayer rather than in sleep, trance, fit, or craze.

The Mariner has become a "visitation," sent to arouse others out of apathy by causing fear. When he tells his nightmare to the Wedding-Guest, the Wedding-Guest recapitulates the Mariner's experience. The Wedding-Guest is isolated from the guests as the Mariner has been isolated from the crew. The Wedding-Guest is separated from his "next of kin" (l. 6) as the Mariner has been from his "brother's son" (see lines 341-4). The Wedding-Guest "went like one that hath been stunned" (l. 622) after listening to the Mariner's frightful nightmare. The Wedding-Guest is "of sense forlorn" (l. 622), i.e., he is no longer dependent upon the senses. The Wedding-Guest is reborn a spiritual man (Coleridge intended "sad" to mean "satisfied, full, firm" rather than "sorrowful").

A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn (ll. 624-5).

Thus a nightmare arouses fear of death of the soul and is part of the purificatory process leading to the soul's becoming eternal. The dream/death motif, like the lack of time specificity, indicates that the Rime does not concern man's corporeal relationship to nature which is subject to time, but instead the relation of the soul to a higher reality which is timeless. "A Poet's Reverie" is, like the poet, concerned with eternal life.
RADIANT GOD

The *Rime's* light imagery duplicates that found in all religions:

A root metaphor of widely recurring incidence is that of light. The physical facts of light are so familiar and pervasive that conscious attention and effort are necessary to separate literal fact from metaphor. . . . Light imagery also gets combined with that of sun, moon, and stars, not to speak of the light of sacred fires, mirrors, and other shining bodies.36

Coleridge observes that this universal light imagery refers to the presence of God in His life-giving capacity:

> The Misery of the *lost* in its unutterable intensity, though the language that describes it is all necessarily figurative, is there [*in Hell*] exhibited as resulting chiefly . . . from the withdrawal of the light of God's countenance, and a banishment from his presence!—best comprehended in this world by reflecting on the desolations which would instantly follow the loss of the sun's vivifying and universally diffused warmth (Collected Letters, III, 482).

Coleridge uses the sun to image God's warmth in the *Rime*, and all the "shining bodies" receive life from it. Before the Mariner's conversion, this warmth is unendurable because he has not yet become a light reflector. Although the Mariner was created in the image of God and is, therefore, essentially like Him, he has not yet realized his own likeness. He cannot receive light as vivifying warmth until he recognizes his similarity to God. Coleridge believed that man must align himself with God to realize his essential being.37 His translation and interpretation of a passage from Plotinus illustrates this concept with light imagery:
"To those to whose imagination it has never been presented, how beautiful is the countenance of justice and wisdom . . . for in order to direct the view aright, it behoves that the beholder should have made himself congenorous and similar to the object beheld. Never could the eye have beheld the sun, had not its own essence been soliform," (i.e. pre-configured to light by a similarity of essence with that of light) "neither can a soul not beautiful attain to an intuition of beauty" (PL, I, 80).

Since the Mariner's essence is not "soliform," he cannot intuit the beauty of nature (including his own nature) imaged by the water snakes:

Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea (ll. 125-6).

Nor can he "behold the sun" without suffering from heat. The Rime's sun depicts God's vivifying warmth with images of red heat (See Appendix A, Item 3):

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon (ll. 111-12).

The sun's heat is unendurable to the Mariner who has not yet directed his "view aright." The ocean, which images the state of the Mariner's soul throughout the Rime, depicts his suffering:

The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red (ll. 269-70).

The moon serves as exemplar to the Mariner by showing him that he must make himself congenorous with the sun.38 The moon does not produce light but mirrors the light of the sun, reflecting its heat as white light. A non-reflector must absorb the sun's heat. A reflector participates in light-giving; a non-reflector becomes sultry:
Her beams bemocked the sultry main
Like April hoar-frost spread (ll. 266-7).

These lines do not mean that the moon scorns the ocean, but that the Mariner sees the contrast between his self-caused state of suffering and the moon's reflective attitude imaged as cool white light. He then desires to become a reflector like his exemplar and "yearneth toward the journeying moon" (Gloss, p. 19).

In his longing to return to his "native home," the Mariner "directs his view aright" and thus becomes "pre-configured to light." His soul becomes beautiful, so he is able to intuit the beauty of the water-snakes:

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare (ll. 282-3).

The water snakes are beautiful because they reflect the beauty of God's countenance with white light:

They moved in tracks of shining white
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes (ll. 275-6).

The Mariner attains relief from heat by becoming a mirror to the sun's light. The red hot ocean becomes cool and white:

And the bay was white with silent light (l. 480).

The Mariner's aspect resembles that of other light reflectors; as the moon's beams="hoar frost" and the snakes' light="hoary flakes," the Mariner's "beard with age is hoar"(l. 619).

The Mariner's outward countenance reflects God's, but this is a cool image. How does the author picture the Mariner responding to God's radiance as "vivifying warmth?" If the Mariner has become like God, he should have his own red heat within. Coleridge shows nature's outward cold, inward hot
pair by the water-snakes' position on the ocean:

Beyond the shadow of the ship (outward appearance)
They moved in tracks of shining white (ll. 272, 74).

Within the shadow of the ship
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire (ll. 277, 280-1).

Like those "angelic spirits," the Mariner's "own form of
light" (Gloss, p. 65) must be "in crimson colours" (l. 483).

Rather than imaging the Mariner's soul as red, Coleridge
depicts its change from cold to hot.

Coleridge describes the soul as "the Heart, the fiery
Spirit that fills, informs, and agitates the whole."39

Before his conversion, the Mariner has no "fiery spirit" of
his own which leads him into two states: (1) he has an ice
cold heart (see note 7) and (2) he is subjected to the fiery
spirit of the Sun and is hot and thirsty. After recognizing
the Infinite fiery spirit, the Mariner's icy heart melts and
the water alleviates his heat and quenches his thirst.

When he becomes related to the God of love, his fiery
spirit is born:

A spring of love gushed from my heart (l. 284).

Coleridge depicts the same union in love with images of the
Sun melting ice in Religious Musings (ll. 415-18):

Of Love, omnific, omnipresent Love,
Whose day-spring rises glorious in my soul
As the great Sun, when he his influence
Sheds on the frost-bound waters---The glad stream
Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows.

Before his conversion, the Mariner cannot pray; he cannot
"flow to the ray:"

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust (ll. 244-7).

After his conversion, water "gusht" in his thirsty heart
and he prays:

The self-same moment I could pray (l. 289).

A radiant God gives life to the soul. God's radiance
and the vivification of the Mariner are described by Coleridge
in "necessarily figurative language," the sun melting his ice
cold heart.

AUTHORITARIAN GOD

The Mariner's submission to God's will is depicted as
submission to political and parental authority just as it is
in all religions. The Mariner's relationship to an authorita-
rian God is seen in pictures of submissiveness such as "slave
before his lord" (l. 414) and "each to his great Father
bends" (l. 697).

An authoritarian God's body of images is associated with
earthly life. Authority is more familiar to man than eternity
or infinity. After his conversion, the Mariner's relationship
to God is shown as closer. The remote images are gradually
supplanted by the familiar group of images. Coleridge strengthens
the picture of the closing gap between the Mariner and his God
even within each image group by first establishing a distant
relationship and following it with a close relationship. For
example, a reference to political authority, "To Mary Queen
the praise be given!" (l. 294) is followed by a reference to
parental authority: "By grace of the holy Mother" (Gloss,
p. 21). Coleridge's reference to Mary as the "Queen"
is more remote than the "Mother" reference, for the latter implies not only authority but also love and the giving of life. The parent as provider corresponds to God's provision of grace as relief from spiritual hunger and thirst. There is an analogy between the Mariner-child in his helplessness, the Sun-father in his sternness, and the Moon-mother in her graciousness. As George Herbert Clarke puts it, the Mariner "becomes anxiously aware of his relation to the God of Law (as symbolized by the Sun) . . . and the God of Love (represented by the Moon-symbol)." The parent-child analogy, where authority is linked with love, eliminates the restrictive Law/Love dichotomy Clarke assigned to Sun and Moon. The Mariner's punishments may best be understood in the authority-love role of the parent punisher who accompanies a spanking with, "You had better learn to mind me; this is for your own good." The Mariner's punishments are not meted out by a wrathful God of Law as a distinct entity from the God of Love, but by a God who shows the Mariner that he must submit his will to God's in order to become whole.

LOVING GOD

Love between man and God is universally expressed as love and communication between man and man. After the Mariner's return to his native home, his love relationship with his God is so strongly emphasized that many critics object to the moralistic ending. Even in Coleridge's "own judgment the poem had too much" of a moral, but the fact that the following stanzas remain intact after much revision of the Rime indicates that this was the only way Coleridge--
a religious person--could end it:

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay! (ll. 605-9).

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all (ll. 614-17).

These stanzas incorporate Coleridge's concept of creation

as a communication of love imaged as begetting:

A supreme self-originated being hath communicated himself without withholding, and for this act, no recipient being conceived previously thereto, the nearest analogy, and at all events the least inappropriate term and conception that human knowledge and human language contain, is that of begetting, and the most expressive relation that of Father and Son.44

Coleridge uses the same analogy to describe the dawn of
the idea of God in man:

Why have men a Faith in God? There is but one answer, the Man & the Man alone has a Father and a Mother.45

As J. Robert Barth has noted, "Coleridge sees the idea of God originating in the child's relationship with his parents, his instinctive reaching out toward something that is not himself."46 The analogy may be carried further. When a child realizes himself to be an entity separate from the parents, he experiences the emotion of isolation. The survival instinct causes the child to cling tenaciously to the parents knowing he cannot fend for himself. When the Mariner finds himself isolated and unable to function as an autonomous individual, the postulation of (or "faith in")
God aids his survival. Order is established out of chaos. Death is eliminated. A mode of life is prescribed.

The Mariner sought relief from his isolation by attempting to communicate with a supernatural power and attained relief by binding himself to that power in love. Coleridge describes the conversion process with universal images of man's idea of God. The "something other" toward which man in his isolation reaches is a love object which encompasses all space and time, imposes authority, and gives warmth, life, and the possibility of communion with it. Every way that people in all times and all places have imaged this "something other" has been incorporated in the Rime.
CHAPTER III
TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS
IN THE MARINER’S CONVERSION
FROM FAITHLESS TO FAITHFUL

Coleridge informs the Rime with the traditional Christian symbols of faithlessness and faithfulness to show the Mariner’s conversion. A harlot symbolizes faithlessness, i.e., idolatry:

As was commonly done by the Prophets, a harlot is connected with idolatry, as a form of prostitution.\(^1\)

A bride symbolizes faithfulness, i.e., the faithful soul is wed to God. The Mariner’s soul changes from a “harlot, sinful and unclean,”\(^2\) to a virgin bride, sinless and clean, “for the uncorrupt soul is a virgin.”\(^3\) Before examining the Mariner’s change, his marriage to God, Coleridge’s use of the harlot and bride symbols must be explained.

Since faithlessness leads to death of the soul, the Rime’s Life-in-Death figure symbolizes faithlessness. The faithless soul is often depicted as climbing a ladder which leads to “death and those who scale it believe that they are alive, while they are already clothed in their shrouds.” The figure of Life-in-Death recalls the faithless soul pictured as “a woman clothed in white like a corpse who mounts slowly, carrying under her arm the lid of her coffin.”\(^4\) The same woman appears throughout Scripture as a harlot, for faithlessness is self-love, i.e., love of the flesh:

The soul of every one of us was harlot when we lived in the desires and lusts of the flesh.\(^5\)

The Rime’s Life-in-Death figure is that same “great harlot who
is seated upon many waters" of Revelation 17:1. Coleridge refers to "the great harlot of Revelation" in a note to the following lines in Religious Musings:

She that reeled heavily, whose wine was blood; 6
She that worked whoredom with the Daemonic Power.

The Rime's harlot is mated with "DEATH" (l. 189) and also drinks blood:

Who thickens man's blood with cold (l. 194).
My life-blood seemed to sip! (l. 205).

Before his conversion, the Mariner's soul is symbolized as a harlot. The symbol recapitulates all those faithless Scriptural souls symbolized by naked harlots with blood upon their hands (Ezekiel 23:26-45). The Mariner kills the Albatross; his soul is a "harlot that sheds blood in the midst of her" (Ez 22:3). The Mariner experiences the same punishments meted out to harlot souls:

You have become guilty by the blood which you have shed (Ez 22:4). I will kindle a fire in you: ... all faces shall be scorched by it (Ez 20:47).

Even after his return to home, the fire burns:

And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns (ll. 582-5).

Only telling his tale quenches the fire, like all harlot souls in whom "a fire is kindled which shall burn forever" (Jer 17:4):

If I say, "I will not mention Him, or speak any more in His name," there is in my heart a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot (Jer 20:9).

But we can see that the Mariner's harlot soul has changed, for all harlot souls that become virginal must reveal their experience as prophecy:
From being a harlot she becomes a prophet. She that was once a harlot, sinful and unclean, is now filled with the Holy Spirit, and at one and the same time is both witness to the past and prophesies concerning the future (Danielou, p. 250).

Coleridge places the Mariner firmly within the Biblical tradition. The Mariner's soul's change from harlot to bride duplicates the change experienced by all the prophets. His tale is a confession of his religious experience, and "confession is interpreted theologically as the content of revelation." The Mariner's soul as a bride is symbolized by the traditional symbols of the Lord's faithful wife, the moon and the bride. Metaphors describing the faithful wife in the Old Testament are applied to the Virgin Mary. For example, the moon, virgin-bride, and rose metaphors are linked in the "Ave, munci spez, Maria!"

Hail, beautiful rose . . .
Hail, lamp of the virgins
burning with heavenly flame,
lighting those enshrined in darkness.
Hail, thou jewel, thou lantern of the sky, . . .
entreat thy son not to deliver us, for our sins,
to relentless judgment.

In the Rime, the bride is "red as a rose" (1. 34) and the moon appears as intercessor and exemplar—exactly the function of Mary in Christian tradition.

The Mariner becomes like the faithful wife symbol, for his soul "magnifies the Lord." Mary's symbol, the moon, magnifies the Lord:

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock;
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock (ll. 476-9).

As St. Paul says, "the rock was Christ" (I Cor 10:4). The kirk is the church standing above its cornerstone, Christ.
The weathercock, since it is "a common symbol for the sun,"\textsuperscript{13} may be related to the more definite symbols of the Lord. An image of the Mariner's soul, the ocean, becomes like the moon in its purity and reflecting quality:

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon (ll. 472-5).

The Mariner is in kinship with the bride and bridesmaids in their singing, the "mark of concord and harmony and rejoicing,"\textsuperscript{14} which is interpreted as magnification of the Lord. And finally, the Mariner himself becomes an exemplar, like the Virgin:

And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence (Gloss, p. 41).

He exemplifies the virtuous soul, as Mary does. The highest of the theological virtues is charity:\textsuperscript{15}

Charity is love of God and love of one's neighbor for the sake of God and in God (Gothic Image, p. 116).

The Rime's moral is the quintessence of charity:

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all (ll. 614-7).

The Mariner's soul is symbolized by the harlot Life-in-Death before his conversion, by the bride and the moon afterwards. But the change is not clear until the general nuptial theme of the Rime is understood as repeating "the general nuptial theme of the Bible, typifying the marriage of God with his people . . . the union of the Word with the soul."\textsuperscript{16} The Rime's frame is a wedding which serves as the symbol of the Mariner's marriage:
Marriage is symbolical of the union of the soul with Christ the Mediator (Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, p. 138).

The wedding frame incorporates the traditional symbols of the marriage of God with his people and also the moral values implicit in the marriage.

Coleridge's notebook entries written while composing the *Rime* indicate his use of the traditional symbols of the faithful entering Paradise on Judgment Day to symbolize the Mariner's wedding to God with the *Rime's* frame. Judgment Day is always signified by the bridegroom, the hour of twelve (the end of the day, i.e., the end of the world), and the sound of a loud horn:

> The bridegroom, whom all alike await at the door of his house, is Christ. . . . At midnight, there was a cry made, the trumpet of God which shall sound in the silence (*Gothic Image*, p. 198).

