Coleridge Contra Eliot: Form and Incarnation in Owen Barfield's *The Tower* [1]

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Introduction: Owen Barfield and T.S. Eliot

In 1927, T. S. Eliot rejected Owen Barfield's *The Tower* for publication in *The Criterion* on a series of ostensibly logistical bases. The poem was of an 'impossible length', but should not suffer serialization; besides, Barfield's title was elsewhere in use; not to mention the poem's scope and difficulty made revisions impractical.[2] Otherwise an advocate of Barfield's work, Eliot insisted his misgivings were economical. Barfield was 'an author too valuable to let go', a poet destined to 'make his mark in the long run'; and yet, in an editorial capacity, 'difficult to sell'.[3] Eliot would rehearse this double-edged apology for Barfield several times over the course of their literary relationship, characteristically coupling vague commendations with even vaguer trepidations ('I do not feel that you have quite reached the necessary point,' posted Eliot the year prior, 'though I hardly know why').[4] Yet Barfield was dubious of Eliot's pretexts. And perhaps rightly so. The Elysian 'long run' of poetic 'mark-making' promised by Eliot became progressively longer, and the author of *The Waste Land* did little to hasten its (ultimately posthumous) advent. Even towards the end of his life, the Inkling would maintain Eliot had rejected *The Tower* on grounds of artistic nonconformity; Barfield was inadequately 'modern,' insufficiently 'pessimistic' to the tastemaker's taste.[5] The problem thus abides unresolved: was Barfield correct to be suspicious of Eliot's rejection? And what ulterior poetic dispute sat beneath Eliot's opposition to *The Tower*?

It is only now, nearly a century removed, that Leslie A. Taylor and Jeffrey A. Taylor's publication of Barfield's *The Tower: Major Poems and Plays* (2021) unseals the means to reconsider the snuffed poem—as well as to speculate the circumstances of its refusal. While disparities between Barfield and Eliot are emphatically multiple, I here aim to highlight a constituent conflict tacitly mediated by the legacy of S.T. Coleridge. Borrowing the language of Harold Bloom—close friend of Barfield and occasional enemy of Eliot—this essay will demonstrate that the disagreement over *The Tower* is best understood in the context of Barfield and Eliot's agon for status as the strongest misreader of

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[1] My gratitude goes to Owen A. Barfield and his encouragement of scholarship on his grandfather's works; so too to my supervisor, Douglas Hedley, as well as Gareth Polmeer, Graham Davidson, and the participants of the 'Barfield, Coleridge and the Imagination' conference at the Cambridge Centre for the Study of Platonism, 1 May 2020.

[2] T. S, Eliot, *The Letters of T. S. Eliot*., Vol. 3, *1926-1927*, ed. Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden (Cumberland: Yale University Press, 2012), 843.

[3] Eliot, *Letters*, 3:105.

[4] Eliot, *Letters*, 3:105.

[5] Owen Barfield and Astrid Diener, 'An Interview with Owen Barfield: *Poetic Diction* — Between Conception And Publication', *Mythlore* 20, no. 4 (78) (1995): 18.

their common poet-critic predecessor. Interrogating *The Tower*'s formal inheritances in this light, we see what Eliot *qua* editor must have seen: *The Tower* negatively characterizes Eliot whilst positively echoing Coleridge; it comprises the arena in which Barfield stages his agon over the mantle of Coleridge.

This paper is divided into four parts. First, I will examine formal allusions to Coleridge (especially *Christabel*) in Part I of *The Tower*. In this exposition, we see that Barfield appropriates a neo-Romantic poet-in-Nature to stage his own edits of Coleridge, specifically Barfield's theory of poetic form as 'incarnational' memory. Next, I will show how the Barfieldian-Coleridgean position of Part I is put into conversation with the rival, Eliotic voice of Part II. This latter voice is written in an intentionally 'failed' register of metropolitan, modernist 'disintegration', something Barfield conflates with Eliot and his poetics of 'decay'.[6] Juxtaposed with the Christabelian forms of Part I, Part II of *The Tower* thus damningly ventriloquizes *Prufrock* in order to narrativize the misstep of Eliot's High Romantic apostacy.

The final two portions of this essay will venture a description of Barfield's 'victorious' misreading of Coleridge as it reprises in the remainder of *The Tower*. Accordingly, section three will engage practical examples of Barfield's theory of 'marriage of epithet and noun' in *The Tower*, the basic unit of formal innovation in his Coleridge-inspired 'poetry of depth'. The concluding section will contextualize this formal influence within Barfield's broader Incarnational metaphysics. According to the logic of this metaphysics, Coleridge's creative 'incarnation' or 'bodying forth' of forms in the imagination points to the foundational, converse incarnation of a Word into flesh ('that Event').[7] Barfield's long poem in this way attempts to claim the Coleridgean mantle from Eliot, shunning a poetics of etherized 'dissection' in favour of 'Poesy / Expressing incarnation' (XIII.147-148).[8]

I *The Tower* and *Christabel*

In this first section, I will examine some Coleridgean formal influences in Part I of *The Tower*. Not to unduly vilify Eliot, we should note that the few early readers of *The Tower* generally accord in criticizing Barfield's formal decisions. C. S. Lewis joins Eliot in his head-scratching, ascribing an unaccountable fragmentary structure and a 'metre *too* eccentric for me', though at the same time conceding that 'on that subject Barfield has probably forgotten more than I ever knew'.[9] While the broader issue of the poem's structure is addressed capably elsewhere—indeed, even a summary of the poem's subjects demands a

[6] Barfield and Diener, 'Interview', 18.
[7] Owen Barfield, *Romanticism Comes of Age: Essays on the Creative Imagination*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Barfield Press), 10.
[8] Owen Barfield, *The Tower: Major Poems and Plays*, eds. Leslie A. Taylor and Jefferey H. Taylor (Anderson, SC: Parlor Press, 2021), 16.
[9] Owen Barfield, *Owen Barfield on C. S. Lewis*, ed. G. B. Tennyson (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 22. Quoted in Barfield, *The Tower*, 16.

