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reads

Coleridge's Afterlives

(Palgrave Macmillan 2008)

edited by

James Vigus and Jane Wright

BEFORE REVIEWING James Vigus and Jane Wright's fascinating collection of essays, I must note that John Beer's excellent afterword to the volume weaves together the multiplicitous strands of Coleridge's afterlives into a truly Coleridgean unity. This unity is far from univocal, but rather, as Beer notes, the one quality that must stand out in looking at the reception of Coleridge's thought is its ambiguity, arising from "the contradictions and dilemmas of Coleridge's personality and career" (254). In thirteen commissioned essays, *Coleridge's Afterlives* explores the profoundly variegated response to what Seamus Perry refers to as "the rich confusion of Coleridge's literary thinking" (244) which rather than obscuring his legacy, made it tenfold more fertile as evidenced by the wide range of subjects covered in this volume.

J.S. Mill is referred to numerous times in this collection as a bellwether of Coleridge's afterlives: he presciently declared that "The influence of Coleridge, like that of Bentham, extends far beyond those who share in the peculiarities of his religious and philosophical creed. He has been the great awakener in this country of the spirit of philosophy, within the bounds of traditional opinions."[1] *Coleridge's Afterlives* richly expands the range of this statement, by adding poetry and literary theory to "religious and philosophical creed" and that he is a "great awakener" not only in England, but all over the world, including India and America. Coleridge's relevance is so extensive precisely because of these "peculiarities"—namely the ambiguity, subtlety, and multivalency of so much of his thought, a quality that engenders what Vigus and Wright refer to as "traditions at once various and in productive strife with each other" (ix).

There are many ground-breaking perspectives in *Coleridge's Afterlives*. After James Vigus establishes the importance of attending to the role of various editions of Coleridge's published work in gauging his afterlives, Lynda Pratt, Anthony John Harding, and Stephen Prickett analyze the relevance of Coleridge's thought for critical methodologies that were not even articulated in his own time, such as class, gender, and pluralism; Coleridge's impact on a wide and sometimes unexpected range of literary figures, including De Quincey, Oscar Wilde, T.S. Eliot, and others is examined by Fred Burwick, Jane Wright, Seamus Perry and Daniel Karlin; Coleridge's importance not only to English letters but to international movements like American

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[1] J.S. Mill, 'Coleridge', *Utilitarianism and Other Essays*, ed. Alan Ryan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), 177

Transcendentalism and the Bengal Renaissance in India is investigated by Daniel Sanjiv Roberts and Laura Dassow Walls; finally, Coleridge's vital legacy for various strands of philosophy, aesthetics, and intellectual history is taken up by Ross Wilson, Paul Hamilton, and Douglas Hedley. The volume represents a stunning array of scholarly work that reveals the breadth, complexity, and ambiguity of Coleridge's influence in the 19th century and beyond.

In the opening essay, James Vigus calls attention to the role of different textual editions on Coleridge's afterlives. Of course the majority of Coleridge's "informal" work—the notebooks, marginalia, and letters, as well as shorter works and fragments—has only appeared in the last fifty years, as well as central texts such as the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, *Logic*, and *Opus Maximum*. There is a need, then, to account for the editions responsible for galvanizing Coleridge's afterlives in the nineteenth century. Vigus's chapter provides an excellent review of these editions of both prose and poetry and how they influenced the reception of Coleridge's thought. For example, he points to different American editions of *Aids to Reflection* that ignited American theological debates, the 1840 publication of *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit* that sparked controversy in the Church of England, and the important but now obscure 200 page essay by Sara Coleridge entitled *On Rationalism* that appeared as an appendix to the fifth edition of *Aids to Reflection*, only to disappear after the next edition. There were many versions of published poetical works, both official family editions and unofficial versions, as copyrights expired. Vigus argues that "In terms of long-term influence on religious, philosophical, and literary critical thought, the new prose editions indeed stand out. But in terms of acts of reading among the burgeoning Victorian reading classes, editions of the poetry—especially cheap editions and those with prefaces by well-known writers—were more important than bibliographies and critical discussions usually acknowledge" (4). While Princeton's *Collected Coleridge* now eclipses all earlier editions, Vigus rightly claims that "without awareness of these past editions, we can never fully appreciate the diversity of ways in which Coleridge lived on through successive generations of readers" (15).

Class, Gender and Pluralism

Several essays examine ambiguities in Coleridge's thought and personal life in light of critical methodologies that were not fully articulated in his own time, such as class, gender, and pluralism. Lynda Pratt looks at class tensions and provincialism in Joseph Cottle's biographical accounts of Coleridge; Anthony John Harding's investigates Coleridge's complex relation to nineteenth century conceptions of masculinity; and Stephen Prickett lays out an intriguing analysis of the "nascent pluralism of Wordsworth and Coleridge" expressed in "their sense of the sheer diversity and complexity of the society they portray" (56). These essays break new ground and situate Coleridge's afterlives within specific social contexts and constructs.