All three elements appear in Coleridge's notebook:

> Sound, sound the Trumpets--for the Bridegroom comes

> Terrible and loud

> As the strong voice that from the Thunder-Cloud speaks to the startled Midnight (Appendix A, Item 10).

All three elements appear in the *Rime*:

> The bridegroom's doors are opened wide (1. 5).
> Till over the mast at noon (1. 30).
> For he heard the loud *bassoon* (1. 32).

The bridegroom's doors (1. 5) are also symbolic of Christ:

> The Lord is not only Himself the doorkeeper but also the door; by His divinity He is the doorkeeper, by His humanity He is the door. 19

On Judgment Day, the faithful symbolically pass through the door, "amid the chanting of hymns and beating of breasts, into Heaven itself." 20
The bride "paced into the hall" amid "bridal music" (Gloss, p. 5) and the beating of breasts:

The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.
The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.
The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast (ll. 31-6).

Coleridge presents the traditional "procession into the sanctuary" which typifies entering Heaven:

The singers in front, the minstrels last,
Between them maidens playing timbrels (Psalms 68:24-5).

The wedding on land is the symbol of the wedding at sea. The bride is the Mariner. To view the marriage, one must examine the antithetical symbols of faithlessness and faith which Coleridge carefully included in the Rime.

Since idolatry is worship of the sensual and "faith is the virtue by which we believe in that which we do not see," symbols of idolatry are very fleshly while faith's symbols are marked by the absence of fleshly considerations. Lust, weariness, and thirst or hunger traditionally illustrate idolatry; chastity, rest, and spiritual water or food illustrate faith. By examining the definite antithesis between idolatry and faith Coleridge established in the Rime, the marriage theme emerges.

LUST VERSUS CHASTITY

or

HARLOTRY VERSUS VIRGINITY

Traditionally, the harlot soul must be confirmed as antitype of the virgin soul to establish antithesis. The wedding
is the resolution of antithesis, i.e., the virgin must negate the qualities of the harlot. Coleridge sets up the anti-thesis by describing Life-in-Death with the Virgin’s traditional symbols perverted.

When the spectre-bark drives between the Mariner and the Sun, the Mariner is imprisoned:

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars (l. 176).

Coleridge immediately mentions Mary:

(Heaven's Mother send us grace!) (l. 177).

Here Coleridge hints at the prominent symbols in the harlot versus virgin scheme—the ribs of the harlot bring death and imprisonment, while the ribs associated with Mary bring life and freedom. By italicizing "her" in the following stanza, Coleridge makes certain that comparison is made between the harlot's ship's ribs and the ribs associated with Mary, who is called "a ship, the ark of the Covenant" (Cathedral, p. 130):

Are those her ribs through which the Sun Did peer, as through a grate? (ll. 185-6).

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun (Gloss, p. 15).

By associating the ribs with the ship, Coleridge perverts the rib imagery associated with the Adam-Noah-Jesus-Church typology. Symbols of life-giving are changed to life-taking. This typology will be discussed more fully later.

Coleridge presents the harlot as a symbol of barrenness, the curse on man after the Fall. Although the harlot and Death are mates, they remain two:

And is that Woman all her crew? Is that a DEATH? and are there two? Is DEATH that woman's mate? (ll. 187-9).

The Spectre-Woman and her Deathmate, and no other on board (Gloss, p. 15).
Coleridge drew the same pair in *Religious Musings*. Their product is atheism:

And from that dark embrace all evil things
Brought forth and nurtured: mitred Atheism! (ll. 331-4).

The harlot is opposed to the "heavenly Mother" whose product is Christ. When the Mariner's soul is a harlot, he is without God, i.e., atheistic. The Mariner's soul is a virgin when he is, like Mary, wed to God and Christ is conceived within him. This fruitfulness is the symbol of Paradise regained.

An italicized "her" again points to a perversion of an accepted symbol of Mary as Christ's mother:

Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres? (ll. 184-5).

According to a popular myth, Mary was spinning gossamer at the time of the Annunciation. These gossamer threads became Christ's "swaddling clothes" which in turn symbolized the shroud He wore after crucifixion. The myth was accepted tradition in Coleridge's day:

The people have never entirely forgotten the old tradition for even today the gossamer threads in autumn which float in the meadows are called the Virgin's threads (*Gothic Image* [1913], p. 244).

Gossamer might seem a tenuous thread from which to hang a recollection of Mary, but it is derived from "gaze a Marie, the gauze of Mary."

In the last stanza employing italicized "hers," oppositions between harlot and virgin amass:

*Her* lips were red, *her* looks were free,*
*Her* locks are yellow as gold,*
*Her* skin was white as leprosy (ll. 190-92).
The traditional symbolic colors of Mary, red=virginity, yellow=potency, white=purity, become perverted in the harlot's description; red=harlotry, yellow=impotency, white=impurity.

The Rime's bride is "red as a rose" (l. 34) and appears with her bride-maids "in the garden-bower" (l. 593). Coleridge here alludes to metaphors expressing the virginity of Mary, whose description as a "rose without thorns and a closed garden"26 is derived from the bride in the Song of Songs whose virginity sets her apart from "maidens without number" (S. of S. 6:8):

I am a rose of Sharon (2:1).
A garden locked is my bride, a garden locked
And a fountain sealed (4:12).

These Biblical "blood proofs of virginity"27 are duplicated by the Rime's bride and countered by the harlot:

Her lips were red, her looks were free (l. 190).

Dante uses the same imagery to describe Lucifer's mate:

There appeared to me a dishevelled harlot sitting
Upon a chariot, with bold brows glancing round.28

Coleridge and Dante worked within the same system of symbols. Faithlessness is symbolized by a harlot whose presentation must be antithetic to faith's symbol, a virgin bride. Coleridge points up the antithesis in the harlot, whose "lips were red."

In the Song of Songs, the bride's "lips were like a scarlet thread" (4:3). Life-in-Death is mated with Death, while this bride and Mary are symbolically mated with God.29

The yellow/gold imagery surrounding Mary refers to her as the mother of Christ; she is golden as the flame within
her. Her coloration symbolizes fruitfulness (potency) and is opposed by the harlot:

Her locks were yellow as gold (l. 191).
The harlot "exhibits the devilish counterpart of the attribute" of potency, for "impotence is yellow with jealousy and envy." Life-in-Death's whiteness perverts the white=purity symbolism of Mary carried by the moon in the Rime:

Her skin was as white as leprosy (l. 192).

Leprosy traditionally symbolizes impurity. In baptism, for example, one is "cleansed from that foul leprosy and made ready to receive the Holy Spirit." When the Mariner's soul is a harlot, he is "unfit for God . . . defiled by touch, by issue: leprous flesh" (Edward Taylor, American Puritans, p. 316).

When the Mariner yearns toward the moon (Gloss, p. 19), he becomes a virgin soul: "fit, pure clean and bright, whiter than whitest snow" (Edward Taylor, p. 316). The Mariner, "whose beard with age is hoar" (l. 619) carries the white=purity images associated with the moon. The Mariner is worthy of sheltering divinity "as Mary sheltered God in her womb" immediately after he yearns toward the moon, as seen in the images linked to the Mariner, the water-snakes:

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
They moved in tracks of shining white (ll. 272-4).
The Mariner harbors within him the Sun:

Within the shadow of the ship
Was a flash of golden fire (ll. 277, 281).
The Mariner has negated his former inhospitality by welcoming the "flame of the Holy Spirit." The blessing of the snakes
which follows is the sign of hospitality already accomplished, just as the Albatross's murder was the sign of inhospitality. Coleridge repeats the sequence of harlots who become virginal through hospitality to the Trinity and who then receive the sign of hospitality.\textsuperscript{34} The Mariner's soul changes from harlot to virgin by his negation of his own faithlessness, just as Mary negated the faithlessness of Eve, the archetypal harlot.

Coleridge is not content to present the resolution of anti-thesis between harlot and virgin as the wedding, but presents the Mariner's marriage to God as his baptism, as tradition dictates:

\begin{quote}
It is Baptism which changes the human race, prostituted to the worship of idols and marked for destruction, into a Virgin Church, the Bride of Christ (Danielou, p. 258).
\end{quote}

The baptism, i.e., marriage, may be seen in the following examination of the Rime's weariness to rest scheme, the second pair of antitheses imaging idolatry versus faith.

WEARINESS VERSUS REST

Before the Mariner's conversion he is weary; afterwards he rests. His weariness is part of the punishment laid upon him for sin. Being "wrought with pain and weariness\textsuperscript{35} is the result of the Fall--Paradise lost:

\begin{quote}
There passed a weary time . . .
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye (ll. 144-7).
Lay like a load on my weary eye (l. 251).
\end{quote}

Coleridge connects the Mariner's weariness to his feeling guilty for sin; he does not sleep for an entire week:

\begin{quote}
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse (l. 261).
\end{quote}
When the Mariner sleeps, his guilt is annihilated. His sensual self dies. He is baptized ("refreshed with rain") (Gloss, p. 21), and is reborn a spiritual man:

The spiritual existence begins in Baptism, which is a new creation and a return to Paradise. "Our former nature has been crucified with Him, and the living power of our guilt annihilated, so that we are the slaves of guilt no longer" (Rom 6:6)" (Danielou, pp. 18-19).

I thought that I had died in sleep, And was a blessed ghost (ll. 307-8).

Sleep symbolizes "a restoration of the state of paradise.
No longer will there be weariness, pain, and guilt."36

Sleep symbolizes paradise restored within the Mariner's soul:

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven
That slid into my soul (ll. 292-6).

During the Rime's composition, Coleridge noted that during the sleep representing paradise restored, the senses are dead, but the spirit is alive:

In the paradisiacal World Sleep was voluntary & holy—a spiritual before God, in which the mind elevated by contemplation retired into pure intellect, suspend[ed] all commerce with sensible objects & perceiv[ed] the present Deity—37

Coleridge presents the Mariner's sleep as paradisiacal sleep.

The "elevation of the mind" during sleep is signified by an "awake heart" in Scripture:

I slept, but my heart was awake (3. of 3. 5:2).

A medieval mystic interprets the passage:

That sleep which the spouse makes her glory in the Canticles, saying: I SLEEP, AND MY HEART WAKES is the sleep in which the blessed heart or soul has rest in God's sweetness.38
The Mariner's sleep "slid into his soul" and he thought he was a "blessed ghost." His sleep, like that of the spouse in the Canticles, symbolizes the marriage of soul to God. This spouse is identified with Mary and the bridegroom with the Lord. But is there evidence in the Rime that the Mariner's sleep "symbolizes the intimate experience of divine love in the individual soul" through connection with Mary, the King's bride?

To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven (ll. 294-5).

Is there evidence that during sleep the Mariner's heart was awake, i.e., was his mind aware of reception of grace disassociated from his body?

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew (ll. 297-9).

After awakening, does the Mariner become aware of the sacramental marriage by some "outward and physical sign of inward and spiritual grace?"

And when I awoke, it rained (l. 500).

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain (Gloss, p. 21).

Evidently grace has been sent. But the Mariner's reception of love, or spiritual intercourse, must have elements of consummation of human marriage, according to the popular Pauline doctrine, here interpreted by Methodius:

The Word did leave his Father, who is in the heavens, to come down and unite himself to a bride and slept in the ecstasy of his Passion, freely dying for her that he might present this
bride to himself, glorious and immaculate, after being purified in the water of baptism ready to receive the spiritual seed which he himself sows and plants, implanting it in the depths of the mind, which the [bride] receives and forms, as in the manner of women, that she may give birth to and nourish virtue.40

Notice here that baptism, marriage and Christ's Passion are synonymous. Did the water of baptism wash the Mariner, and did he receive the spiritual seed as the spouse in the Canticle received the bridegroom who said, "Open to me . . . for my head is wet with dew, my body with the drops of the night" (S. of S. 5:2)?

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank (ll. 501-4).

The Mariner's marriage has occurred during sleep and duplicates the "paradisioal World's sleep," for his "elevated mind" has been "implanted with the spiritual seed," i.e., "perceives the present Deity."

The wedding in the Rime's frame is the symbol of the Mariner's wedding within the tale, as Coleridge confirms:

Marriage between Christians is a true and perfect symbol or mystery; that is, the actualizing faith being supposed to exist in the receivers, it is an outward sign co-essential with that which it signifies, or a living part of that, the whole of which it represents. Marriage is symbolical of the union of the soul with Christ the Mediator [as it is] symbolic of the union between Christ and his Church (Aids to Reflection, p. 138).

A "symbol of the union of the soul with Christ" is a symbol only if "the actualizing faith . . . exists in the receivers."

Without faith, participation in any symbolic marriage (baptism and the Eucharistic feast) is idolatry. The Wedding-Guest
participates in the Mariner's tale, the real wedding, rather than in the symbolic wedding. The Mariner's confession prevents the Wedding-Guest's idolatry rather than relieves the Mariner of guilt. That Coleridge intended the Mariner's conversion as the wedding—with the wedding on land as its symbol—is evident in the Rime's rib imagery. Coleridge was thoroughly familiar with the Pauline doctrine which connects the sleep of Adam to the sleep of Christ through typological rib imagery. For example, Coleridge's statement concerning marriage as a symbol (p. 63) refers to Ephesians 5:25-33; Methodius' interpretation of the same Scriptural passage (pp. 62-3) begins, "the Church is born from the bone and side of Adam. For this reason the Word did leave his Father," etc. Eve, formed from Adam's rib during sleep, was intended to be the mother of man in both flesh and spirit. Because of the Fall, however, man derives only flesh from Adam and Eve. For this reason, Christ was sent to enable man to become spirit:

Adam passes on to us only our natural life. It is the second Adam who is the source of our spiritual existence (Danielou, pp. 18-19).

Christ's Passion recapitulates the sleep of Adam:

It is from the pierced side of Christ, sleeping on the Cross, as from the pierced side of Adam, that blood and water flowed out, symbols of Baptism and the Eucharist (Danielou, p. 53).

Before his conversion, the Mariner exists only in the flesh. To exist in the spirit, he must recapitulate the sleep/death of Christ:

I thought that I had died in sleep (l. 307).
In addition, he must receive water and blood. His reception of water, which symbolizes baptism, has already been discussed. The Mariner also participates in a symbolic Eucharistic Feast, for to be "blessed" means to "receive blood;"

And was a blessed ghost (l. 309). The Mariner, like Mary who preserved the Church born forth from Christ so that man could receive the spirit, "receives the water and blood that flow from the Saviour's side" (Gothic Image, p. 189). Coleridge specifically refers to Mary as the mother of man's spirit during the Mariner's conversion:

By grace of the holy Mother (Gloss, p. 21). The terms "holy Mother" and "Heaven's Mother" (see l. 177, associated with rib imagery) are used only when Biblical exegetes discuss Mary as being the spiritual mother to man (as distinguished, for example, from "Holy Mary, mother of God" in the Hail Mary). Mary is the fulfillment of type, the mother of the Mariner's spirit:

Adam's sleep was a type of the death of Christ who had slept in death. Eve coming from Adam's side is a type of the Church, the true mother of all living flesh. The holy Mother, the New Eve [Mary], gives birth to those who are reborn (Tertullian quoted by Danielou, p. 49).

Coleridge employs the traditional Eve/Mary, Adam/Christ symbolism to depict the Mariner's change from faithless to faithful. He sidesteps the doctrinal message evident in the symbolism—that man is regenerated by the ceremonies of baptism and the eucharist as administered by the Church—by having the Mariner become a church, i.e., an abode for God, himself. The Mariner's wedding is depicted in terms of the symbolic bride
of God, the emblem of faith. The Mariner also negates the harlot's unfaithfulness as Mary negated Eve's. His faith enables him to receive the spirit:

At the Crucifixion all men lost their faith, Mary alone remained constant. Because of her faith, the whole Church took refuge in her heart (Gothic Image, p. 191).