study unto itself—[10] we will focus here on Lewis's comments on metre and form in *The Tower*. Considering these in the context of Barfield's Coleridgean commitments, we are able to see that this alleged 'eccentricity' (a model Eliot's editors misleadingly pin to 'blank verse') should rather be seen to comprise a mode of accentual verse derived from the introduction to Coleridge's *Christabel*.[11] Turning to this introduction, Coleridge might be read as responding, almost uncannily, to Eliot and Lewis on behalf of Barfield:

> …the metre of Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. [12]

The Tower's metrical parameters—in this case five accents distributed between eight to eleven syllables—approximate Coleridge's model. The 'newness' of Coleridge's accentual principle (with that of Hopkins after him) is, we now see, not so radically original as some primers to *Christabel* or *The Wreck of the Deutschland* promise.[13] Crucially for Barfield, however, Coleridge's rhythmic constraint innovatively emphasizes that

> this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion.[14]

In *The Tower*, Barfield's infrequent breaks from the predominant decasyllable line are likewise situated at the junction of decisive images—specifically ones which bear back on the poetic process. These infrequent deviations lay bare their intentionality in the sheerness of their contingency. In other words, the decasyllable is always syntactically proximate; Barfield's occasional decisions to break the standard ten-syllable pattern—often by mere poly- or asyndeton—are deliberate. The first syllabic disruption in *The Tower* is an example:

> [. . .] Since midday
> The golden afternoon had hung about him,
> Like a great, sunlit dewdrop gathering
> To fall from a leaf's point; till all that weight
> Dazzled and lulled his mind [. . .] (I.2-6)

Here, the second line (I.3) signals the intentions of Barfield's metrical system. Were Barfield dedicated to the decasyllable, a jettisoned article in 'The golden

[10] Beyond the Taylor and Taylor edition of *The Tower*, a helpful place to start is the trio of presentations by Jeffrey Hipolito, Elizabeth Hadaway, and Fred Dennehy in the 'Book Symposium on *The Tower*: *Major Poems and Plays*', *Journal of Inklings Studies*, 11.1 (2021): 80-98.

[11] Such a designation is echoed by the editors in Eliot, *Letters*, 3:843.

[12] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, Vol. 1, *Poems*, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), 215.

[13] See Robert Bridges on Coleridge and Hopkins in the 'Accentual Verse' entry for *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 4th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 4-5.

[14] Coleridge, *Poems*, 215.

afternoon' (for example) could cut the odd syllable count back to ten—and yet the line interpolates a measured eleventh. Appropriately, this variation indicates the first 'transition in the nature of the imagery': the speaker's overlong line draws out the 'lulling' temporal inertia of the 'golden afternoon' which 'had hung about him' (I.2).

The Tower's first metric aberration works towards Coleridge's promised end: it decelerates and disposes the reader for Barfield's subsequent plays on form. In the lines that follow, the semi-colon is poised as grammatical parallel of the dewdrop's drop (I.5); the leading accent of 'Dazzled' in 'till all that weight / Dazzled'—the first line in the poem to begin on an accent—proceeds to enact a literal fall on the page that, with the accentual 'Daz', is approximately onomatopoeic of the dewdrop's splatter (I.5-6). This very proximity is key: elsewhere in his writing on poetic form, Barfield distinguishes 'conscious… onomatopoeia' from the 'music' of 'some remotely onomatopoeic reminiscence that still lingers unconscious in the language'—a formal parallel to Coleridge and his 'physiognomic expression' of nature.[15]

Barfield's novel, formally contingent way of 'seeing' the dewdrop through its 'music' literally 'weigh[s],' according to the poem, on the 'leaf' (a synonym, not insignificantly, for paper) and the 'mind' alike (I.5-6). At the beginning of the long poem, we thus find Barfield simultaneously staging and describing the kind of form-specific 'vision' he praises in his Romantic hero—the image of the leaf 'embodied' on the page is analogously 'bodied forth' in the mind. Barfield cites this very 'transformative' experience in critical and autobiographical writings as evidence for the Incarnation ('that Event'; more on this below).[16] Taken within the context of Barfield's formula from *Romanticism Comes of Age*, we are reminded in this exposition of

> the duplex nature of the process by which, for the romantic, the spiritual significance of nature is revealed—first the purely subjective experience artificially induced and then the reaction of this upon nature.[17]

From this inaugural example onwards, the poet's infrequent decasyllable breaks accord with Coleridge's tactic of 'rhythming' an image to reveal a 'spiritual significance' of imagination made 'incarnate' in poetry.[18] Later transitions in imagery (e.g., the poet's uniquely short, rhythm-halting 'hell's gate' verse) and metrical variations (e.g., V.143; XII.80; XIII.131) compound the evidence for this inheritance.[19]

Taking this metrical appropriation as a starting point, *The Tower*'s versification of Coleridge's duplex 'reaction … upon nature' brings us to the

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[15] Owen Barfield, 'Form in Poetry', *The New Statesman* (August 7, 1920), 501-502. Accessed 2 Jan 2021 via the Owen Barfield Literary Estate, https://www.owenbarfield.org/read-online/articles/form-in-poetry/. See relevant discussions in *Biographia Literaria*, XXII.

[16] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 10.

[17] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 9.

[18] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 9.

[19] In the case of 'hell's gate', for example, the truncated line mirrors the speaker's poetic aphasia: 'If I / Can bring those threads together, disentangled, / Up to hell's gate in memory' (IV.21).

poem's more substantive inheritances from *Christabel*. Making parallel the diction and setting of the two poems, we can quickly ascertain *The Tower*'s opening lyrics enact an inversion of *Christabel*'s expository trope. Cursorily, both poems find protagonists venturing out into an ethereal setting: the youth of *The Tower* roams a 'dreaming field' (I.1) as the young Christabel wanders her dream-adjacent wood. In *The Tower*, time is polarized: Christabel's (apparent) midnight becomes Barfield's noon (I.2).[20] In their respective solitudes, the two protagonists arrive at wraithlike enclosures. Yet the portents of each enclosure oppose: while Christabel's sanctuary oak is lifeless under its façade of moss and mistletoe, Barfield's speaker lays himself in doubly fecund 'unwavering grasses down', taking care to note that—unlike Christabel—he encounters 'no ghost' there (I.22).

At first glance, Barfield's scene is merely a binary inversion of the exposition of *Christabel*. Yet when we interrogate the activity to which their 'stealing away' in nature leads, a more sophisticated agendum emerges. In the case of Coleridge, Christabel's agrestal journey prefaces prayer for a distant lover ('She kneels beneath the huge oak tree, / And in silence prayeth she'). When the speaker of *The Tower* comes to his parallel terminus, he ventures no prayer or supplication. Instead, the natural setting acts upon his senses, and a mnemonic scent (one 'Imprinted for all lifetime secretly') flings him, in Proustian fashion, inwards on an epic of memory: as from the madeleine, the bulk of *The Tower* unfurls from the hedgerow's evocative scent (I.14).[21] This passage is pivotal:

> Back to the mists: deeper: his peering mind
> Felt the quick touch of flitting shapes, but saw
> No light at all: deeper: and all was still.
> Wherefore lost memory turned, to seek some light,
> Back down the years. (I.29-33)

While Christabel returns to a literal tower removed from nature, Barfield's speaker remains in nature and begins a journey inward. Just as Coleridge compounds a sense of inward movement through *Christabel*'s use of colons (a staggering thirty-eight in total), Barfield signifies his spiritual passageway with a double-doubling of the punctuation mark. The events enact, as above, Barfield's 'duplex… process' exemplified in the best Romantic poetry: his speaker's 'subjective experience artificially induced' is followed by 'the reaction of this upon nature' in order to reveal its 'spiritual significance', a process

[20] When *The Tower* later delivers its critique of a wartime society, these poles (along with the bulk of the poem's initial images) are flipped: 'The weighted summer air was dark with noon' (IV.3). When the speaker encounters the poem's eponymous tower, this polarity resolves into a state 'betwixt sleep and waking' (IV.84). As Perdita Davidson argues, this very 'uncertainty' of time is likewise suggested in *Christabel*'s 'the owls have awakened the crowing cock'. See Perdita Davidson's '*Christabel*, a Poem of Transgression' in *The Coleridge Bulletin*, New Series 51 (Summer 2018): 43.

[21] This passage bears further inheritances of Coleridge's 'middle voice'. See Blake Allen's tremendously insightful 'The Eolian Harp: Coleridge's Middle Voice?' in *Literature & Theology*, 34.1 (2020): 101–19.

intended to be mirrored in speaker and a participating audience alike.[22]

Superficially, Christabel's Christian prayer and *The Tower*'s Proustian reminiscence are disparate ventures. If *The Tower*'s inversion of *Christabel* were to be followed uncritically, it may even seem Barfield intends to supplant Christabel's Christian ritual with some areligious substitute. Yet as Barfield later insists in *What Coleridge Thought*, it is this very hermeneutic of theological 'insincerity' Barfield seeks to disabuse in Coleridge criticism.[23] Above all, Barfield aims to undeceive critics of a metaphysically 'insincere' Coleridge, a Coleridge unfairly indexed as either para-Christian or else 'toadying to orthodoxy' only because 'his conclusions were compatible with those of theological orthodoxy'.[24] Taken within the context of Barfield's own critical writing, his Christabelian revision is better understood as a sophisticated equivalence between prayer and poetic form—agents of spiritual insight frequently conflated in Barfield.[25] As idiosyncratically defined in his 'Form in Poetry' (1920), it is the

> blending and harmonising of remembered impressions that constitutes true form in poetry, and it is here that poetry satisfies our aesthetic sense, our desire for and emotional appreciation of that form.[26]

Following Barfield's 1920 definition, the speaker's act of inner, mnemonic exploration in *The Tower* ('wherefore lost memory turned, to seek some light') is thus itself a participatory depiction of his theory of poetic form (I.32). The speaker encounters, with the reader, the 'remembered' forms which Coleridge has 'bodied forth'—spiritually subsisting forms which in turn 'harmonise' with Barfield's own innovations. This implicates one Barfield's most radical claims: that the poet's formal creativity embeds a kind of theological 'evidence' of the Christian Incarnation. Just as memory is 'the poet's material', the mnemonic forms the poet fashion are

> *creative* in the full religious sense of the word. [The imagination] had itself assisted in creating the natural forms which the senses were now contemplating . . . For it was "the repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation"—the Word made human.[27]

The 'memory' of forms which have been previously 'bodied forth' constitute, for Barfield, evidence of the quasi-divine, co-creative activity of the genius.[28] Hearkening back to *History in English Words*, this creative theory—the great contribution of Romantic Movement—is 'embodied' (a very deliberate pun in Barfield) in figures like Christabel and Wordsworth's Urania, who represent for

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[22] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 9.
[23] Barfield, 'Form in Poetry', 501-502.
[24] Owen Barfield, *Romanticism*, 191-192. See also the introduction to Owen Barfield, *What Coleridge Thought* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1971), 3-12.
[25] See Barfield, *Romanticism*, 9ff.
[26] Barfield, 'Form in Poetry', 501-502.
[27] Owen Barfield, *History in English Words*, Revised Ed. (Barrington: Lindisfarne Books, 1967), 218.
[28] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 214.

Barfield Coleridge's awful commission 'to explore this [inner] world'.[29]

Although Barfield's appropriation of Coleridge's formal creations constitutes a kind of secondary imagination, the subsistence of Coleridge's forms in intertextual memory points to their origin in the primary imagination of Coleridge. Barfield, of course, seeks to wield the primary imagination in his own innovations—but it is notable that *both* modes of the imagination implicate his theological concept of creation. In critical work from *Poetic Diction* to *History in English Words* to *Romanticism Comes of Age*, Barfield maintains the 'felt change of consciousness' resultant of these formal revolutions points invariably to an 'Event' at the foundation of poesy.[30] We shall explore this theological formula in closer detail in the final portion of this essay; in the meantime, we shall follow the narrative arc of the poem and turn to the Eliotic voice which 'interrupts' the Christabelian venture at the conclusion of Part I.