Baptism, marriage, and the eucharist—all sacraments of the Church—are present in the Mariner's conversion, but are far removed from ceremony; they symbolize the inward experience of the Mariner's spiritual union, and all are inevitably dependent upon the Mariner's faith. To Coleridge, faith, not ceremony, produces the "union of the soul with Christ, the marriage of man and God:"

It is neither the outward ceremony of Baptism nor any other ceremony, but such a faith in Christ as tends to produce a conformity to his holy doctrines and example in heart and life . . . that properly makes us Christians (Aids to Reflection, p. 338).

Coleridge finds fault with organized religion for forgetting its purpose:

Too soon did the Doctors of the Church forget that the Heart was the Beginning and the End; and that Truth, Knowledge and Insight were comprehended in its expansion. There remained only rites and ceremonies and spectacles (Aids to Reflection, pp. 184-5).

Organized religion is self-abortive when concerned with ceremony rather than the heart—the individual's union with God. Organized religion was born out of man's isolation from God, as Paul Tillich makes clear in a statement which bears comparison with Coleridge's:
The "shame" of religion is that it makes itself the ultimate and despises the secular realm. It makes its myths and doctrines, its rites and laws into ultimates... It forgets that its own existence is a result of man's tragic estrangement from his own true being (Theology of Culture, P. 9).

When the Church forgets the heart, its "rites and ceremonies" become idols:

Religious symbols point symbolically to that which transcends all of them. But since, as symbols, they participate in that to which they point, they always have the tendency (in the human mind, of course) to replace that to which they are supposed to point, and to become ultimate in themselves. And in the moment in which they do this, they become idols. All idolatry is nothing else than the absolutizing of symbols of the Holy and making them identical with the Holy itself (Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 60).

Coleridge also believed that symbols not only represent but also partake of the eternal:

A symbol always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part of that unity, of which it is the representative (Statesman's Manual, pp. 36-7).

Coleridge deplores the tendency of man to substitute the symbol for that which it represents:

Here was the spiritual degraded into an image, and secondly, the image was unnaturally made to possess spiritual powers... to give the spirit the attributes of the body, and to give the body the attributes of the spirit... this is the character of superstition in all ages; it is the confounding of the spiritual with the bodily.41

Without a recognition that the rites of the Church are symbols of an individual allegiance with God, the sacraments cease to be a token of the regenerative process and become idols--
superstitious instruments. 

Ceremony cannot substitute for inward communication between man and God. In 1794 Coleridge apparently reached the conclusion that ceremony was unnecessary if one were faithful, for in 1827 he wrote he had been "33 years absent from my Master's Table. Yet I humbly hope, that spiritually I have fed on the flesh & blood, the Strength and the Life of the Son of God in his divine Humanity during the latter years." In the Rime, Coleridge incorporates his view of the efficacy of faith and of the superstitious use of the sacraments, for he has drawn the Mariner as idolatrous (superstitious, faithless) before his conversion and as faithful during and after his conversion.

FLESHLY VERSUS SPIRITUAL FOOD

Coleridge presents the Mariner's change from idolatry to faith in yet another traditional manner--his change from bodily hunger and thirst to his feeding upon the flesh and blood of the spirit.

Coleridge must have read, in the Book of Common Prayer, "their guilt shall strike the wicked dumb before the Judge's face" (Psalter, p. 4). In the Rime, the Judge's face appears:

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist (ll. 97-8).

... the Sun ... peered
With broad and burning face (ll. 178-9).

The Mariner and his shipmates are struck dumb:

Through utter drought all dumb we stood (l. 159).
Their guilt strikes them dumb:

... through utter drought
We could not speak (ll. 136, 8). The shipmates ... would fain throw the
whole guilt (Gloss, p. 11).

The crew's sufferings are comparable to the sufferings
of Hell in the apocryphal Book of Paul where people were
"hanging over a channel of water and their tongues were
exceeding dry;"44

Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink (ll. 121-2).

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root (ll. 136-7).

Being sensual men, the mariners suffer physical agony for
spiritual guilt. The Mariner seeks to alleviate spiritual
anguish by physical means, like another sensual man who, when
surrounded by water and apples without being able to eat or
drink, "was so dried up to utter rind by hunger that at last
he turned his teeth upon himself."45 The Mariner's biting his
arm is an idolatrous act; his "confounding of the spiritual
with the bodily is superstition" (Philosophical Lectures, p. 268).

Coleridge presents the Mariner's act as idolatrous, for
eating flesh is the traditional mark of idolatry. For example,
eating culminates the attempt to elevate flesh to spirit in
the York cycle's Fall of Man:

We shall be as God (I. 92).
We shall be as wise as God that is so great
And as mickle [great] of price, forthy eat of this meat.46

Idolatry is making the body "have the attributes of the
spirit" (Philosophical Lectures, p. 268). The Mariner's act
is a perversion of the Eucharistic Feast, for he makes himself the bodily substitution for the spiritual "flesh and blood of the Son of God:"

I bit my arm, I sucked the blood (l. 160).

The Mariner bites his arm. Coleridge shows the Mariner as the sensual man in every possible way, for the spiritual man relies on God, "I depend on thy almighty arm," and denies the sensual: "The arm of flesh defy." The "arm" motif in Scripture represents the power of God, and those who seek such power in themselves are always cursed:

Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart turns away from the Lord (Jer 17:5).

The Mariner bites his arm and curses himself. His act conjures forth the figure of idolatry, Life-in-Death, who curses him. She typifies the sensual man, one who "lusts after the flesh." Mary typifies the spiritual man, one who "hungered and thirsted after righteousness," as Dante explains further:

Mary thought more, how the wedding should be honorable and complete, than of her own mouth (Divine Comedy, Purgatory, Canto XXIII, p. 88).

The Mariner stops thinking of his own mouth when he directs himself toward God in that crucial "yearning toward the Moon" scene:

Thirst, arising from the passions, grips the soul until God draws forth water and quenches the thirst of the soul which is directed towards Him. By using familiar Biblical wording, Coleridge shows that when the Mariner directs himself toward God he has
followed the command, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'" (John 8:37-38):

A spring of love gushed from my heart (l. 284). The Mariner drinks from the "fountain of wisdom . . . the fountain of living waters . . . to quench his thirst from the fullness of divine knowledge." The spring which gushed forth marks the birth of the Mariner's reason:

The spring which gushed forth from the rock (is) the type of the quickening power of the Logos. The spring of love quenches the Mariner's thirst.

Coleridge clenches the "living water" scheme by having the Mariner's buckets become "filled with dew" (l. 299). Those countless Biblical virgins who bring water jars to wells are types of the soul which becomes wed to God. St. Ambrose's discussion of Rebecca provides interpretation (see also Gen 24):

She came to the fountain of wisdom--be she the Church or the human soul, to fill to the brim her pitcher and drink of the discipline of true wisdom. What this fountain is, he will tell you himself. "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters" (De Isaac, VI, 642, quoted by Danielou, p. 146).

If the "living waters" furnished both Rebecca's pitcher and the Mariner's buckets, why are they "silly buckets?" Coleridge chose a Gothic word for his Gothic period tale. Gothic "silly=good, prosperous, happy" is derived from Anglo-Saxon "soelig=blessed." What should we think of those "silly buckets on the deck, That had so long remained" (ll. 297-8)?

Think either of the Church awaiting for so long
a time the coming of her Lord, or of the soul which raises itself above the body by the renunciation of all luxury and bodily delights, and wishes henceforth to experience the divine presence and the grace of the word of salvation (De Isaac, VI, 642, quoted by Danielou, p. 647).

In the stanza following the "silly buckets," the Mariner experiences the divine presence. In the gloss opposite the buckets, the Mariner experiences grace.

Coleridge further indicates the Mariner's change from sensual to spiritual by a series of inter-related images of manna (figuratively, spiritual food). The Mariner's being "refreshed with rain" is symbolic of eating manna, but stronger evidence of manna's presence is Coleridge's description of the Mariner's conversion scene. The buckets are "filled with dew." The moon's beams are "like April hoar-frost spread." The snakes' light "fell off in hoary flakes." Compare with the scene of the manna's appearance:

And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as hoar-frost spread on the ground (Exodus 16:13-14; my italics).

Honey-dew (or honey-milk) is metaphorically manna. One who feeds on manna has sweet, soft speech, for if "honey and milk are under your tongue," your "speech is most sweet" (S. of S. 4:11 & 5:16). One of the "Polar Spirit's fellow-daemons" (Gloss, p. 27) evidently feeds on the Spirit:

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew (ll. 405-6).

Here Coleridge provides another link between the Polar Spirit, his fellow-daemons, and the other beings related to the spiritual life such as the moon, birds, and Hermit. Most are linked
visually by cloud/fog/snow/white/hoar-frost. Their sounds and motions are linked by images of softness and sweetness. Supernatural beings and spiritual humans are traditionally described as soft and sweet, showing their connection with the "land where flow milke and honey." A few examples of the spiritual food—sweet, soft, gentle, quiet imagery carried by the spiritually oriented in the *Rime* follow:

Albatross . . . . . . . sweet bird (l. 88).

Moon . . . . . . . . softly she was going up (l. 265).

Mary . . . . . . She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven (l. 295).

Angelic spirits and birds . . . . . . Sweet sounds rose slowly from their mouths (l. 351). Each sweet sound darted to the Sun (l. 353). Sweet jargoning (l. 362). Quiet tune (l. 372).

Breeze . . . . . . . Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze (l. 462).

Hermit . . . . . . . How loudly his sweet voice he rears (l. 516).

 Appropriately, the fleshly food versus spiritual food scheme ends with a comparison of the ceremony of marriage to the real spiritual union as expressed in love and prayer; the latter is sweeter:

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
Tis sweeter far to me
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—
And all together pray (ll. 602-5, 607).

Coleridge here compares improper to proper sacrifice. When the marriage-feast (Eucharistic Feast) is undertaken as a
feeding of self for self, one merely has his mouth open.

Agape they heard me call (l. 162). The improper sacrifice has taken place.\textsuperscript{55} But when the Mariner becomes related to others in love (agapé) and annihilates himself in prayer (the sacrificial giving of oneself to God), he feeds his spirit.

The Mariner has changed from idolatrous to faithful, but Coleridge is careful to describe his faithfulness as a type of his life after death rather than his actually becoming a spirit in Heaven. Before he "stood on the firm land" (l. 571) of his native country, his idolatry is overthrown. His ship's sinking amid loud rumbling sounds may be compared to the fall of Jericho, where "the trembling of the earth symbolized the overthrow of the idols, typical of the final victory over death at the Parousia."\textsuperscript{56} The Mariner's return to his home symbolizes his faith which typifies his life after death:

We who believe, do not yet see ourselves raised or seated in heavenly places: but all this is already outlined by Faith, because in mind and hope we are already raised above earthly and material things. . . . What we now possess in anticipation by faith, we shall [after the Parousia] possess in the fullness of reality.\textsuperscript{57}

Although the Mariner has been wed to God, he cannot rest on his laurels. Like his exemplar, Mary, whose reception of the Holy Ghost "would have nothing availed her had she not remained very good and faithful,"\textsuperscript{58} the Mariner must remain faithful to secure his future life. Coleridge, in his defense of justification by faith, describes the Mariner whose faithfulness implies penitence for past sin and wariness of future
idolatry:

A Christian's conscience, methinks, ought to be a Janus bifrons,--a Gospel-face retrospective, and smiling through penitent tears on the sin of the past, and a Moses-face looking forward in frown and menace, frightening the harlot will into a holy abortion of sin conceived but not yet born, perchance not yet quickened (Literary Remains, p. 280).

CONCLUSION

The Mariner's experience is of mystical union between man and God. Countless examples of Coleridge's mysticism could be related to the Rime, for as Leslie Stephen has noted, the germ of all Coleridge's utterances may be found--by a little ingenuity--in the "Ancient Mariner." For what is the secret of the strange charm of that unique achievement? . . . The secret is the ease with which Coleridge moves in a world of which the machinery is supplied by the mystic philosopher.59

The "Parable of Two Mystic Pilgrims" (reproduced in Appendix B) seems to have been written by Coleridge as an explanation of the Rime.60 While reading it, compare the Mariner to the first mystic, who "borrows his phrases and figures from the sacred books of his Religion" to tell his tale, which is "received as a Madman's Tale." Coleridge the poet, who may be compared to the second mystic, placed the Mariner's tale within the "established Track," that is, within the realm of recognizable Christian ecclesiasticism, in order to make his reader's recognize the "truth mingled with the dream." The truth which Coleridge mingled with the tale was that same truth he as a philosopher espoused: reality consists of both nature and Supernature and man can become united with both if he postulates, i.e., has faith in, God.
The Mariner's tale is expressed as his individual religious experience, subject to his viewpoint. Coleridge expressed the Mariner's individual experience with images common to all religious confession:

Confession consists of the spontaneous cry of the heart, expressing or declaring the meaning the speaker has found in existence. The form will be that of luminous and powerful images, and its content will be a distinctive configuration of life values which are the content of all religious experience (Language and Faith, pp. 229-30).

Coleridge employed universal images of the Supernatural to show the Mariner's conversion from the widest perspective—the change from conceptualism to dualism which is the basis of every individual experience of the Supernatural.

Coleridge also employed traditional Christian symbols to relate the Mariner's change to a specific doctrinal point of view—faith in Christ.

The Mariner's conversion is thus expressed as both his subjective or individual experience of the Supernatural and as objective religious experience within a particular ecclesiasticism:

Religion is inward Life and Truth and outward Fact and Luminary. But as all Power manifests itself in the harmony of correspondent Opposites, each supposing and supporting the other,—so has Religion its objective, or historical and ecclesiastical pole, and its subjective, or spiritual and individual pole.

In the Rime, Coleridge maintains a balance between the subjective and objective poles of experience of the Supernatural which he felt was the "essence of religion in its highest contemplation."


APPENDIX A

The following extracts from The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Kathleen Coburn (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), Vol. I were written during the Rime's composition. Coleridge's notes indicate his intention to write about a spiritual journey. Notes are reproduced uncorrected.

1. Necessitarianism:

16--Hymns to the Sun, the Moon and the Elements--six hymns.--In one of them to introduce a dissection of Atheism--particularly the Godwinian System of Pride. Proud of what? An outcast of blind Nature ruled by a fatal necessity--slave of an Idiot Nature! (174 G. 169).

2. Typological ressurect1on:

Jonas--a monodrama--

3. Rime's "bloody sun" a symbol of Christ's Passion:

Christ, the great Sun of Righteousness, & Saviour of the World, having by a glorious rising after a red & bloody setting, proclaimed his Deity to men & angels--& by a complete triumph over the two grand enemies of mankind sin & death set up the everlasting Gospel in the room of all false religions, has now (as it were) changed the Persian superstition into the Christian Devotion; & without the least approach to the Idolatry of the former made it henceforth the Duty of all nations, Jews & Gentiles, to worship the rising Sun (f4v 327 21.28 322).

4. Life-in-Death and her mate:

The eldest daughter of Death (sin) drest in grave clothes--(272 G. 269 f77v 273).

5. Spiritual journey:

Unitarian/ travelling from Orthodoxy to Atheism--why--& c. (79 G. 74).

6. Dante's influence:

Poem in three one Books in the manner of Dante on the excursion of Thor--(f23v 170 G. 165).

Mars rising over a gibbet--(158 G. 153 154).
7. God and space:

Stars twinkle upon us--Suns on other worlds.--Double sense of prophecies.--(82 G. 76 90).

God no distance knows,
All of the whole possessing.--(98 G. 92 91).

It surely is not impossible that to some infinitely superior being the whole Universe may be one plain--the distance between planet and planet only the pores that exist in any grain of sand--and the distances between system & system no greater than the distance between one grain and the grain adjacent.--(f15 120 G. 114).

8. The first two types of "Life" describe the Mariner before his conversion, the third type describes the conversion process as death of the senses, birth of the spirit:

   Brutal Life--in which we pursue mere corporeal pleasures and interests--

   Human Life--in which for the sake of our own Happiness we & Glory we pursue studies and objects adapted to our intellectual faculties.

   Divine Life--when we die to the creatures & to self and become deiform by following the eternal Laws of order from the pure Love of Order & God (f63v 256 G. 253 258).