II The Tower, Prufrock, *and some disagreements over 'Philosophical Poetry'*

The Tower, like *The Waste Land*, is a polyphonic poem; and indeed, voice in Barfield is often as difficult to track as it is in Eliot. *The Tower*'s early narrative voice no sooner begins its journey inwards, no sooner glimpses Barfield's ideas on the Incarnation than it is deposed: the end of Part I and transition into Part II sees the Barfieldian-Coleridgean register give way to the unmistakable voice of Eliot. After *The Tower*'s expository adaptation of the 'successful' Christabelian poetics in Part I, Part II (along with the concluding portion of Part I) proceeds to contrast Romantic tropes and forms against the 'failed' poetics of Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1915). This trajectory accords with Barfield's version of poetic history, which laments High Modernism's popular victory over Barfield's (and Lewis's) 'Romanticism come of age'.[31] In other words, just as the speaker of Part I is about to arrive at the fullness of his Barfieldian-Coleridgean insight, the heretical Eliot arrives to snuff inspiration out. As Eliot surely saw in his review of the poem for *The Criterion*, the derogatory ventriloquization of Prufrock represents Barfield's poetic revision of Eliot's 'victory'. Barfield's commission is unequivocal, especially for those familiar with his critical work: English poetry must abandon the way of Eliot and return to Coleridge.

Barfield's choice of diction makes his target unambiguous. *The Tower*'s voice transition (at the conclusion of Part I and beginning of Part II) introduces the magical 'lamp' of childhood (I.105) and a functional 'further room' with analogously muffled voices (I.104), conjuring *Prufrock*'s magic lantern and dinner party interiors. This transition then evokes *Prufrock*'s reference to Hesiod, where a creeping, 'crinkled weariness of work' (I.107) pollutes 'Long, secure days…' (I.109). Evening in *The Tower*—depicted by the 'warm beam flung from crimson coals'—likewise 'Spreads its radiant fingers' over the scene

[29] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 220.
[30] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 218.
[31] Owen Barfield, *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning*, 3rd ed. (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 36-38.

(I.122-3).[32] Approaching paraphrase, Barfield echoes language of 'lingering' evening-time (I.84) just as he does the digression-inducing 'fragrances / That danced about girl-faces' (I.135-6). Finally, Barfield's urban setting is populated with the pessimistic, acutely Prufrockian images of window-peerers; of silent seas; of 'queer patterns in the skull' and 'wriggl[ing]' and 'suppressed lust' (II.15-16); and the very image of being pinned to a wall in a 'pitiless web / Of elemental nothing' (I.74-5).

The competitive relation of these (negative) images to the (positive) poetics of Coleridge is clear: the hollow, 'Habitual laughter' of Eliot's metropolis results in 'imagination, / Barred within doors' (I.144-145). Summoning the final lines of *Prufrock*, this imaginative staleness resounds in the philosophers who 'drown like lead without a cry' (II.19). Accordingly, and unlike the Christabelian / Proustian olfactory experience in Part I, Part II's Eliotic child is found 'Pitching past the hedgerows in a train' and thus only capable of 'Filling his mind with small things' (II.77, 97). No journey inwards is ventured; Nature remains an object apart. Eliot's etherized patient only versifies the 'dissection of Nature' warned of in Wordsworth.[33] *The Tower*'s Eliotic 'failure' of the spirit is at length remedied only by a return to the Romantic venture as it reprises in the remainder of the poem. Just as in (S. T. and Sara) Coleridge's fantastical 'The Silver Thimble', where the prophecy of Moses is 'Pour'd on mine ear with deep impressive voice' (II.54), Barfield's triumphant, Romantic lyrics are ultimately 'pour' from Eliot's 'blasphem[ing]' boy (II.53-56).[34] Barfield's formal decisions accord; the metrical 'music' of *The Tower*'s inaugural speaker is suspended until the Romantic voice returns.

Such dual poetical and theological attacks on Eliot suffuse Barfield's poetry generally and deserve a study of their own. Barfield was not as outspoken in his opposition to Eliot as Lewis was; or rather, Barfield rarely disparages Eliot by name. Barfield's politically tight lips would eventually loosen—in old age, his position became unabashedly explicit: 'I didn't care for T. S. Eliot's poetry at all. I think that is really all I can say'.[35] Earlier in Barfield's career, however, some detective work is required to identify instances of their disagreements. Reading *The Tower* in the context of Barfield's and Eliot's critical writing, we can thus observe a parallel, tacit disagreement centred around the extent to and manner in which Coleridge's poetry (or poetry generally) might be deemed 'philosophic'.

Barfield and Eliot's tacit argument plays out over the course of multiple critical publications. In his 'Introduction' to G. Wilson Knight's *Wheel of Fire*, Eliot claims that 'Shakespeare was not a philosophical poet in the sense of

[32] Both Eliot's and Barfield's inventions summon, in turn, the *Rhododactylos* of Homer.

[33] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 201. See again the *Preface to the Second Edition* of Barfield, *Poetic Diction*, 36-38, which likewise sets the poetic 'decline' of Eliot against the 'true, imaginative metaphor' of Coleridge.

[34] I have not yet encountered mention of the fact that the name of this boy—'Big Bannister'—figures in C.S. Lewis's *The Silver Chair* (1953). This allusion makes sense: as Taylor and Taylor note, this passage was particularly admired by Lewis. See Barfield, *The Tower*, 16.

[35] Barfield and Diener, 'Interview', 14.

Dante and Lucretius'.[36] What Eliot means by these 'senses' of philosophical poetry is the subject of yet another study, but for present purposes it is sufficient to note that during the earlier era of *The Tower*, Eliot was determined to categorize Coleridge as 'philosophic' only in 'the derogatory sense': Coleridge, with Aristotle before him and Barfield after him, adulterated criticism with philosophy, vitiating both in the process.[37] And to a point, Barfield sided with Eliot. 'Overtly philosophical poetry,' agreed Barfield,

> is not, as is sometimes affirmed, a contradiction in terms. It is not a thing impossible to be written, as both Lucretius and Dante have sufficiently demonstrated, but it is no service to Coleridge to maintain that his attempts at the genre, in 'Religious Musings' and 'The Destiny of Nations', were other than failures. [38]

It is no coincidence that Barfield's claim couples Lucretius with Dante and Coleridge with Aristotle. Part of the reason Barfield and Eliot both cite these Lucretius and Dante traces back, of course, to the common influence of George Santayana.[39] And yet this source alone is insufficient to explain the commonality between Barfield's and Eliot's texts. Both omit (for competing reasons) Goethe from Santayana's trio; both cite a parallel trio of philosopher-poet-critics in Aristotle, Shakespeare, and Coleridge.[40] Despite the fact that neither Barfield nor Eliot mentions the other, their positions have been mutually inflected. And yet while the *Tower*-era Eliot saw (for the time being)[41] no hope of philosophical redemption for Coleridge, Barfield was eager to oppose Eliot in rescuing Coleridge as a paradigm for his 'poetry of depth'—a poetry which achieves spiritual insight precisely without relapsing into philosophical homiletics.

After initially agreeing with Eliot's position, Barfield thus continues:

> By the other route to the depths on the other hand, the way of symbolism, the way of the *Ancient Mariner*, of *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel* … [Coleridge] was rather more than successful.[42]

Barfield's retrospective account on the relationship between poetry and philosophy accords with what we have seen in *The Tower*: Barfield rescues *Christabel* and certain other works as capable of articulating certain kinds of form-specific truths, truths which would not hold up in the forms chosen by

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[36] G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretation of Shakespeare's Tragedy*, 5th Revised Ed. (Cleveland: Meridian, 1957).

[37] T. S. Eliot, *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition,* Vol. II, *The Perfect Critic, 1919-1926*, eds. Anthony Cuda and Ronald Schuchard (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press and Faber & Faber Ltd., 2014), 268.

[38] Owen Barfield, 'Coleridge's Enjoyment of Words', in *Coleridge's Variety: Bicentennial Studies*, ed. John Beer (London: The Macmillan Press, 1974; Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1975), 204-218. Accessed 2 Jan 2021 via the Owen Barfield Literary Estate, https://www.owenbarfield.org/read-online/articles/coleridges-enjoyment-of-words/.

[39] See George Santayana, *Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe* (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1910).

[40] Eliot, *Prose*, 2:79.

[41] For the best available assessment of Eliot's shifting opinion of Coleridge, see Seamus Perry, 'T.S. Eliot's Coleridge' in *Coleridge's Afterlives*, eds. James Vigus and Jane Wright (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[42] Barfield, 'Coleridge's Enjoyment of Words', 204-218.

Eliot or his peers. The final two portions of this essay shall attempt some observations about what this Coleridgean 'route to the depths' might look like—particularly in light of Barfield's ideas of poetic form and Incarnational theology.

III *Marriage of Epithet and Noun: A Formal 'Route to the Depths'*

In seeking (with Eliot) a substitute for explicit philosophizing, Barfield posits several modes of formal innovation, the most basic being the 'marriage of epithet and noun'.[43] Barfield's claim is that the formal mechanism of epithet innovation—alongside his categories of 'rhythm' and 'arrangement'—can, at their best, facilitate an emergent, irreducible mode of experiencing the world's 'spiritual significance'.[44] Rather than mere vessel for poetic 'matter', the 'marriage' which comprises poetic form articulates irreducible truths of its own.[45] In Barfield's several accounts of this 'marriage', Coleridge is never named—his 1920 essay on form and its parallel in *Poetic Diction* turn instead to Milton and his exemplary 'Teiresias and Phineus, prophets old' to construct his idiosyncratic definition:

> The poet who places epithet and noun in a new and beautiful relation creates in us a new "state of memory"—a "form" which the emotions instinctively recognize as having aesthetic significance.[46]

Yet while Coleridge does not feature in this essay on form, readers of the *Biographia* will quickly identify the origin of Barfield's formula—specifically in Coleridge's ironic discussion of the 'profusion of new coined double epithets' with which his opus opens:

> I pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand, and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction; though in truth… I was often obliged to omit disentangling the weed, from the fear of snapping the flower.[47]

Tellingly, in a footnote to the above passage, Coleridge *himself* points to Milton—along with Shakespeare—as chief source of noun-epithet innovation. In all likelihood, then, Barfield's citation of Milton is simply an echo of Coleridge.

Yet Barfield's inheritance does not stop here; the similarly irreducible 'newness' of Barfield's epithet model reverberates in the footnote to Coleridge's passage:

> The rule for the admission of double epithets seems to be this: either that

[43] Barfield 'Form in Poetry', 501-502.

[44] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 3.

[45] The reader may find it fruitful to put Barfield's position in conversation with recent texts on theology and poetic form, especially Michael D. Hurley, *Faith in Poetry: Verse Style as a Mode of Religious Belief* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

[46] Barfield, 'Form in Poetry', 501-502.

[47] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria, Or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, eds. James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate, 1st Princeton/Bollingen Paperback ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 7.

> they should be already denizens of our language, such as blood-stained, terror-stricken, self-applauding: or when a new epithet, or one found in books only, is hazarded, that it, at least, be one word, not two words made one by mere virtue of the printer's hyphen.[48]

Scanning *The Tower* for such novel single and double epithets, we find Barfield accordingly eager to follow Coleridge's suit, to fashion word combinations which are not 'already denizens of language'. His goal, as after Coleridge, is to create forms both 'new' and 'one' that may serve to awaken spiritual senses in his 'route to the depths': to create 'Fresh ears, fresh eyes' with 'piercing words' (V.11). Appropriately, Barfield's first example of epithet invention in *The Tower*—a 'pattern' 'half obliterate'—implicates a Coleridgean model of poetic imagination. This epitheted 'pattern' extends from the poem's inaugural image:

> [. . .] and a faint smell,
> Confused, of hawthorn and of little flowers
> Drowsing about the hedgerow, clothed his body
> And drew a warm veil over all his thought,
> With on the veil traced half obliterate
> The pattern of some far forgotten day (I.6-11)