   First stage--the pressure of immediate calamities without earthly aidence makes us cry out to the Invisible--

   Second Stage--the dreariness of visible things to a mind beginning to be contemplative--horrible Solitude.

   Third Stage--Repentance & Regret--& self-inquietude.

   Fourth Stage--The celestial delectation that follows ardent prayer--

   Fifth Stage--Self-annihilation--the Soul enters the Holy of Holies (f63v 257 G. 253 257).
10. Judgment Day:

Sick, Lame, & Wounded—Blind, and Deaf and Dumb—
Why sleep ye, O ye Watchman—
Wake from the sleep of whoredom. trim your Lamp—
Sound, sound the Trumpets—for the Bridegroom comes—
0 man, thou half-dead Angel—
a dusky light—a purple flash
crystalline splendor—light blue—
Green lightnings—
in that eternal and delirious misery—
wrathfires—inward desolations—
an horror of great darkness
great things that on the ocean counterfeit infinity
(273 G. 270 273).

Terrible and loud
As the strong Voice that from the Thunder-Cloud
Speaks to the startled Midnight (207 G. 209).

The Earth feared and was still, when GOD arose
to Judgment to save the meek of the Earth. Surely,
the Wrath of Man shall praise thee—the remainder of
wrath shalt thou restrain.—
God shall cut off the spirit of Princes—he is
terrible to the Kings of the Earth.
Then shall the right-aiming Thunderbolts go
abroad; & from the Clouds, as from a strong Bow,
shall they slay fly to the mark.
There be spirits that are created for Vengeance—
in the time of Destruction they pour out their forces
& appease the Wrath of him that made them (f26 175 G. 170).

11. Supernatural world experienced while bodily alive:

certainly there are strange things in the other
World; and so there are in all the immediate
preparations to it; & a little Glimps of Heaven . . .
any ray of God . . . are infinitely far from
Illusions (186 G. 182).
APPENDIX B

The Parable of Two Mystic Pilgrims

THE MARINER

I will endeavour to describe two mystics in a sort of allegory, or parable. Let us imagine a poor Pilgrim benighted in a wilderness or desert, and pursuing his way in the starless dark with a lanthorn in his hand. Chance or his happy genius leads him to an Oasis or natural Garden, such as in the creations of my youthful fancy I supposed Enos the Child of Cain to have found. And here, hungry and thirsty, the way-wearied Man rests at a fountain; and the Taper of his Lanthorn throws its Light on an overshadowing Tree, a Bosom of snow-white Blossoms, through which the green and growing Fruits peeped, and the ripe golden Fruitage glowed. Deep, vivid, and faithful are the Impressions, which the lovely Imagery comprised within the scanty Circle of Light, makes and leaves on his Memory! But scarcely has he eaten of the fruits and drank of the fountain, ere scared by the roar and howl from the desert he hurries forward; and as he passes with hasty steps through grove and glade, shadows and imperfect beholdings and vivid fragments of things distinctly seen blend with the past and present shapings of his Brain. Fancy modifies sight. His Dreams transfer their forms to real Objects; and these lend a substance and an outsense to his Dreams. Apparitions greet him; and when at a distance from this enchanted land, and on a different track, the Dawn of Day discloses to him a Caravan, a troop of his fellow-men, his memory, which is itself half fancy, is interpolated afresh by attempt to recall, connect, and piece out his recollections. His narration is received as a Madman's Tale. He shrinks from the rude Laugh and contemptuous Sneer, and retires into himself. Yet the craving for Sympathy, strong in proportion to the intensity of his Convictions, impels him to unboism himself to abstract Auditors; and the poor Quietist becomes a Peri; and, all too poorly stocked for the Writer's trade, he borrows his phrases and figures from the only Writings to which he has had access, the sacred Books of his Religion. And thus I shadow out the enthusiastic Mystic ... Jacob Behmen.

COLERIDGE THE POET

To delineate a Mystic of the second and higher order, we need only endow our Pilgrim with equal gifts of Nature, but these developed and displayed by all the aids and arts of Education and favorable Fortune. He is on his way to the Mecca of his ancestral and national Faith, with a well-guarded and numerous Procession of Merchants and Fellow-Pilgrims, on the established Track. At the close of Day the Caravan has halted; the full moon rises on the Desert; and he strays forth alone,
out of sight, but to no unsafe distance; and Chance leads him too to the same Oasis or Islet of Verdure on the Sea of Sand. He wanders at leisure in its maze of Beauty and Sweetness, and thrids his way through the odorous and flowering Thickets into open "Spots of Greenery," and discovers statues and memorial characters, grottos, and refreshing Caves. But the Moonshine, the imaginative Poesy of Nature, spreads its soft shadowy charm over all, conceals distances, and magnifies heights, and modifies relations; and fills up vacuities with its own whiteness, counterfeiting substance; and where the dense shadows lie, makes solidity imitate Hollowness; and gives to all objects a tender visionary hue and softening. Interpret the Moonlight and the Shadows as the peculiar genius and sensibility of the Individual's own Spirit.

COLERIDGE THE PHILOSOPHER

But the residentiary, or the frequent visitor of the favored spot, who has scanned its beauties by steady Day-Light, and mastered its true proportions and lineaments; he will discover that both Pilgrims have indeed been there! He will know, that the delightful Dream, which the latter tells, is a Dream of Truth; and that even in the bewildered Tale of the former there is Truth mingled with the Dream.

(Coleridge, Aids to Reflection, pp. 381-86).
NOTES TO CHAPTER I


5 "Coleridge and Imagination" (1929), rpt. in On Being Creative and Other Essays (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1932), pp. 116-17.

6 In Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford Press, 1959), p. 11, Paul Tillich draws a similar conclusion: "Religion's existence is a result of man's tragic estrangement from his true being."

7 Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary (New York: World Publishing, 1945), p. 1712. All definitions are from this dictionary, unless otherwise noted.


11 Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956-9), II, 866-7. Hereafter cited as Collected Letters. In this letter to Sotheby, Sept., 1802, several examples of Coleridge's plagiarism occur. The "One Life" statement is from Acts 17:28: "In him we live and move and have our being." Coleridge said that because of their belief in the "One Life," Hebrew poetry is superior in "Imagination and Intellect" to Greek poetry (p. 866). Earlier in the letter (p. 864), Coleridge attempted to show that his poetry was pure Imagination, i.e.,
a spontaneous eruption of the "One Life" concept, by stating, "I involuntarily poured forth a Hymn in the manner of Psalms." The poem supposedly written without volition was "Hymn Before Sun-Rise in the Vale of Chamouni" which was actually "founded on a much shorter German poem by Frederika Brun" (Coleridge: Selected Poetry and Prose, ed. Elisabeth Schneider [New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1966], note to p. 131). Whether Coleridge's poetry was the result of surfacing bubbles from the latent image of God in man or of plagiarism or of diligent labor with conscious intent, the effect is the same. The Hymn has a hidden meaning which can be brought out of hiding by explication of its author's sources. Such explication may appear to allegorize the Hymn, but Coleridge approves of allegorical interpretation of works whose author's intended a "hidden meaning:"

There is a general Ridicule cast on all allegorizers of Poets--read Milton's prose works & observe whether he was one of those who joined in the Ridicule" (p. 867--Milton was not, by the way).

Coleridge does not ridicule allegorization of poems written with a "Platonizing Spirit;" instead, he ridicules those who comment on a man's works without reading the sources of inspiration or recognizing the author's beliefs:

How little the commentators of Milton have availed themselves of the writings of Plato--Milton's darling. But alas! commentators only hunt out verbal Parallelisms (p. 866).

In this same letter Coleridge finds a "passage from Josephus . . . wholly allegorical" (Josephus is the "learned Jew"of the Hyme's gloss, p. 11). Josephus influenced the Hyme, but the most immediate source was the Bible. Phrases in Coleridge's theological writings often correlate to phrases from the Bible, especially those which are included in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (the edition Coleridge possessed is hard to get; the American edition [New York: H.W. Hewet, 1843] corresponds to it exactly except that in prayers for success in warfare, the name of the country is changed). In his Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit, ed. H. St. J. Hart (Stanford U. Press, 1957), Letter III, p. 52, for example, Coleridge writes the following words as if they were his own:

God maketh the lightnings his ministers, fire and hail, vapour and stormy winds fulfilling his word.

Almost the same wording is found in the Book of Common Prayer:

Fire and hail, snow and vapours: wind and storm fulfilling his word (Psalter, p.44).

The source is Psalms 148:8:
Fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind
fulfilling his command.

Echoes from this same Psalm, which is an exhortation to praise God in song and prayer, occur twice in the Rime:

I. Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay! (Rime, ll. 608-9).

Let youths with maids,
And hoary heads with babes, join (Common Prayer, p. 44).
Young men and maidens together,
Old men and children! (Psalm 148:12).

II. (the water snakes) moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes (Rime, ll. 273-6).

Praise him, ye dreadful whales,
And fish that through the sea
Glide swift, tori th gli t't ring scales (Common Prayer).

Praise the LORD from the earth,
You sea monsters and all deeps (Psalm 148:7).

The killing of the Albatross, a "Christian soul" (l. 65), may have been influenced by a psalm in which the psalmist, a "righteous Christian soul" is told to--

Flee like a bird to the mountains; for lo, the wicked bend the bow, they have fitted their arrow to the string, to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart. . . . The Lord . . . hates him that loves violence. On the wicked he will rain coals of fire and brimstone; a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup (Common Prayer, Psalm 9:2,3).

In Chapter Three, I shall point out other "borrowings" from Scripture in the Rime. My purpose is not to condemn Coleridge for plagiarism, but to establish the Rime's basis. The use Coleridge makes of borrowed phrases corresponds to the traditional use of those phrases, which helps in understanding the Rime.


James notes that all religions "agree that the 'more' [more of the higher part of man--Supernature] really exists, but when they treat of the experience of 'union' with it their speculative differences appear" (p. 463). For William James, the unconscious mind is the "actual area of contact between the individual self and a higher, transcendental power" (Wheelwright, p. 401). For Coleridge, the experience of union is this same mystical "unconscious mind/God" communication. Mysticism is defined as "a direct communication between God and man through the inward perception of the mind."

Coleridge believes that the idea of God in the unconscious corresponds to the reality of God so that when that idea is projected out into the unknown it lands in the reality of God:

Beyond the beast, yea, and above the Nature of which they are the inmates, Man possesses power namely of seeking what it can no where behold and finding that which itself has first trans­ fused--the permanent, that which in the endless flux of sensible things can alone be known (Coleridge's Ms. B3 ff. 67-8, quoted by J. Robert Barth, *Coleridge and Christian Doctrine* [Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1969], p. 86, n. 3).

James and Coleridge are mystics of the same breed, often phrasing their ideas similarly:

Whatever it may be on its farther side, the 'more' with which in religious experience we feel ourselves connected is on its hither side the subconscious continuation of our conscious life (James, p. 465).


The Mariner, like Coleridge's "true Philosopher," is directed by the command "KNOW THYSELF" to take an inner journey. Not content with the view from below the first range of hills, nature--the conscious mind, he strikes out to see what is on the "other side," Supernature--the unconscious mind. The Mariner's conversion, or mystical union, takes place when he "peeps over the hill" and views the "other side of consciousness" (BL, I, 164-72). Extent of omission may be inferred from number of pages cited in BL.
Both Coleridge and Hawthorne, working within the framework of the Christian myth, describe the conversion process as being partly the drinking from the fountain of living waters.

52 Anyone's being refreshed with rain corresponds to the manna coming down from Heaven, according to St. John (4: 31-3). St. John interprets the series of divine interventions of the Exodus as adumbrations of the corporeal presence of Christ, the fountain of living waters. Coleridge was undoubtedly thinking of the Exodus as he composed the Rime, for in a letter to Poole in 1796 he wrote:

Thou has been 'the Cloud' before me from the day that I left the flesh-pots of Egypt & was led thro' the way of a wilderness--the Cloud that hast been guiding me to a land flowing with milk & honey (Collected Letters, I, 249).

So familiar was Coleridge with the Biblical account of the Exodus that he incorporated portions of it as his own:

The mystics were a moving cloud of smoke to me by day, yet they were always a pillar of fire throughout the night, during my wanderings through the wilderness of doubt, enabled me to skirt, without crossing, the sandy deserts of utter unbelief (EL, I, 98).

Compare to the Exodus:

The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light (Ex 13:21). They are entangled in the land; the wilderness has shut them in (14:3). They crossed the sea when it was made dry land, and the waters were divided (14:21).

In the Rime, Coleridge moves the cloud/water images through exactly the series of interventions found in the Exodus. "Mist and cloud are types of the presence of the Holy Ghost" (St. Ambrose, De Mysteriis, III, 13: P.L. XVI, 393, quoted by Danielou, p. 181). In the Rime, mist, cloud, rain, etc., are types of the Divine Presence, i.e., the Shekinah which Christians call Christ. When the Mariner's ship is trapped in the ice, the Albatross appears through the fog and "the ice did split with a thunder-fit" (l. 69)—an unmistakable reference to God's parting of the waters for the trapped people of the Exodus (Ex 14:29). As the "shining pillar of cloud expressing the divine presence" (Bible note, p. 85 to Ex 14:19-20) moved with the Israelites, the Albatross moved with the ship bringing shining clouds with him.
In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud
It perched for vespers nine;
While all the night, through fog-smoke white
(See moving cloud of smoke, BL above).

When the Mariner kills the Albatross the mist moves from the Albatross to the Sun:

The Sun now rose . . . hid in mist (ll. 83, 85).

The sun is like the pillar of fire. The appearance of cloud and light together (mist and sun) refers to judgment:

In its twofold aspect of cloud and light, it corresponds, according to Zeno, to the two judgments, that of water, which has already been held, and of fire, which is to come (Danielou, p. 179).

Here begins the "Judgment Day" section of the Mariner's experience. Next, the crew justifies the killing of the Albatross, and the cloud moves from the Sun to the Polar Spirit, i.e., the brazen serpent--another type of the Shekinah/Christ (see John 3:14-15). After the crew "make themselves accomplices in the crime," (Gloss, p. 9) the mist and cloud representing spiritual refreshment is withdrawn, for the "good cloud overshadows only those whom the Holy Spirit visits" (Danielou, p. 181). The cloud does not withdraw until all deserve loss of the Shekinah. The Shekinah returns in the conversion scene in the form of dew, rain, and the spring from the Mariner's heart (John 6:31-58, 7:37-40).

53 Scholars found the description of manna in Exodus 16:13-14 (in text, p. 72) "corresponds closely to honey-dew" (Bible note, p. 86) and "the taste of it [manna] was like wafers made with honey" (Ex 16:31), so honey-dew or milk became a metaphor for manna, which in turn is metaphorically spiritual food.

54 St. Gregory of Nyssa quoted by Danielou, p. 146. Compare Coleridge's letter (note 52). When the Mariner hears the voices like honey-dew the ship is traveling "faster than human life could endure" (Gloss, p. 29) and the swift/soft/sweet combinations amass as he approaches his home, the typological land of milk and honey. The Mariner is "hastening toward that land where flow milke and honey" (Gregory). "The drink of milk and honey of early baptismal ceremonial symbolized entrance into the Promised Land" (Parkhurst, Cathedral, p. 249).

55 The Mariner's biting his own arm is certainly improper
sacrifice and Coleridge loads the Rime with references to such idolatry. For example, the Hermit's metaphorical description of the Mariner's ship contains references to idolatry. The owl, as we have seen, symbolizes "mitred atheism," that is, an atheistic priesthood administering the Eucharistic Feast. The "wolf ... that eats the she-wolf's young" (ll. 536-7) brings to mind the "she-wolf which in her leanness seemed laden with all cravings" of Dante's Divine Comedy, Hell, Canto 1:37, Great Books, p. 1. In both poems, "the wolf is the type of avarice" (Hell, p. 1, n. 8). The wolf who eats its own children symbolizes the desire of gain for oneself, avarice, as does the Mariner when he eats his own flesh. The beasts Dante mentions are derived from Jeremiah 5:6 which names them as "beasts of prey unleashed against the wayward people" (Bible note, p. 915). These beasts of prey turn up with alternates in various scenes of judgment, e.g., "Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves ... they fly like an eagle swift to devour" (Habakkuk 1:8). Beasts of prey generally are types of avarice, i.e., idolatry, which is the reason the beasts are sent: "God has no alternative in the face of rampant idolatry" (Bible note, p. 915). This note refers to Jer 5:7, which shows idolatry as harlotry and specifically as a turning away from spiritual food:

When I fed them to the full, they committed adultery and trooped to the houses of harlots.

The Biblical beasts of prey appear in "what seems to be a rough draft of 'The Wanderings of Cain': Cain discovered sitting ... The beasts are cut on the ramp" (Xanadu, p. 235). The beasts are cut from the second draft of "The Wanderings." Instead, improper sacrifice is depicted as arm-cutting. Cain is almost persuaded by an evil spirit (who assumed the shape of Abel) to offer improper sacrifice. Cain "meets in the desert a young man whom upon nearer approach he perceives to be Abel. ... He is going to offer sacrifices ... and persuades Cain to follow him. Abel offers sacrifice from the blood of his arm. He then persuades Cain to offer sacrifice, for himself and his son Enoch by cutting his child's arm and letting the blood fall from it" (Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. E. H. Coleridge [London: Oxford U. Press, 1912], I, 285-92). Neither the beasts nor the arm-cutting appears in the final "Wanderings." What was left out of the "Wanderings of Cain" seems to have found its way into the Rime. Beasts of prey and Cain's cutting his own child's arm are not far removed from the wolf who eats his children and the Mariner who eats his arm. All are, in any case, symbols of idolatry.

56 Origen, Theological Discussion, V, 25, quoted by Danielou, p. 279. Parousia means the destruction of the world on Judgment Day.

16William James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience" (see note 14), p. 463.


18The fancy making objects of others is the same as the I-It relationship described by Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1937). An I-It relationship is manipulative. The man using the fancy lacks "heart"—the recognition of mutuality between individual beings:

Unless a man understand his own heart, it is impossible that he should have insight into and feeling for the hearts of other men (Coleridge, Notebook 31 rpt. in *Inquiring Spirit*, ed. Kathleen Coburn [New York: Pantheon Books, 1951], p. 261).

The Mariner and the crew are separated from one another and from nature because they are I-It persons who do not recognize the real being of others. For example, they view the Albatross as an object to be used for their own good, a "bird of good omen" (Gloss, p. 7). They "cry out against the Mariner" not because he had eliminated another's existence, but because he had killed the bird "that made the breeze to blow" (1. 94). When the "fog cleared off, they justify" his killing the bird "that brought the fog and mist" (1. 100). Their approval or disapproval of the killing is dependent upon whether or not it betters their condition. The Mariner's attitude changes to an I-Thou attitude when he understands his own heart, i.e., when he is converted. He recognizes the water-snakes as beings rather than as objects and "blesseth them in his heart" (Gloss, p. 21). He negates his former I-It attitude by establishing a relationship of reciprocity between himself and others.

19For Coleridge's analysis of Hartley's theory of associationism, see 31, I, 74-88.

20Killing the Albatross is the moral reflexion of a state of estrangement from the Supernatural World. Sin is "universal, tragic estrangement and should never be used in the plural" (Tillich [see note 17], p. 123). The idea
of sin as a moral transgression is deeply ingrained in western culture, probably as a result of the cataloguing of sin as represented by disobedience to moral imperatives: "thou shalt not kill"="killing is a sin." The confusion of terms leads to two misconceptions, both apparent in some analyses of the Rime: (1) that original sin is one's first moral transgression, or (2) that original sin is sinning in a new manner, as illustrated by a student of mine who complained, "You said 'original sin' and I've been thinking and just can't think of any new ones."


22 Collected Letters, I, 354; written to Poole, Oct., 1797.


26 The idea of God "works" in the Mariner like "the Memory of a Name" (see p. 6). The Mariner's native country symbolizes the supernatural world; he remembers the other world when he "yearneth toward the journeying Moon" (Gloss, p. 19). That the "higher faculty" becomes operative when he remembers his native home becomes apparent when realizing the tradition within which Coleridge worked. The Christian concept of exile from paradise is derived from Plato's idea of earthly life as the fall from the archetypal world of the Fathers into the shadow world of the flesh. The Mariner leaves his native home, i.e., paradise, and travels on the ocean. His journey symbolizes his earthly life which is the counterfeit of his real Being in the paradisiacal world:


An ocean voyage traditionally images one's reaching for his "true being." The image's evolution from Platonic to Christian thought is summarized by Eric Colledge, Medieval Mystics of England (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1961), p. 21:

The idea of the Regio dissimilitudinis or the 'land of unlikeness,' which Augustine developed from the Christian Platonist Plotinus, as Plotinus
had adapted it from Plato who in the *Politics* says that God's guidance is needed if the earth is not to plunge into the 'ocean of unlikeness.' Plotinus teaches that the soul in its lapse from virtue into vice falls into this 'region of unlikeness,' and the soul must travel towards God through its 'likeness' to Him. . . . In Genesis 1:26, God said that He would make man in His image and likeness, and Augustine teaches that the soul is God's image through its reason, His likeness through its intelligence.

The Mariner's traveling on the ocean can be viewed as his experience of "unlikeness," i.e., his estrangement from God. He can travel to God through his "reason" and "imagination," which correspond to Coleridge's "reason" and "imagination"—the higher faculty. The Mariner's birth of the higher faculty is concomitant with his memory of his "native country." The Mariner's death wish adumbrates his desire to return to the native country, for Coleridge believed that "Death itself will be only a Voyage—a Voyage not from, but to our native Country" (Collected Letters, I, 1123, written April 6, 1804 to Sir George Beaumont—before the addition of the gloss).

By comparing the lines which image the Mariner's memory of his native home to Dante's explanation of the same memory of home, the Mariner's becoming reanimated might become clearer:

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth toward the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival (Gloss, p. 19).

Before Dante can become "reanimate, pure, and disposed to mount unto the stars," the "memory of good" must occur (Divine Comedy, Purgatory, Canto 33:142 in Great Books of the Western World, trans. Charles Eliot Norton [Chicago: William Benton, 1952], 21, 105). The memory occurs when he sees a natural image which, since it corresponds to an image within, causes him to yearn toward the ideal form:

Our faculty of apprehension draws an image from a real existence, and displays it within you, so that it makes the mind incline toward it, that inclination is love. Then as the fire moves upward by virtue of its form, which is born to ascend thither where it most abides in its own matter, so the captive mind enters into longing (Canto 18:19, p. 80).

Nature reflects the Mariner's choice between evil and good, i.e., between individual and universal selfhood.
Several critics, beginning with Wordsworth, have objected to the Mariner's characterization as a person who is "more acted upon than acting" (Preface to Lyrical Ballads (1800), I, rpt. in The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. James Dykes Campbell (London: Macmillan, 1938), p. 596). Apparently Wordsworth considers "acting" to be external action, whereas Coleridge believed that one's most important actions were the internal acts of the will. Coleridge felt that the "will has a bi-polar line, the potential evil being the negative pole, and the actual good the positive pole" and that each individual is absolutely free to choose between the two poles (Notebook 26 quoted by James D. Boulger, Coleridge as Religious Thinker (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1961), p. 156). The Mariner's "fall" is his internal act of willing himself toward the negative or individual pole of the will. His "will realized the negative potency, willed itself individual, and fell into apostasy and Original Sin" (Coleridge, Notebook 26, ff. 14-17 quoted by Boulger, p. 158).

Two external actions, shooting the Albatross and the Mariner's biting his own arm, are the moral results of his action of willing himself individual. The Mariner's second internal action, willing himself toward the positive or universal pole of the will, results in the moral action of blessing the snakes. Coleridge presents the Mariner as acting, and his acts determine how he is "acted upon." He may appear to be a victim of external forces, but by his acts of will he has invited these forces into action. Coleridge explains that an act of the will determines one's subjection to nature:

This is the essential attribute of a will . . . that whatever determines the will acquires this power from a previous determination of the will itself. . . . By an act to which the will had determined itself, it has subjected itself to the determination of nature (Aids to Reflection in The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. W. G. T. Shedd (New York: Harper Brothers, 1884), I, 267).


29Coleridge, quoted by I. A. Richards, Coleridge on Imagination (Bloomington: Indiana U. Press, 1965), p. 34. No source for the quotation is provided.

30Collected Letters, II, 708. Letter written Oct., 1797 to Poole:

My opinion is that deep thinking is attainable only by a man of deep feeling and all truth is a species of revelation.
Coleridge confirms his adapting philosophy to Christianity in his criticism of a poem, The Recluse. Coleridge said that Wordsworth's purpose was "to infer and reveal the proof of, and necessity for, the whole state of man and society being subject to and illustrative of, a redemptive process in operation, showing how this idea reconciled all the anomalies, and promised future glory and restoration. . . . It is, in substance, what I have all my life been doing in my system of philosophy" (Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism, ed. Thomas M. Baysor [Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1936], pp. 411-12). Was Coleridge's purpose in the Rime to illustrate that same "redemptive process?" Redemption is the chief ingredient of Christianity, the component which separates it from all other religions. Redemption means to be ransomed from sin and its consequence, spiritual death, by Christ's Passion, as Coleridge explains in a notebook entry written during the Rime's composition (see Appendix A, Item 3). Repeating Christian doctrine, Coleridge says that only those who are willing to "repent and be regenerated, and be crucified to the flesh" are redeemed (Collected Letters, II, 1189). Redemption is an individual "triumph" over "sin and death." Before the Mariner's redemption, i.e., crucifixion, sin and death are interposed between him and the Sun in the form of the spectre-bark's inhabitants (see Appendix A, Item 4). Coleridge employs the four traditional figures of speech illustrating the redemptive process to depict the Mariner's redemption. In his description of the basic metaphors of the Pauline theology, Coleridge displays his recognition of their function as a literary device:


Coleridge knits together the first two figures of speech, sacrifice and atonement, in the blessing of the snakes:

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart
And I blessed them unaware.

To bless means "to give blood for another." The Mariner's
blessing is his "crucifixion," a blood gift to insure another's well-being. Atonement, to "make reparation for a crime," is linked with sacrifice. To compensate for spilling the Albatross's blood, the Mariner must be willing to shed blood for God's creatures—to bless them. The last figure of speech, "satisfaction of a creditor's claims by payments of the debt," is related to atonement. The Mariner's debt is exacted by the Polar Spirit:

Penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit (Gloss, p. 27).

The Mariner thinks the Hermit will "wash away the Albatross's blood" (ll. 511-12), but the Hermit also imposes penance. To shrive means to "impose a penalty" as well as to administer absolution, and the Hermit clearly shrives the Mariner in the former sense:

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrive him; and the penance of life falls on him (Gloss, p. 39).

Sacrificial expiation of sin, the first figure of speech, results in ransom from slavery, i.e., redemption, the third metaphor. The Mariner had formerly borne the weight of his sin as Christ had borne the sins of mankind upon the Cross:

Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung (ll. 142-3).

The Mariner becomes "free" rather than "hung" when the Albatross falls off:

And from my neck so free (l. 289).

His enslavement to sin (the life-in-death curse), is "finally expiated" (Gloss, p. 31) before his return to home. Since he has become free from the curse, the ship's sinking has no effect upon him—only the crew is sunk.

Coleridge has incorporated a much clearer and comprehensive picture of the redemptive act in the Rime than can be dealt with here, but the reader can perhaps be more aware of the blood sacrifice images, ransom and slavery references, etc., from this summary.

34 Notes to Chapter VIII, p. 92 of BL, I, p. 240.

35 BL, I, 6. It might be pointed out that to Coleridge, "Spiritual and Supernatural are synonymous" (Aids to Reflection, I, 71).

36 Notebook 40, ff. 25-25v, May 4, 1829, rpt. in Barth, Coleridge and Christian Doctrine, p. 36.
The main idea of Coleridge's statement is "that by faith alone can I be justified." Justification and redemption are synonymous (see note 33). Coleridge reiterates his advocacy of justification by faith in this theological essays and, in my opinion, in the Rime. Such justification seems old hat today, for this is the standard doctrine of all protestant churches. However, in Coleridge's time, his statements regarding justification by faith represented a definite break with the Catholic and Anglican doctrine. Coleridge says that both grace, the unmerited love of God for man, and faith, man's love of God, are necessary to establish Being:

Redemption is in the Absolute Act of Freedom thro' Grace & in faith by which we overcome self-being! (Notebook 39, f. 37 quoted by Barth, Coleridge and Christian Doctrine, p. 153).

Coleridge combines the neo-Platonic concept of aspiration (man rises up toward contemplation of the supernatural world by denying the material world) with the doctrine of his church (God accepts the unacceptable). J. B. Beer feels that aspiration and inspiration are two distinct views of the nature of man which are "exclusive of one another" and finds that Coleridge was "torn between an awareness of this uncompromisability and an unwillingness to choose" between the two. One view is of "man truly made in the image of his Creator, and hindered only by the ruthless conditions of his environment from realizing the glory of his true identity." The other view is that man is "in the clutches of a spiritual disease, stained by an eternal guilt. . . . Those who put their faith in the divinity of mankind talk of building the new Jerusalem, of striving towards the ideal, of choosing right courses of action, of responsibility; while those who hold the other speak of sin and redemption, of man's insufficiency and God's mercy, of necessary evils and the protection of innocence" (Coleridge the Visionary, p. 33). Dr. Beer's analysis of the two views is excellent, but they are not "exclusive of one another." The first is Greek in origin; the second is Hebrew in origin. Both views are incorporated in present-day Christian doctrine. Coleridge's compromise between the views might be stated here as this combination: "man is truly made in the image of his Creator and is hindered from realizing his true identity by his individual guilt, i.e., by freely choosing to disassociate his will from God's will." Coleridge's attempts to reconcile the two views is indicated in a letter to Sotheby, 1802 (Collected Letters, II, 866):

If there be any two subjects which have in the very depth of my Nature interested me, it has been the Hebrew & Christian theology, & the Theology of Plato.

The Rime incorporates Coleridge's compromise between the two views. The Mariner yearns toward home (aspiration) before receiving grace (inspiration).
One of many possible examples of such an assumption follows:

The almost flattering and yet appropriate term is Poesy—i.e. poiesis-making. . . . Now what the Globe is in Geography, miniaturizing in order to manifest the Truth, such is a Poem to that Image of God, which we were created with, and which still seeks that Unity, or the Revelation of the One in and by the Many (Unpublished Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1935), II, 128-9. Written to Poole, March, 1815).

Coleridge admired and investigated such diverse systems of philosophy as Platonic, neo-Platonic, Hartley, Priestley, Berkeley, and Kant, the Greek and Kabbalistic myths, and the Unitarian, Methodist, and Swedenborgian concepts of Christianity (to name a few)—all while remaining a member of the Anglican Church. The differences between these conceptions of reality are less important than the likenesses which Coleridge eternally pursued. All have in common the postulation of a supernatural reality, belief in the real existence of nature, and some method by which man can gain knowledge of both realities. Coleridge finds "that which is common" to be the "timeless truth," although each expresses that truth differently. For example, Coleridge sees the truth within Greek myth:

In reference to a working cause, as grounded in humanity, Truth is always existing either actually or potentially, and thus [Greek myth] never ceases to be a symbol (Literary Remains, II, 352).
Whatever expresses the "timeless truth" is a symbol:

An IDEA, in the highest sense of that word [the Platonic or archetypal sense] cannot be conveyed but by a symbol (EL, I, 100).

The symbol is the bridge between the finite mind's innate ideas and the eternal ideas of God. Whatever expression bridges that gap is a symbol, whether found in Greek myth, Kabbalistic lore, or philosophy.

43By "Gothic period" I refer to the medieval period when Gothic art flourished—the middle of the twelfth century to the end of the sixteenth century. Gothic art reflects a spiritual Zeitgeist, when "the culture tended to accept the belief that the individual is only a part of a transcendent whole, a fragment of the universe and of infinity. . . . The Gothic spirit is remote from contemporary life. To love and appreciate Gothic in its original masterpieces the history of the forms must be understood to be symbolic of the endeavour to create sacred places for the worship of God" (Encyclopaedia Britannica [Chicago: William Benton, 1966], X, 605).