As we saw above, the imaginative import of Barfield's formal invention bear back upon this 'veiled' journey inwards: that is, the process of 'tracing' this 'half obliterate… pattern' of memory is itself symbol of a Barfield's mnemonic theory of poetic form. The passage suggests, further, a series of allusions to a Coleridge fragment sometimes published as 'The Veil of Light':

> Bright clouds of reverence, sufferably bright
> That intercept the dazzle not the Light
> That veil the finite form, the boundless power reveal
> Itself an earthly sun, of pure intensest White...[49]

Here, we find in Coleridge almost all the critical vocabulary of *The Tower*'s expository image: a poet's 'finite form'; 'reverence' for the bright clouds as 'veil' between poet and sun; a sunlit 'dazzle' that evidences a source-spiritual 'Light'. For Coleridge, when sunlight 'veil[s] the finite form' of the poet, the human is not darkened, but rather illuminated, revealing 'boundless' power in 'an earthly sun'.

The genius of Barfield's epitheted 'half obliterate… pattern' is in its complex suggestion of the same creative image. On a superficial reading, Barfield's veil of scent and sunlight is, with time, destructive: the veil ostensibly annihilates half the memory of 'some far forgotten day'. Barfield's 'pattern', however, is described precisely as 'obliterate' rather than 'obliterated'.

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[48] Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, 6.

[49] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, Vol. 2, *Dramatic Works and Appendices*, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), 998. Wordsworth resonates here too. For a study of these images, see the 'Romantic Veils' chapter of Veronica Della Dora's wonderful *The Mantle of the Earth: Genealogies of a Geographical Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

Employing the less common usage of 'obliterate' as 'to veil' rather than 'to erase' (as an arabesque 'obliterates' the sky), the sun's 'obliteration' in each poem is, to the contrary, requisite in the creative process: in *The Tower*, it is the veil's very shadow that gives to the poet a pattern to 'trace' in the first place.[50] Barfield's imaginative symbol thus accords with Coleridge's idea of finite repetition of the divine as well as Heidegger's vision of the poet as tracer:

> Poets are the mortals who, singing earnestly of the wine-god, sense the trace of the fugitive gods, stay on the gods' tracks, and so trace for their kindred mortals the way toward the turning.[51]

According with this inaugural example, epithet innovation in *The Tower* generally assumes the creative imagination as generative locus. Again ascribing creative activity to celestial bodies, an inspirational 'night' is named 'eager-eyed' (I.35-6); invoking the Mariner's pelagic imagery, 'ocean' is adjectivized into the 'ocean silence' of the eye (I.45). Barfield's other magnificent examples of unique noun-epithet pairings—'empty brilliance' (III.2); 'fatuous thought' (IV.23); 'upturned Fate' (IV.38); 'mineral passion' (IV.89); 'secret-breathing world' (V.33); 'constant-crystallizing vegetation' (XI.72)—deserve a study entire. Yet a final example fitting for close inspection here might be the 'half-fledged bird' of imagination set against the 'business important' of an industrialized humanity. In opposition to this 'business' and out of a sea of two thousand 'nowhere-looking eyes', there emerges

> […] once more imagination—
> Like some huge half-fledged bird, with clanging wings
> Too stiff to lift its bulk, which flies at last
> By taking from the top of scaffoldings
> Laboriously erected—soared up sunwards
> Over bright fields of green and shimmering life
> That lie this side the brain. (XI.109-115)

The description of imagination as 'half-fledged bird' is noteworthy. Barfield, already at this early stage versed in the history of Coleridge reception, is not improbably reclaiming the imaginative theorist from an anonymous critic who in 1820 ridiculed the 'half-fledged conceptions' of Coleridge's poetry.[52] His 'shimmering life', as we shall see in our final section, is likely another Coleridge-inflected reference to the Incarnation (XI.114).

In these examples, we see Barfield make pervasive use of the very formal innovations he elsewhere attributes to Coleridge. More often than not, this attribution is implicit; in *The Tower* and other verse works, Barfield's anxiety of

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[50] In Part IV's long reversal sequence of the poem's opening images, it is only when 'No cloud was in that sky' that 'earth seemed / Dark' (IV.59-60).

[51] See Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001). Although Barfield's anthroposophical tendencies stand outside the context of this essay it is important to note this sun-veil-poet model reflects too Barfield's idea of Christ's dual Incarnational relation to the sun and poetic meaning. See Owen Barfield, 'Julian the Apostate' in *Anthroposophical Quarterly* 6.2 (Summer 1961): 38-44.

[52] Anonymous, 'On the present State of Poetical Talent', *New Bon Ton Magazine* 5 (September 1820): 282-85.

influence is on full display. Reading the long poem in light of Barfield's clinamenic project, we even encounter evidence of Barfield's struggle to sufficiently distance his own innovations from Coleridge. One relevant example stands out in Part V of *The Tower*, where Barfield's encounter with a 'Pierian Spring' of Romantic lyrics effects literal and enduring change to his spiritual senses:

> […] Fresh ears, fresh eyes
> Are built into his soul by piercing words
> Of Keats or Shelley—all that marvellous Wave
> That burst the crust of Reason […] (V.11-13) [53]

From what we have discussed so far, it might seem odd to encounter Keats and Shelley before we encounter Coleridge. That Coleridge is not mentioned here by name—nor, indeed, anywhere in *The Tower*—is only evidence for the intended obliqueness of Barfield's inheritance. In all other accounts of the Romantic paradigm shift—from the fictional *This Ever Diverse Pair* to the critical *History in English Words*—Coleridge is described with this very language of a 'wave' which has 'burst' upon history. In the 'Imagination' chapter of *History in English Words*, for example, Barfield relates that 'just before the turn of the century there burst, with [Coleridge's] help, that strange explosion which received, naturally enough, the name of the Romantic Movement'.[54] (This reiterated image of Coleridge 'bursting' on to a new sea must originally draw, of course, from the 'burst' of the Mariner.)