46Whatever finds one in the unconscious necessarily proceeds from God:

When I read the Bible so far as possible in the same way I read any other book, when I contemplate it as a record of the reflexions and experiences of men like myself, striving like myself for the truth, then I discover that there is more in it, more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; that the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit (Coleridge, Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit, ed. H. St. J. Hart [Stanford U. Press, 1957], Letter II, p. 43).

47Aids to Reflection, I, 294-5.


49Male, Gothic Image, p. 29, continues:
True Knowledge then consists not in the study of things in themselves—the outward forms, but in penetrating to the inner meaning intended by God for our instruction, for in the words of Honorius of Autun, "every creature is a shadow of truth and life." The material and the spiritual worlds are one.

How similar this is to Coleridge's statement that truth is the perception of the divine world in the material world:

But let it not be supposed, that it religion is a sort of knowledge; No! it is a form of BEING, or indeed it is the only knowledge that truly is, and all other science is real only as far as it is symbolical of this. The material universe, saith a Greek philosopher, is but one vast complex MYTHUS, that is, symbolical representation, and mythology the apex and complement of all genuine physiology (Sl, I, 94).

Coleridge believed that a spiritual man would not "pursue studies and objects adapted to our intellectual faculties" (Appendix A, Item 8), a typically medieval view:

The study of things for their own sake held no meaning for the thoughtful man... The task of every student of nature was to discern the eternal truth that God would have each thing to express (Gothic Image, p. 34).

50 Philosophical Lectures, p. 367.

51 Coleridge's notebooks in the British Museum (Add. 4746--550) quoted by Beer, Coleridge the Visionary, p. 87.


53 Martin Gardner, The Annotated Ancient Mariner (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1965), p. 54, n. 42, states "because Magellan, in 1520, was the first to burst into the Pacific, these lines 'We were the first that ever burst/Into that silent sea' suggest that the poem's action did not take place later than 1520." Gardner also cites specific words such as "crossbow" as evidence that the Rime's setting was probably around 1500.


55 In The Active Universe (London: Athlone Press, 1962), p. 103, Herbert W. Piper states:

In 1795 Coleridge had been reading, and making jottings from, Sir Isaac Newton's Prophecies of
Holy Writ which contained the phrase "Rain... spirit, and the defect of rain for spiritual barrenness."


58The Psychopathology of Everyday Life (New York: Macmillan, 1917), p. 310. To Coleridge, the image of God is in the unconscious, so that when a man knows himself, delves into the unconscious, he becomes united with God:

We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD (BL, I, 136).
NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Coleridge states that "felicity to the righteous in the future world, though the precise nature of that felicity may not yet be defined, are illustrated by every image that can swell the imagination" (Collected Letters, III, 482).

2. Although these images are common to all religions, the word "God" will be used for brevity.


4. Hutchison finds that "among the most persistent images of the world's faiths is that of height. In a great variety of ways the religious object is regarded as high... In many languages the same word means both 'high' and 'deep.' Objects of religious devotion are thus deep as well as high" (p. 251).

5. "Table Talk" (1823-34), rpt. in Selected Poetry and Prose, p. 464.


7. Coleridge consistently describes the lower faculty as "cold." People who view reality only through the senses "seem to rank wisdom and truth among the Alpine flowers, which can flourish only amid ice and snow." Such a person would "reason in as cold-blooded a tone as if he were demonstrating a problem in geometry... A cold self-possession... is the commencement of that depraved indifference, that deadness of the moral and religious sense which so easily passes into the brutal" (Coleridge, Essays on His Own Times [December 21, 1809], II, 645-6, rpt. in Inquiring Spirit, p. 287). In the land of ice and snow, the Mariner kills the Albatross in cold blood. The sensual man's "moral and religious sense" is dead. He remains cold-blooded through the spectre-bark scene when his sensuality is presented to him as "The NIGHT-MARE Life-in-Death... Who thickens man's blood with cold" (11. 193-4).

8. Since every religion images supernatural beings as height objects, every religion also images the intermediary flight between Nature and Supernature with winged creatures, usually birds. The soul soars like a bird to the Heavens, and the Gods fly downward when visiting earth. Communication between man and God is often imaged by flying: "wings carry right prayer upward with an increase of power" (Martin Buber, Tales of the Hasidim: The Early Masters [New York: Schocken Books, 1947], p. 5). The Albatross's symbolic function
closely corresponds to that of the dove which appears often in Scripture. Coleridge's statement that as long as he loves he feels as if he were "swelling up against and yet towards--the outspread wings of the Dove that lies brooding on the troubled waters" (Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit, Letter III, p. 53) refers to the first Scriptural appearance of the dove (Gen 1:21). The Albatross, like the dove, symbolizes the hand of God extended toward man from the Creation:

> Over the ages the hand of God, or the dove which issues from the cloud (Emile Male, Religious Art from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century [New York: Pantheon Books, 1949], p. 31).

The Mariner's "inhospitable" killing of the Albatross symbolizes his inhospitable refusal to shake the hand of God which has been extended to him to help him escape the sensual life. Coleridge indicates the horrendous nature of inhospitality by connecting the Albatross's murder to the punishment for inhospitality described by Dante. The Albatross "perched for weavers nine" (I. 76) and the Polar Spirit lives "nine fathom deep" in the "land of mist and snow" (II. 139-4). In the ninth circle of Hell, closest to Lucifer himself, traitors to hospitality are frozen in a lake of ice (See Dante, Divine Comedy in Great Books, Vol. 21, p. 47 and diagram of Hell, p. 159).

9Coleridge intended the Mariner's individual fall to be representative:


The Mariner's fall into sin is his free choice of evil:

> Evil cannot originate in the Divine Will; it must therefore be referred to the will of man. If sin be not original, that is originated within the will, it would not be a sin (Aids to Reflection, I, 271).

Coleridge employs the question/answer technique to establish the Mariner's freedom to choose between good and evil. "I shot the Albatross" shockingly isolates the deed from any extenuating circumstances and stresses its origin as the Mariner's self will, for "a sin is an evil which has its ground or origin in the agent, and not in the compulsion of circumstances" (Aids to Reflection, I, 271).


12. Flavius Josephus, The Life and Works of Flavius Josephus, trans. William Whiston (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, n.d.), p. 34. The Mariner's resemblance to Cain is strong in this "death of the old self" portion of the Rime. Coleridge refers to "the learned Jew, Josephus," in the Rime's gloss, p. 11. In The Road to Xanadu (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), p. 233, Livingston Lowes finds that Coleridge included in a notebook prior to writing the Rime "exerpts, in the Greek, from Josephus's account of Cain." Dr. Lowes refers to Josephus only concerning those "invisible inhabitants of this planet" (Gloss, p. 11). However, Josephus's Cain and Abel story differs from the Biblical account (Gen 4:4-5), which sheds some light on the Mariner. Josephus concludes that God refused Cain's offering because he failed to "make proper use of his senses," while the Biblical account offers no explanation of the refusal. An improper use of the senses, according to Josephus, is placing the sensual above the spiritual. Cain, like the Mariner, understands his world through his senses only to find that the sensual world is abhorrent without unification with the spiritual world. Both wish to die after being cursed with Life-in-Death. In a rough draft of "The Wanderings of Cain," Coleridge writes: "Cain advances, wishing death" (Xanadu, p. 235). In the Rime, the death wish is linked with the number seven: "seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse, And yet I could not die" (ll. 261-2). This seven days of being cursed constitutes a warning to the Mariner to repent. The Mariner endures an eternity of pain and heeds the warning. Josephus (p. 1020) explains the use of seven to indicate eternity:

There are only seven days: which by a continual circulation compose all time.

Coleridge used the traditional pain/seven/warning-to-repent idea in the Rime and also applied it to himself:

The Terrors of the Almighty have been around and against me--and tho' driven up and down for seven dreadful Days by restless Pain . . .

Woe be to me, if this last Warning be not Taken (Collected Letters, III, 463-4, written 1813).

13. Evidence that Coleridge was planning to write of this gradual progression of self-annihilation is found in his notes written during the Rime's composition. Of the extracts from this notebook reproduced in Appendix A, Items 8 & 9 sketch the sensual to spiritual process, and Item 7 is relevant to the height/depth images of an Infinite God.


It seemed to me I was far more light . . .
What heavy thing has been lifted from me?

The "heavy thing" is the mark of pride. When removed, Dante begins to "fly upward." Sin, the choice of the sensual over the spiritual, results in self-enslavement to the senses. Choice of the spiritual results in freedom—freedom from the body: "And from my neck so free" (l. 289). A slavery to freedom motif can be traced through the Rime, but may be summarized by Coleridge's France: An Ode, rpt. in Selected Poetry and Prose, pp. 96-99. In this poem, written in 1798, slavery is sensuality:

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain! (ll. 85-8).

Freedom from the senses results in a mystical union with God, Liberty's hypostasis:

While I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea, and air
Possessing all things with intensest love
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there (ll. 102-5).

Denial of the body results in a mystical union. From Plato's "theia mania" to Coleridge's "self-annihilation," the mystical process involves climbing above the sensory to the spiritual. As Paul Tillich states, there "is no living religion in which the principle of mysticism, the immediate presence of the divine and the way of union with it, is not thought and practiced." (Theology of Culture, p. 192).

15 Coleridge, The Friend (1818), III, 104-8 in Inquiring Spirit, p. 384. In Coleridge's notebook written while writing the Rime is evidence that he was planning to "reduce to a regular form the Swedenborgian's Revelies" (The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Vol. I, 165 G. 160). Swedenborg discusses separation from God (the Fall) as disease and death of the human soul and the return to God (redemption) as the soul's restoration to health and life (See J. Glover, Dialogues on... Swedenborg [Oxford Press, 1788], pp. 57-60).


17 Coleridge's notebook again indicates the interpretation (see Appendix A, Item 11). If the following stanzas were intended as a "glimpse of Heaven," preparing the Mariner for the "other World," lines 354-62 must image a mystical union. The "ray of God" in the notebook, the sun image of God in the Rime, and the following lines in Religious Musings are related:
Love's [God's] day-spring rises glorious in my soul
As the great Sun, when he his influence
Sheds on the frost-bound waters--The glad stream
Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows (ll. 416-19).

Coleridge labelled this union "mystic," and says it is a future state:

I haply journeying my immortal course
Shall sometime join your mystic choir! Till then
I discipline my young and novice thought
In ministreries of heart-stirring song,
And eye on meditations heaven-ward wing.
Soaring aloft I breathe the empyreal air (RM, ll. 409-14, italics mine).

The same bird-song, Sun, and flying images in the Rime
provide the Mariner with a glimpse of his future state. The flying, singing, sun images in both poems are reminiscent of Dante's Paradise where individual souls are "flying, seeing and singing the glory of Him . . . like a swarm of bees . . . were descending . . . and rising up again to where their love always abides" (the sun) (Divine Comedy in Great Books, Vol. 21, p. 153). Coleridge, like Dante, describes a mystical union with images of almost unalterable form among mystic writers:

As for any mystic--anyone who attempts to describe what is beyond reach of mortal senses--the supersensible for Dante is shadowed forth in images of sound and movement and light (Helen Parkhurst, Cathedral [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1936], p. 177).

18 Hutchison, Language and Faith, p. 252.

19 Hutchison's statement that "something is above . . . time" is not a "metaphor." "God is eternal" is not a metaphorical statement because no body of images is available to expand the metaphor into a simile: "God is as eternal as . . ." For example, one instantly recognizes that Coleridge is speaking metaphorically of God when he exclaims, "Most High!" (RM, l. 114). A height image is available for reference: "God is as high as the sun is high." The lack of universal images of eternity testifies to its remoteness from man.


23 Collected Letters, II, 991. In the same letter to Wedgewood, Sept., 1803, Coleridge says, "something there is in my stomach or Guts that transubstantiates my Bread and Wine into the Body & Blood of the Devil." Coleridge repeats the same fiend/nightmare of Hell refrain in several letters over a four month period.


25 Coleridge's affirmation of self, "I am, because I affirm myself to be" (BL, II, 183) is similar to Descartes' "I think, therefore, I am" and Spinoza's "I, in being conscious, am existent." If the Mariner is thinking/conscious/affirming the self in sleep (while supposedly unaware of the body), the Mariner can also exist when his body is actually dead. In every mystical system, the participant in mystical union is supposed to be separated from the body. The earthly type of meditation is the counterpart of the spiritual life after death. Coleridge's description of the "Fifth stage" of prayer describes such a process:

Self-annihilation—the Soul enters the Holy of Holies (See Appendix A, Item 9).

I have skipped over Coleridge's relationship to the philosophers mentioned above. In my opinion, Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, in which he sets forth the most complete sketch of his "philosophical system," is a rehash of the philosophy of dualism set forth by Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Kant, the latter providing the two further dualisms of understanding—reason and fancy—imagination. For example, Coleridge's distinction between the speculative or practical reason and the Reason is exactly that of Kant's moral philosophy:

What is meant by Religion generally? Is it knowable from the speculative reason as a Science? No. From the speculations or Data supplied by the practical reason, this reason taken as a faculty of the Human Mind or rather as the Mind in its' [sic] highest function? No! The Reason and the Idea must be affirmed, as Revelation (Coleridge, Notebook 26, ff. 27v-43);
Coleridge had adapted this dual concept of reason before writing the *Rime* (See Appendix A, Item 8, "Human Life"). Coleridge was acquainted with Kant at the time; in Sept. of 1796, he wrote to John Thelwall of "the most unintelligible Emanuel Kant" (*Collected Letters*, I, 284). It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss fully the bearing of dualism in the *Rime*, or Coleridge's borrowings from these philosophers in his other works. The important point to note in relation to the *Rime* is that all these philosophers agree that dualism is absolute rather than relative. The soul functions absolutely separate from the brain; knowing is the function of the soul. Coleridge was aware of this concept before writing the *Rime*. In *Rl*, I, 80, Coleridge links three dualists:

Leibnitz's doctrine of a pre-established harmony, which he certainly borrowed from Spinoza, who had himself taken the hint from Des Cartes (written 1816, one year before the marginal gloss appeared).

But earlier, before his extensive revision of the *Rime*, Coleridge tells of asking a librarian "if he had Leibnitz" (*Collected Letters*, II, 747, letter to Southey, May, 1801).

Coleridge depicts each of the three types in the *Rime*. Corporeal life is imaged by the dead men, appropriately:

They raised their limbs like lifeless tools (l. 339).

Life of the body without the soul is mere mechanical motion, Coleridge later stated:

"I raise my limbs, like lifeless Tools." The organs of motion & outward action perform their functions at the stimulus of a galvanic fluid applied by the Will, not by the Spirit of Life that makes the Soul and Body one (Coleridge's notebooks in the British Museum, Add. 47496-550, 176, quoted by J. B. Beer, *Coleridge the Visionary*, p. 309).

The spiritual life is represented by the spirits and daemons, of course. Those who exist dually are the Mariner, Hermit, Pilot, Pilot's Boy and the Wedding-Guest. The bridal party may be separated into like categories, but serve mainly as symbols, as we shall see later.


28 In his letter to Poole of Oct. 3, 1803, this added passage is an amended version of *The Rains of Sleep* (*Collected Letters*, II, 1009).
29Collected Letters, II, 1005. In this letter to his
brother, George, Oct. 2, 1803, Coleridge repeats the "fiend"
dream and continues, "possibly these horrid dreams with all
their mockery of Crime, & Remorse, & Shame, & Terror, might
have been sent, etc." In a letter to the Beaumonts in Sept.,
the "Visitation" refrain began:

While I am in possession of my will & Reason,
I can keep the Fiend at arm's length; but with
the Night my Horrors commence. . . . Nine years
ago I had a three months' Visitation of this
kind . . . those Dreams with all their mockery
of Guilt, Rage, unworthy Desires, Remorse, Shame
& Terror (Collected Letters, II, 993).

30J. Robert Barth, Coleridge and Christian Doctrine

31Death of the body is not to be feared:

0 what a wonder seems the fear of death,
Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep
(11. 1-2, "Monday on the Death of Chatterton,"
rpt. in Selected Poetry and Prose, pp. 31-35).

Bodily "life is but a breath/To sigh and pant with, up Want's
rugged steep" (ll. 5-6). Bodily death does not affect one's
self-hood:

Here has thou found repose! beneath this sod!
Thou. O vain word! thou dwell'st not with the clod!

Amid the shining Host of the Forgiven
Thou at the throne of mercy and thy God (11. 19-21).

Coleridge compares life to the soul, death of the body to
a clod in "Self-Knowledge" (rpt. in Selected Poetry and Prose,

Life of the soul is "life" or "joy" to Coleridge, when
the soul "exists in a participation of a common spirit. In
joy individuality is lost," but life is found when "existing
universally" (Coleridge's Philosophical Lectures, ed. Kathleen
Coburn, p. 179, quoted by Dorothy M. Emmet, "Coleridge on the
Growth of the Mind," rpt. in Coleridge, A Collection of Critical
Essays, p. 174). A dream of joy, then, is a dream of the
spiritual life; a nightmare is a dream of bodily life without
the spirit, a "total eclipse by night" of the "Joy in Life,
that passeth all Understanding" (Collected Letters, II, 990
written to Southey, Sept., 1803). In the Rhine, the Mariner's
nightmare state is imaged by the Sun's eclipse when the
Night-mare Life-in-Death wins the Mariner:

No twilight within the courts of the Sun (Gloss, p. 15).

At one stride comes the dark (l. 200).
Coleridge often described prayer as the victory of the spirit over the flesh:

To pray with all your heart and strength... and to do the thing he God pleaseth thereupon— that is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare on earth (Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Complete Works, ed. Shedd, VI, p. 327).

Coleridge believes prayer is self-annihilation to unite with God. In all religions, prayer is interpreted as this sacrificial giving of one's self to God.

The Wedding-Guest is often cited as the example of life in opposition to the Mariner's Life-in-Death (see, for example, Humphry House, Coleridge: The Clark Lectures, rpt. in Rime Handbook, p. 157). The Wedding-Guest is, however, more closely related in experience to the Mariner than to the wedding guests who make the "loud uproar." The Wedding-Guest is a guest at the Mariner's wedding to God rather than at the ceremonial wedding on land. The Wedding-Guest's interruptions do serve to point up the contrast between "two potentialities of experience, the visible bodily world of human beings marrying and giving in marriage and an invisible world of spirits and the dead where quite a different system of values is to be learnt" (House, p. 157).

The two potentialities are the corporeal life and the spiritual life, and Coleridge considers the latter to be life. The Wedding-Guest, then, is not the example of life. After listening to the Mariner's tale, he gains the same view of life as the Mariner—preference for the life of the soul over the life of the body.

The first definition of "sad" is the meaning which was in use from the Anglo-Saxon period to roughly 1600. In a letter to Southey, Sept., 1803, (Collected Letters, II, 989), Coleridge quotes the line, saying that a new perspective "does a man's heart good—He rises 'a sadder and a wiser man!'" A new view of life is good for the soul.

The poem was titled "The Ancient Mariner, A Poet's Reverie" in the 1800 edition of Lyrical Ballads (Rime Handbook, p. 1).

Hutchison, Language and Faith, p. 252.

Every religion incorporates the "being as being is good" concept with the restriction that man must place himself in alignment with the Deity to realize his own goodness. Coleridge explains the alignment:

The will of God is the last ground and final aim of all our duties, and to that the whole
man is to be harmonized by subordination, subjugation, or suppression alike in commission and omission (Literary Remains, II, 564).

Notice that the "whole man" is "harmonized" by such subjugation. One's being is found only in relation to the Supreme Being:

The ground of all being, but therein likewise absolute Being, in that he is the eternal self-affirmant, is the I Am in that I Am; and that the key of this mystery is given to us in the pure idea of the will, as the alone Causa Sui (Literary Remains, I, 103).

That the moon remains a constant symbol of exemplary behavior in the Rime will be discussed in Chapter 3, for the moon's symbolism is within the realm of Christian doctrine. It might be pointed out here, however, that the images of supernatural appear good or bad only in relation to that peculiar justice religious men, like Coleridge, find satisfying. Many critics ascribe to the general theory set forth by Robert Penn Warren:

In the poem the good events take place under the aegis of the moon, the bad events under that of the sun ("A Poem of Pure Imagination: An Experiment in Reading," rpt. in Rime Handbook, p. 116).

The difficulties inherent in this theory are solved by its proponents by postulating exceptions to the rule, i.e., by changing the symbolic scheme in crucial instances to suit their view of "good" or "bad" events. For example, the crew's death is judged to be "bad," so the moon symbolism must somehow change when they die:

One after one, under "the star-dogged Moon" (distorted symbol, for the moment, of an alienated Love), the sailors perish (George Herbert Clarke, "Certain Symbols in The Rime . . .," rpt. in Rime Handbook, p. 96).

The moon . . . has no part in the dying and cursing. It is the star between its horns that represents the daemonic vengeance upon the Mariner. When the moon ascends the sky, later on, "with a star or two beside," she has become the symbol of reconciliation (J.B. Beer, Coleridge the Visionary, p. 169).

The fact of these unhappy events under the aegis of the supposedly beneficent moon raises a question: Does this violate the symbolism of the moon? I do not feel that the poem is inconsistent here. First, if we accept the interpretation that the Polar Spirit belongs to the imagination cluster and yet exacts vengeance, then the fact that horror comes in the moonlight here is
simply an extension of the same principle: violated and despised, the imagination yet persists and exacts vengeance (Warren, *Rime Handbook*, p. 121).

Notice that the crew's death is an "unhappy event;" their deaths are judged unjust. The justice of their deaths will have to be explained within a Christian context later. However, I might state now that the crew's lights go out, they die, because they refuse to follow the example of the moon who "magnifies the Lord" (Luke 1:46). Symbols of both sun and moon remain constant as images of a supernatural which both punishes and rewards. No critic tampers with the sun's symbolism, although it is apparent that the "events" corresponding to the sun's appearance are not all "bad"—what about those "sweet songs" that follow the dawn in lines 349-66 and the sun that "rises higher and higher every day" (1. 26) as "the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather" (Gloss, p. 5)? The sun is "bad" only to the unregenerate; the moon is "good" only to the regenerate. The *Rime* simply illustrates the universal religious belief that bad men are punished, good men are rewarded. Scholars have been concerned with effects, not with their causes, and have judged these effects either bad or good according to their own points of view rather than Coleridge's. Coleridge believed the supernatural reward/punishment system was just:

Good men will be rewarded, and the impenitent wicked punished, in proportion to their dispositions and intentional acts in this life; and that if the punishment of the least wicked be fearful beyond conception, all words and descriptions must so far be true, that they must fall short of the punishment that awaits the transcendentally wicked ("Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," rpt. in *Selected Poetry and Prose*, p. 180).

Coleridge accepts God's retributions as just. One must not cry over the sufferings of the damned:

You are rebuked for shedding tears at the mere sight of the punishment, which, being the evidence of the justice of God, ought not to awaken pity (Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Hell, Canto 20:19 in *Great Books*, p. 28, n. 5).

The reader's pity should go to the partly good Mariner who must still undergo penance to purify himself, not to the crew members who have met their just desserts. Although Coleridge said he was "taking the opportunity of diverting the reader from myself to characters more worthy of his attention" in his defense of Milton, he may also have been
defending himself from attackers who claimed he killed the crew unjustly:

Does he express it as his own wish that they . . . should suffer these tortures? or as a general consequence, deduced from reason and revelation, that such will be their fate? The latter only! ("Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," rpt. in Selected Poetry and Prose, pp. 184 & 180).

39 Collected Letters, I, 103. Written to Southey Sept. 18, 1794.

40 Hutchison, Language and Faith, p. 253, states, "the root image here is one of authority, whether of father, king, or more generally, of sovereign will."


42 A loving God is usually imaged within the authoritarian scheme of parental love. Hutchison, p. 254, states:

Social relations exhibit another and more amiable quality of authority, whether described as comradeship, fellowship, or love, and whether illustrated by family or other wider social groups.

43 Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1875) in The Complete Works, ed. Shedd, VI, 324.


45 Coleridge's Ms. B3 ff. 67-8 quoted by Barth, p. 86.

46 Barth, p. 86.

47 The moral of the Mariner's tale is that God is Love, so the participation in that Spirit is the expression of that Godly attribute in man:

He prayeth best, who loveth best . . .
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all (11. 614-17).

Himself being all, he communicated himself to another as to a Self: but such communication is Love and in what is the re-attribution of that Self to the Communicator but Love. This too is Love, filial Love. Love is the Spirit of God, and God is Love (Coleridge's Ms. B3 f. 278/258v, quoted by Barth, pp. 91-2).
NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE


2 Origen, Third Homily on Joshua I, 4:840C, quoted by Danielou, p. 250.


5 Origen, Third Homily on Joshua I, 4:829C, quoted by Danielou, p. 257.


7 The Rime incorporates elements from several Biblical prophesies of Judgment Day. Like all prophets, the Mariner must preach repentance to those who need warning of the impending Judgment:

That moment that his fact I see,
I know the man that must hear me;
To him my tale I teach (ll. 588-90).

Understanding the Mariner's resemblance to other prophets explains that curious mixture of agony and harmony at the Rime's conclusion. Considering Coleridge's anti-papist remarks and that the Rime extolls personal religious faith over ritual, the Mariner's agony cannot be attributed to his penance in the sense of ecclesiastical censure. In the Roman Catholic Church, confession is a voluntary disclosure of one's vices and is part of the sacrament of penance, i.e., a cleansing of oneself. In the Rime, the Mariner's confession is an apparently involuntary disclosure of his virtues defeating his vices and serves to teach others to cleanse themselves:

Throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land; and to teach ... (Gloss, pp. 40-41).

The Mariner's agony is the "inner agony of God's prophet as he confronts the unheeding godlessness of his day" (Bible, p. 939, note to Jer 20:14-8). Until he warns of destruction, a prophet experiences this inner agony as physical anguish:
Therefore my loins are filled with anguish; I am bowed down so that I cannot hear, I am dismayed so that I cannot see. My mind reals (Isaiah 21:3-4).

Coleridge listed in a notebook the agonies prophets experience if they lay down on their warning jobs:

Sick, Lame, Wounded—Blind and Deaf and Dumb—Why sleep ye, O ye Watchman (See Appendix A, Item 10; prophets are called "watchmen").

Coleridge reproduces the prophet's agony in the Mariner:

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free (ll. 578-81).

The Mariner has "strange power of speech" (l. 587), like all God's mouthpieces: "You shall be as my mouth" (Jer 15:19). The Mariner serves as mouthpiece even though his listener calls him a "grey-beard loon" (l. 11). Derision is the lot of the prophet:

I have become a laughingstock all the day;
everyone mocks me (Jer 20:7).

The prophet's lives must also be "a symbol" (Jer 1-13, Hos 1:2-9, Is 8:3-4). Their lives must show others that bodily life is not to be preferred over the spiritual life; the Mariner must also act out—"teach by his own example"—the doctrine of denial of the flesh:

We must be here as strangers and pilgrims that we may plainly declare that we seek a city above (Anne Bradstreet, Meditations, rpt. in American Puritans, ed. Perry Miller (New York: Anchor Books, 1956), p. 280).

Prophets, therefore, are not to join in any "merry din" (l. 8):

You shall not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink (Jeremiah [16:8] speaks here of idolatry within the tabernacle).

Prophets must heed the sounds of the spiritual life instead:

The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings (Jer 33:11).

The Mariner heeds the proper voices; rather than joining in the "loud uproar," he prays (brings thank offerings):
What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there;
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bridesmaids singing are;
And hark the little vesper bell
That biddeth me to prayer! (ll. 586-90).

Prophets are "commanded to symbolize by appropriate actions" leaving faithlessness (Bible note to Ez 12:2-3):

You shall go forth yourself at evening in their sight, as men do who must go into exile . . . for I have made you a sign.

Coleridge skillfully works in the command, travel, and evening:

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land; and to teach by his own example (Gloss, pp. 39-40).

I pass, like night, from land to land (1. 586).

8Hutchison, Language and Faith, pp. 229-30.


10J. B. Beer connects the moon in the Rime to Isis, and uses as a portion of his proof the statements which expressly indicate the Virgin Mary:

Identification of the moon with Isis in the poem may be reinforced by the mention of "Mary Queen" and "Heaven's Mother." The Heavenly Mother of Egyptian mythology is thus related to the Roman Catholic Queen of Heaven (Coleridge the Visionary, p. 170).

The Virgin Mary is known by both names, however; Coleridge refers to Mary in his use of the moon. Isis and Mary are related. Mary's figurative descriptions are derived in part from Isis:

From Isis in her character of patron saint of mariners come undoubtedly Mary's title STELLA MARIS, and from that same goddess something of her lunar symbolism . . . associations with the crescent moon and morning star (Cathedral, p. 240).

Mary's symbolism is derived from several myths. For example, Coleridge uses the traditional symbol of Mary as the sacrificial example:
[The] horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip (ll. 210-11).

Her symbol here is derived from Astarte, the Phoenician
moon-goddess whom Milton describes:

Astarte, Queen of Heaven, with crescent horns
(Paradise Lost, Book I, l. 439 in Great Books,
Vol. 32, p. 103).

The crescent moon enclosing a star symbolizes the Virgin
Mary enclosing Christ in her womb while knowing He would
be crucified. Dante's use of the symbol illustrates this
Christian symbolism:

From horn to horn, [from arm to arm of the cross],
lights were moving (Paradise, Canto 14:109 and
insert is note 1, p. 128).

A single star closest to the right horn of the moon causes
the moving lights:

From the arm which extends on the right, ran
a star of the constellation which is resplendent
there, down to the foot of the cross (Paradise,

The horned moon symbolizes the "Virgin who gives to the world
the sacrificial example" (Emile Male, Religious Art from the
Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century, p. 119). The "star within
the nether tip" is Christ, "the star from which a drop of
dew falls upon our interior aridity" (Religious Art, p. 133).
Dew appears in the Rime after "the rising of the Moon" (Gloss,
p. 15):

From the sails the dew did drip (l. 208).

In many hymns to the Virgin, among them the De Beata Virgine,
the rising moon symbolizes man's exemplar:

The Star of the Sea is risen, heralding the Sun.
Rejoice, ye faithful, beholding that divine
radiance (rpt. in Cathedral, p. 134).

The appearance of the rising moon and the dripping dew after
Death has won the crew constitutes intercession, the offering
of grace after doom has been pronounced, as indicated by the
salve, mater salvatoris:

Star of the Sea, thou steadfast star. Permit us
not to be shipwrecked in this sea of life, but
save us by thy intercession that we may be drenched
with the dew of Heaven (rpt. in Cathedral, p. 133).
With the sacrificial example before them (the horned moon), and the dew of Heaven dripping from the sails, the Mariner's shipmates are still alive and able to repent. But they turn from the exemplar and throw their sin upon the Mariner; they seal their doom:

Each turned his face with a ghastly pang
And cursed me with his eye
Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one (ll. 214-9).

That the moon serves as exemplar and intercessor in this scene is clenched by the crew's behavior. They "curse" the Mariner with their eyes rather than become contrite. The crew, as well as the Mariner, dwell in sin. They are "themselves accomplices in the crime" (Gloss, p. 9). Only contrition can "deliver them from bloodguiltiness" (death):

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; the broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Psalm 51: 14-17).

Only the Mariner is contrite; he recognizes his sinfulness, accepts the guilt, and grieves for his sin:

A single motion of contrition is enough. The sinner needs only to grieve for his sins and he will be saved (The Ars Moriendi, quoted by Emile Male, Religious Art, pp. 152-3).

The crew members are not contrite. Rather than accept the responsibility for their sins, they made the Mariner their scapegoat:

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird around his neck (Gloss, p. 11).

Coleridge establishes their "evil looks" to be their projection of sin to the Mariner and also correlates the Mariner's acceptance of their guilt to Christ's acceptance of the whole guilt of mankind. The text corresponding to the above gloss reads:

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung (ll. 140-3).