Reading Part V in this light, one has the sense that Barfield is trying to avoid the accusation that *The Tower* is merely a metred rewording of the philosophy of Coleridge. Barfield, with Eliot, was weary of such a poetics; his efforts to half-bury his Coleridgean system intimates his anxiety to evade Eliot's indictments of 'philosophizing.' The great irony of this affair is that Eliot would ultimately come to reverse his position on philosophy and poetry: at least in his capacity as critic, Eliot transitioned from antagonist of 'philosophical criticism'[55] to a late proponent of the position that 'literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint.'[56] Tellingly, I think, Eliot's change of heart was accompanied by a change of his assessment of Coleridge.[57] Such are the contingencies of history: had this latter Eliot been the one to read *The Tower*, it may well have ended up published in the first place. In any case, by Barfield's own metric, the success of *The Tower* must turn on the extent to which it can be

[53] Although the image of the poem's eponymous tower does not feature in this argument, it is important to note that Barfield elsewhere uses this image as synecdoche for the Romantic tradition. In the course of his contra-Eliot apology for Romanticism, Barfield finds the 'Humanists… leveling its towers and pinnacles… tunneling beneath its walls'. See Barfield, *Romanticism*, 6. For a broader survey of Romantic influences in the poem, see Jeffrey Hipolito, 'Sidelights and Long Shadows', *Journal of Inklings Studies*, 11.1 (2021): 80-83.

[54] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 212.

[55] Eliot, *Prose*, II:79.

[56] Eliot, *Prose*, V:218.

[57] This very argument comprises the first chapter of my ongoing PhD thesis; if any reader feels so inclined to discuss this relation, I am especially open to conversation.

deemed 'philosophical' in the oblique, formally contingent sense. Such is the position of John Ulreich's, who says the following of *Orpheus* (1937; published 1983):

> [Barfield's metaphor] does not 'explain'; it *is* the meaning to be apprehended by the active imagination. That meaning cannot be inculcated; it will never disclose itself to a passive understanding.[58]

The Tower walks this tight line; if an older Owen Barfield were to criticize *The Tower*, he might suggest the 'definite … theological standpoint' of the poem occasionally overwhelms its formal parameters. At other moments, however it shimmers through, illuminating its half-obliterate veil. In any assessment, it is to this 'theological standpoint' that we now turn.

IV *Barfield's Incarnational Misreading of Coleridge*

We have this far considered poetic form in *The Tower* as the arena in which Barfield stages his Coleridgean agon with Eliot. Deeming modernist poetics an unfortunate aberration from the Romantic legacy, Barfield's long poem attempts to build upon Coleridgean formal innovations as a means to create his own obliquely philosophical 'poetry of depth'. Over the course of this study, we have seen a recurrent reference to Barfield's Incarnational understanding of the Coleridgean imagination. Now that we have contextualized the philosophical stakes of Barfield's poetics, this final section will survey Barfield's theological theory as it more explicitly reprises in the remainder of *The Tower*.

First, some critical context. Barfield classifies his vocation less as theorist of 'poetry' at large than, as his famous title indicates, 'poetic *diction*'.[59] In so specifying, Barfield means to insist the very 'arrangement' or 'harmony' of words can 'enhance' a poem's meaning and thereby, in best application, 'reveal hitherto unapprehend parts of reality'.[60] The *locus classicus* recurrent in his criticism is the transformation of the mundane 'old prophets' into the Miltonian 'prophets old'.[61] More than mere rework of Coleridge's 'best words in the best order', Barfield educes emphasis on 'arrangement' in order to demarcate poetic form as a mode of spiritual 'seeing' and, thereby, site of 'reverence' for a world revealed.[62] For a diction-inclined Barfield, it is not so much the narrative arc or philosophical 'matter' of a poem that matters; it is, rather, the altered 'way of seeing' through 'particular combinations of words' which bring him to—and themselves constitute—his first moments of religious

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[58] John C. Ulreich, Jr., 'Afterword', in Owen Barfield, *Orpheus: A Poetic Drama*, ed. John C. Ulreich, Jr. (West Stockbridge: The Lindisfarne Press, 1983), 135. Quoted in Barfield, *The Tower,* 6.

[59] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 5. Emphasis in the original.

[60] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 5.

[61] See Barfield, 'Form in Poetry', 501-502, as well as *Poetic Diction*, 41. Barfield's argument is amusingly gestural: 'The difference is inexplicable and varies with each example but it is undoubtedly there'. This also echoes, of course, James Bowyer's teaching to Coleridge: 'there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word'. See Coleridge, *Biographia*, 9.

[62] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 3.

awe.[63]

The spiritual charge of Barfield's definition is deliberate. In the autobiographical introduction to *Romanticism Comes of Age*, the poet-critic's account of encountering Coleridge suggests emphatically an experience of conversion. Barfield's Oxford days are characterized by a 'sudden and rapid increase in the intensity with which I experienced lyric poetry', the first and metanoiac remedy for a 'vacuum' of 'reverence' that had characterized his first twenty-one years of life.[64] After two decades of religious indifference, Barfield's 'felt change of consciousness' in Romantic lyrical poetry is seen to divulge at last a 'pertain[ance] to the origin and spiritual nature of man'.[65] For the young poet, innovations in word order in texts like the *Lyrical Ballads* are themselves understood as diplomatic agents of the Book of Nature. After reading Wordsworth and Coleridge,

> The face of nature, the objects of art, the events of history and human intercourse betrayed significances hitherto unknown as the result of precisely these poetic or imaginative combinations of words. I found I knew things about them which I had not known before.[66]

In the context of Barfield's spiritual autobiography, this newfound reverence for poetic form *as* a mode of theology is foundational: the Inkling calls it the 'first serious thing that happened to my mind'.[67] On the basis of this experience, the young Barfield settles henceforth that any satisfactory metaphysics must reckon the transfigurational reality of words. It is in this experience that Barfield's 'converse' incarnation comes into play: as versified in *The Tower*, the experience of 'seeing' through poetry points to a creative 'incarnation' in 'consciousness' (XIII.138-140).