The crew refuse to wear their own crosses, the Mariner bears his sin when the spectre-bark appears. By what appears to be
pure chance, Death wins the crew and Life-in-Death wins the Mariner. But the dice were loaded: the game was rigged in the Mariner's favor by his contrition. Only the Mariner deserves mercy, and he is accorded Life-in-Death with the possibility of life if he remains contrite. The evil looks throughout the remainder of the journey are the same looks of evil-projection to the Mariner, and he always responds with contrition.

In the Rime, Coleridge employs the moon symbol of intercession and exemplar to indicate a "motherly" quality of God. He specifically refers to Mary because the ready-made symbols surrounding her name display this motherliness. Elsewhere Coleridge uses "nature" to indicate the motherly quality of God, but then has to explain himself further:

I use the word "Nature" partly to avoid the too frequent use of a more awful name, & partly to indulge the sense of motherliness of general Providence--when the Heart is not strong enough to lift itself up to a distinct contemplation of the Father of all things (Collected Letters, II, 1005, written October, 1803).

The moon functions to help the Mariner's weak heart lift itself up to contemplate the Father, exactly the function of Mary to medieval Christians. Her reference symbols, funded with meaning garnered from various myths, make explanations within the Rime unnecessary. The moon is definitely connected to Coleridge's idea of the "motherliness of general Providence," for in the same letter, written before the addition of the moon gloss (p. 19), similar images occur:

When the Moon was rising & when the clouds caught its Light; then all the mountains belonged to the blue sky (letter).

The moving Moon went up the sky (l. 263).

and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them (gloss).


12The "apostles built the edifice of the faith, a temple made of living stone, which is the Church"(Gothic Image, p. 304).

13J. B. Beer, Coleridge the Visionary, p. 176.

14Origen, Sixth Homily on Joshua VII, 1-2; 856D, quoted by Danielou, p. 278.

15"The greatness of charity, what places her above the other theological virtues" is that virtue begins and ends with charity (Gothic Image, p. 116). The Mariner's first charitable
act is his blessing of the snakes:

A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware (11. 284-5).

His willingness to "give blood" for his neighbor typifies
the virtue of charity:

Thou shalt love thy God with all thine heart and
thy neighbor as thyself (Gothic Image, p. 117).

His native home, where he teaches charity, is a symbol for
Paradise, and "Paradise is the symbolical name for virtue"
(Danielou, p. 59).

16Danielou, p. 143.

17Medieval schoolmen marked the hours one to twelve
from both noon and midnight, probably because "Jesus said,
're are there not twelve hours in the day?'" (John 11:9). The
number twelve is also connected to Judgment Day by the Fathers
because it multiplies into 144:

Twelve into [sic] twelve gives one hundred forty-four,
which last number is used in the Apocalypse to signify
the whole body of the saints (St. Augustine, On Christian

The congruity between noon and Judgment Day seems strained,
but it is traditional. I might point out that there are
144 stanzas in the Parable. Coleridge seems to be using
numbers as Dante did in the Divine Comedy.

18Usually a trumpet as in Rev 8:7 and Ex 19:13,
sometimes undesignated as in 2 Sam 6:15: "the sound of
the horn." The sound must always be loud, however, for the
horn is both a warning and a type of the voice of God on
Judgment Day:

And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound
of many waters and like the sound of loud
thunder (Rev 14:2).

19The Book of Privy Counsel in Mediaeval Mystics of

20Zeno, P.L. XI, 509-10 quoted by Danielou, p. 179.
See Exodus 15:19 for the basis of this Scriptural motif.

21The people of the wedding party and the skylark and
his fellows sing the same song (11. 349-76). In Wordsworth's
"To a Skylark," the singing bird is an "ethereal minstrel!
pilgrim of the sky! . . . Type of the wise who soar." Milton's
"minstrelsy of Heaven" incorporates singers and birds (Paradise
Regained). Bishop Douglas, Eneas, has "Dame naturis mensstralis and all small fowl's singinges of the spray" sing with "meri noteis myrth" to God. The poetic descriptions are all based upon the Biblical depiction of the faithful entering Heaven. Quotations are from *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (New York: Oxford Press, 1959).


23 The Church Fathers find the typology congruent through rib imagery. Briefly, Eve--the Church or mankind--was formed from Adam's rib; the beams of Noah's ark (ribs) preserved mankind; from Christ's rib flowed the Church--spiritual mankind--and Mary preserved the Church; cathedral supporting columns are still called "ribs." A ship in Christian symbolic literature is the body of Christ, its ribs His ribs; the symbolism is derived from the ark myth:

Noah's ark is a type of Christ on the cross (St. Augustine, *City of God*, quoted by Male, *Gothic Image*, p. 113).

Medieval artists "placed the wound on the right side of Jesus in order to teach men that it is before all things symbolic; it is the wound in the side of Adam, or again it is the mysterious door which opened in the side of the ark. Near to this wound they place the New Eve--Mary--the Church--in the form of a queen who receives the blood and water in her chalice" (*Gothic Image*, p. 118).

24 The number "two" is also symbolic of evil. As God is the One, Evil is two, the first number to break away from unity:

The clean are in sevens and the unclean are in twos. The bad, again, are in twos as being easily divided, from their tendency to schism (St. Augustine, quoted by V. F. Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism* [New York: Columbia U. Press, 1938], p. 78).

25 Infant's clothing symbolizing a corpse's wrappings sounds weird, but as Male states, the "artist-theologian of the Middle Ages . . . would tell us that from the moment of birth Jesus must have the semblance of a victim. The cradle in which he sleeps is the very altar of sacrifice" (*Gothic Image*, p. 185). Evidently Coleridge had Christ as the sacrificial victim in mind as he wrote the Rime, for images of His Passion abound: the bloody Sun (see Appendix A, Item 3); the Albatross perched "on mast or shroud" (a ship's mast is traditionally an image of the Cross because of the cross-shape, and shrouds are both the ship's ropes and a
corpse's winding sheet); the dice game repeats the gaming after Christ's Passion—even to the "whistling thrice."


27. *St. Hilary, Tractatus Mysteriorum*, II, 9, 154-6, quoted by Danielou, p. 255. Virginity symbolizes faithfulness to God. Blood proofs are linked to Christ's Passion as St. Hilary continues:

The scarlet sign of salvation, a colour which is manifestly the colour of royalty when considered as a dignity, and when looked at, the colour of blood; both these features were found in the Passion; the Lord was clothed in scarlet, and blood flowed from his side.

Red, and red roses, signify the extreme of faithfulness—martrydom: "roses signify the blood of the martyrs" (*Gothic Image*, p. 32). Roses became Mary's symbol because "Mary is the Martyr of martyrs" (*Gothic Image*, p. 237).


29. "For several centuries the doctors of the Church had identified the Virgin with the Sulamite in the Canticle of Canticles. . . . The Bridegroom is the Lord Himself. One of the most mystical books of the fifteenth century, the Canticle of Canticles illustrated with woodcuts, had made these metaphors and similes almost popular" (*Emile Male, Religious Art*, p. 134).

30. Various Old Testament tales have been seen as prefigurations of the Virgin birth, most have golden fire burning but not consuming that which holds the fire. That "Moses saw a burning bush which the flames could not consume is a figure of the Holy Virgin; for never burning with the fire of concupiscence she yet received within her the flame of the Holy Spirit." People trapped within a burning golden statue were untouched and "even so the Holy Spirit impregnated the Holy Virgin with His innder fire, while without he protected her against all concupiscence" (*Gothic Image*, pp. 148-9). Medieval artists usually depict Mary as "golden" while pregnant by yellow hair, while before and after pregnancy, she has brown hair.


Parkhurst, Cathedral, p. 260. Faithfulness and obedience makes one worthy, as signified by Mary's adherence to the will of God in the York Annunciation: "of God's will I holde me payde" (l. 184); she is "to his will already grayd" (l. 188) before her reception of the Holy Ghost (Ten Miracle Plays, ed. R. George Thomas [Evanston: Northwestern U. Press, 1966], p. 71).

The first of these harlots is Rahab:

It was by her faith and hospitality that the harlot Rahab was saved (St. Clement quoted by Danielou, p. 245).

The sign of hospitality is a scarlet thread Rahab displays on her door. The bride's lips "were like a scarlet thread" in the Song of Solomon (4:3). The scarlet thread is a blood sacrifice (martyr) image:

St. Gregory links up this blood, the sign of the scarlet thread, with that which reddened the lips of the spouse in the Canticle (Danielou, p. 258).

The red-lips imagery culminates in Mary:

The whole of the Middle Ages saw in the Virgin the bride of the Song of Songs and applied all its metaphors to Mary (Gothic Image, p. 233).

Origen, Homily on the Book of Numbers, pp. 164-5, quoted by Danielou, p. 209.

Moore, Judaism, II, 303, quoted by Danielou, p. 13.

Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Kathleen Coburn, f 28 191 G. 187, dated 1795. This is the germ of Coleridge's later description of "Reason," that light of reason in the conscience which is synonymous with the heart's moral sense. Coleridge consistently connects the heart (soul) with the faculty of reason:

The Heart was the Beginning and the End . . . Truth, Knowledge and Insight were comprehended in its expansion (Aids to Reflection, p. 185).

Coleridge's reason/soul/heart connection reflects his knowledge of the roots of Christian thought. Biblical exegesis interpret an "awake heart" as a mind opened to Wisdom (God). That the heart is awake during sleep symbolizes the elevation of mind above matter, that state necessary to "perceive the present Deity." The concept is derived from Plotinus' description of the soul having an "upward neighbor, its prior and source," the Intellectual-Principle within which is the "Reason," that
part of the soul which, since it duplicates the Reason of "the Supreme Intelligence," enables man to perceive the Supreme Intelligence:

The soul's substantial existence comes from the Intellectual-Principle; and the Reason within it becomes Act in virtue of its contemplation of that prior; for its thought and act are its own intimate possession when it looks to the Supreme Intelligence (Plotinus, Fifth Ennead, First Tractate in Great Books, XVII, 209).

Plotinus further explains that the soul can "make upwards toward Him" only when the soul is "holding itself in quietude" and the "body is at rest" (p. 209). Coleridge uses almost the same wording as Plotinus in a letter to his brother, George, Oct. 2, 1803:

All is vanity that does not lead to Quietness & Unity of Heart, and to the silent aweful Watching of that living Spirit, & of that Life within us, which is the motion of that Spirit—that Life, which passeth all understanding (Collected Letters, II, 1008).

It might be pointed out that this is the same letter in which Coleridge describes his terrible nightmares. It seems that he feels sleep ought to be what his philosophical and theological studies had indicated—a release from the body and the conscious mind so that the unconscious mind would somehow connect with its model, God. The following day, Coleridge included the nightmare portion of "The Pains of Sleep" in a letter to Poole (Collected Letters, II, 1009). In the poem, he indicates he prepares for sleep hoping for an "awake heart," but, instead, the sensual reigns:

But silently, by slow degrees
My spirit I to Love compose,
In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought express,
Only a sense of supplication;
A sense o'er all my soul impress,
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, every where
Eternal Strength and Wisdom are (11. 4-13).

Desire with loathing strangely mixed
On wild or hateful objects fixed.
Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!
And shame and terror over all (11. 23-6, rpt. in Selected Poetry and Prose, pp. 135-6).

39Editor's introduction to the *Song of Songs*, Bible, p. 815. The editor continues:

In Christian tradition it has been interpreted also as an allegory of the love of Christ for his bride, the church.

Most bride-bridegroom stories in Scripture are so allegorized, but the figures of speech in the Canticles are the most vividly erotic and are, therefore, more easily recognizable as figures describing divine marriage.

40Banquet of the XII Virgins, II, 8:35-6, quoted by Danielou, pp. 49-50. I have replaced the word "Church" with "bride" for clarity, although this does detract from Methodius' purpose, to present the Eucharistic feast of the Church as, in Danielou's words, "a permanent and sacramental presence of the sleep of Adam, that is of the Passion of Christ" (p. 50).


42Without faith, anything which is a symbol of the Holy can be made an idol, a superstitious instrument. In "Fears in Solitude" (April, 1798), Coleridge opposed faith to superstition:

Oh! blasphemous! the Book of Life is made A superstitious instrument, on which We gabble over the oaths we mean to break Faith doth reel; the very name of God Sounds like a juggler's charm; and, bold with joy, Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place, (Portentous sight!) the owlet Atheism, Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon, Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them close, And hooting at the glorious Sun in Heaven, Cries out, "Where is it?" (ll. 79-86, rpt. in *Selected Poetry and Prose*, pp. 102-8).

The comparison of the Mariner to the self-blinding owl here is obvious:

I closed my lids and kept them close (l. 248).

His ship, symbol of his sinful soul, carries the owl image:

And the owlet whoops to the wolf below (l. 536).
Blindness traditionally represents atheism—an inability to see God. For example, "the owl became a type of the Jews, who in their blindness shut their eyes to the Sun" (Gothic Image, p. 45). The blindness metaphor in the Rime indicates the Mariner's shutting his eyes to God (Coleridge did not equate Judaism to atheism). Immediately preceding the Mariner's blinding himself, he had "gabbled over oaths" and used the "name of God . . . like a juggler's charm," i.e., he tried to pray to better his condition physically:

> I looked to heaven and tried to pray;  
> But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
> A wicked whisper came, and made  
> My heart as dry as dust (11. 244-7).

His prayer here is idolatrous, and unsuccessful. After the Mariner becomes faithful, his prayer attempt is successful:

> A spring of love gushed from my heart (1. 284).  
> The self-same moment I could pray (1. 288).

The Mariner's faith is rewarded:

> To pray is the reward of Faith (Collected Letters, III, 479).

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43 Notebook 36, ff 32v-33, quoted by Barth, p. 178, n. 52.
44 Quoted by Parkhurst, Cathedral, p. 169.
49 St. Ambrose, De Isaac, VI, 642, quoted by Danielou, p. 212.
50 St. Basil, De Spiritu Sancto, XIV; PG XXXII, 124, quoted by Danielou, p. 188.
51 J. B. Beer finds a relationship between "A spring of love" and the fountain imagery in the Isis and Osiris myth (Coleridge the Visionary, pp. 169-70 and Chapter 8). Perhaps
Coleridge was influenced by his study of this myth (from which the Christian myth derives much of its imagery), but Coleridge simply may have presented the Mariner's conversion in the conventional manner well-known to Christians. The Mariner's cold heart/weight of sin/spiritual dryness cluster of images has a long tradition and was an often employed literary device in Coleridge's day. For example, the same cluster of images and the same melting ice/shedding sin/ability to pray after conversion is presented in Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Roger Malvin's Burial" (1832), rpt. in The Celestial Railroad and Other Stories (New York: Signet Classics, 1963), pp. 7-27. The heart of the main character, Reuben, is described comparably to the Mariner's heart in the land of ice and snow:

Inwardly there was a cold, cold sorrow, which he compared to the snowdrifts lying deep in the glens and hollows (p. 21).

The sign of Reuben's sin is a dried, withered branch of an oak tree. The Mariner's sin has three signs: "Every tongue, through utter drought,/Was withered at the root" (ll. 136-7), the dead Albatross, and the spectre-bark and its inhabitants, with his own ship taking on their death-like aspect later. Both changes of heart are depicted as tradition dictates—living water, i.e., love, gushing from a rock, i.e., a heart:

Then Reuben's heart was stricken, and the tears gushed out like water from a rock (p. 27).

A spring of love gushed from my heart (l. 184).

Both signs of sin fall:

The withered topmost bough of the oak loosened itself in the stilly air, and fell (p. 26).

The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea (ll. 289-91).
The ship went down like lead (l. 549).

Both conversions result in the ability to pray:

[Reuben's] sin was expiated—the curse was gone from him and . . . a prayer, the first for years, went up to Heaven from the lips of Reuben (p. 27).

[The Mariner's] spell begins to break (Gloss, p. 21). The self-same moment I could pray (l. 288).

[Later], this spell was snapt (l. 442) The curse is finally expiated (Gloss, p. 31). And I with sobs did pray (l. 469).