Barfield's experience with Coleridge in turn inflects his understanding of Shakespeare, who has us 'feel genius is indeed something more than earthly' in his insight that the 'imagination bodies forth / The forms of things unknown'.[68] Through the lens of Coleridge, Barfield thus retroactively deems the Bard a Romantic prophet:

> That mystical conception which the word embodies in these lines—a conception which would make imagination the interpreter and part creation of a whole unseen world—is not found again until the Romantic

[63] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 3.

[64] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 2. Though *Romanticism* only gestures obliquely to the mechanics of this conversion, Barfield's account is narrativized in the novel-poem hybrid *This Ever Diverse Pair*, where Barfield explicitly draws out the participatory, Incarnational implications of Biographia XIII and its relation to poetic form. This leads, too, to the identification of poetry's unique theological capabilities: '…the silent commerce of our soul clothed itself in a kind of rhythmic, liturgical splendor which, if it could be expressed at all, could only be expressed in verse.' Owen Barfield, *This Ever Diverse Pair* (Edinburgh: Floris Classics, 1985), 43.

[65] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 2.

[66] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 3.

[67] Barfield, *Romanticism*, 2.

[68] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 214. As with much in this essay, Barfield's take on Coleridge, Shakespeare, and form is especially fruitful considered in conversation with Douglas Hedley's trilogy on the creative imagination. See especially Douglas Hedley, *Living Forms of the Imagination* (London: T&T Clark, 2008).

Movement had begun.[69]

Reprising his pervasive 'embodied' pun, Barfield insists that, after a series of intervening 'failures' in the history of poetry and human consciousness, Coleridge finally christens a 're-animation of Nature' through the very creative theory we encountered above: the imagination as "'the repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation"—the Word made human.'[70]

Amusingly, Barfield insists that while ultimately *not* blasphemous, Coleridge's 'new use [of *creation*] should have met with some opposition on the grounds of blasphemy'.[71] *The Tower* attempts to articulate Coleridge's proximity to creation *ex nihilo* with the pseudo-blasphemous voice of Part XIII, where Christ's first and only appearance in sees him cast in the company of Prometheus, subordinate to the Zodiac and other gods:

> Ye gods that bound yourselves on rock and cross
> To become our life — only let us want,
> Infinitely, nothing for ourselves,
> And we shall set you free […] (XIII.91-94) [72]

According to this paradigm, Christ's 'binding' of himself to the cross signifies the Incarnation; Barfield's attempt to 'set [him] free' the creative echo of the poet.

Turning thus to the Romantic recovery arc of Parts XI-XIII of *The Tower*, we find the author attempting to versify this very sense in which poetic form is 'incarnational':

> Then, as he walked through stony galleries
> Peopled with statues of old myths and gods,
> The constant-crystallizing vegetation
> Of man's unfolding dream, congealed in stone,
> Those forms began to melt and pass, sliding
> Into each other there before his eyes
> Bright with intenser thinking, until Time
> Sprang into life in his imagination
> Incarnate in a visible procession
> Of cloudlike shapes. (XI.70-79)

This passage reiterates the form-Incarnation relationship expounded in Barfield's philosophical work. In this functionally converse incarnation, a spiritual world is made 'incarnate' in the mind through in the forms of art. As with the 'shimmering life / That lie[s] this side the brain', the 'life in his

[69] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 214.
[70] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 218.
[71] Barfield, *History in English Words*, 207.
[72] In an Anthroposophical context, this passage represents less a rejection of the Christian event than an early Steinerian inflection. In *Romanticism Comes of Age*, Barfield relays how Steiner's 'method of knowledge had confirmed for him, as a fact of experience, the historical tradition of the Incarnation of Christ', compelling the young Barfield to 'give in' to the reality of 'that Event'. See Barfield, *Romanticism*, 10-11. Yet Steiner need not steer our reading; as we have seen above (and as Lewis insisted), Barfield's theory of poetry remains equally comprehensible in a Steiner-less, Christian-Coleridgean paradigm.

imagination' points to Barfield's notion of the *logos* as fundament of poetic meaning (XI.109-115; XI.77).[73]

Building upon the 'imagination / Incarnate' of Part XI, Part XII of *The Tower* redoubles this language of an inner, spiritual life:

> […] knowledge is not,
> Until it is the thing it knoweth; knowledge
> Is Life incarnating in consciousness. (XII.69-71)

Following John, Christ the *logos* is made incarnate in the flesh; for Barfield, the very possibility of this spirit-flesh movement is suggested by poetic form's converse 'incarnation' in the mind. As the poem comes to its conclusion, Barfield asks and answers:

> What is Poesy? The second birth!
> It is the incarnation of this flesh
> Into this consciousness. (XIII.138-140)

Appropriately, *The Tower* concludes with a final articulation of the Incarnation formula which motivates Barfield's Coleridgean revision:

> There is a noise of trumpets in the mouth
> Of Wisdom, and their voice is Poesy
> Expressing incarnation […] (XIII.146-148)

We see, then, that in defending a Coleridgean poetics against the predominate Eliotic, *The Tower* is staged as a recovery of and apology for the Romantic's innovations in form. At stake in this defence is an Incarnational theology Barfield deems inextricably evident in the experience of Romantic verse forms. Through, in particular, the organic mechanisms of rhythm, word order, memory, and noun-epithet invention, Barfield as poet strives to enable an irreducibly participatory 'incarnation' of 'flesh' in 'consciousness' (XIII.139-140). In seeking to restore Coleridge's poetics and its cognate spiritual insights, Barfield's formal decisions in *The Tower* are motivated by his own attempt to create an obliquely philosophical 'poetry of depth', the foundation of which is Barfield's creative, Incarnational construal of Coleridge.

[73] In a corresponding example from his critical work, we find Barfield condemning Ian Robinson and his elliptical edits of John 1, 'not so much because they replace the whole of the intervening reference to the Incarnation as because they also eliminate the two earlier statements that all things were made by the logos, and that it was the 'life' within the logos that was the light of man.' Owen Barfield, 'Focus on Language', *The Denver Quarterly* (Autumn 1974): 80-89. Accessed 2 Jan 2021 via the Owen Barfield Literary Estate, https://www.owenbarfield.org/read-online/articles/focus-on-language/.