In her essay "'Let not Bristol be ashamed'?: Coleridge's afterlife in the

Early Recollections of Joseph Cottle" Lynda Pratt examines a crucial moment for Coleridge's posthumous reputation surrounding the publication of Joseph Cottle's *Early Recollections*. Henry Nelson Coleridge, "one of the chief promoters of Coleridge as contemporary prophet and sage," was outraged by Cottle's "unvarnished memoir" of Coleridge, which included details of his human flaws, including his opium addiction and financial problems (21). In the resulting imbroglio, two very different views of Coleridge were at stake: "Was Coleridge a success or a failure? Was he a man who had laboured for the benefit of society and the nation, or had he been irretrievably mired in self-abuse and selfishness?" (21) Pratt surmises that Cottle's depiction of Coleridge in *Early Recollections* makes it "a deeply subversive text" in three areas: "class, geography and the cult of the individual" (22). Class tensions are at work between Cottle, a lower-middle class bookseller and H.N. Coleridge, who is the product of an elite education and upwardly mobile family. Cottle also reconfigures Bristol, his native city, as "a centre of modernity and progress in scientific experimentation and literary culture," and situates Coleridge (who lived there for part of the 1790s, 1800s, and 1810s) within that context, providing "a salutary and much-needed reminder of the provincial—but non-Lake District—contexts for Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth" (27). Additionally, the treatment of other figures in Coleridge's circle in *Early Recollections* places him in the midst of other literary men and women, marking a "refusal to propagate the image of an isolated genius [that] strikes a central blow against the idea of Coleridge as an autonomous great thinker and (in a longer term critical perspective) against what was to become of the central tenets of Romanticism… The end result is a narrative that is more inclusive and democratic in its realisation of a literary community than many of its high Romantic counterparts" (32).

In "Gendering the Poet-Philosopher: Victorian 'Manliness' and Coleridgean 'Androgyny'" Anthony John Harding investigates Coleridge's "chameleon nature, where gender and sexuality were concerned" finding something in the nature of Coleridge "that is refreshingly unsettling to our received notions about gender" (67). He was a hard figure to categorize: on one hand, he was appropriated by the Victorians as "the teacher of a reflective, personal, yet philosophically mature system of religious discipline, which continued to the Broad Church idea of the Christian gentleman" but he is also the author of sexually ambiguous and suggestive poems such as "Love," "Lewti," "Kubla Khan" and "Christabel." Victorian critics and biographers consistently referred to Coleridge's work in gendered terms, sometimes even transcending gender "reflecting the late-nineteenth-century interest in the androgyne as a sexual possibility" (66).

Harding notes that in the first half of the nineteenth century, "judgments about literary reputation and even about the worth of an individual literary work were more likely to involve consideration of an author's gender identity, or what might now be called his 'performance' of gender" (66-67). Coleridge's

published prose works, especially *The Friend, Aids to Reflection, Lay Sermons* and *Church and State* "lent themselves to the development of this influential Victorian ideal of manliness, even while what was known or believed about his private life (including his consumption of opium) detracted from his credibility as a teacher" (68). It is paradoxical, then, that Coleridge is at once an arbiter of moral development and also one who was derided for his lack of sobriety, intellectual and otherwise. While Coleridge's opium habit, perceived effeminacy, interest in metaphysics and German thought were troubling to nineteenth century intellectuals, there was never a shortage of figures ready to declare the importance of his thought, including J.C. Hare, Frederick Denison Maurice, Thomas Arnold, Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes, and of course the aforementioned J.S. Mill, who "says nothing about Coleridge's personal weaknesses… or his unmanly conduct" but rather represents Coleridge "as a worthy English representative of post-Kantian idealism, who had a formative influence on intellectual life in Britain" (71). Even more intriguingly, Harding notes that in many Victorian accounts "there is a half-acknowledged fascination with Coleridge's Dark Side, as if the writer sensed the restrictiveness of conventional masculinity" (72). These complexities parallel another current debate about whether or not Coleridge was "exceptionally sympathetic to, and insightful about, women—even, perhaps a kind of feminist—or was to a greater or lesser degree masculinist or misogynist" (66). This essay is a fascinating and nuanced account of Coleridge's ambiguous relationship to nineteenth century gender norms.

In another essay chronicling Coleridge's relevance to contemporary debates, Stephen Prickett explores the idea of pluralism and diversity in "Romantic Fragments and Victorian Pluralisms: From *Lyrical Ballads* to *Guesses at Truth*." Prickett begins by asking why Coleridge and Wordsworth "stressed the unity rather than the fragmentary nature" of *Lyrical Ballads* when the subjects and themes of the volume are "diverse and wide-ranging enough to embrace ancient mariners, old huntsmen, mothers (both of the mad and foster varieties), idiot boys, lost sheep, convicts, tables turned and abbeys revisited, old men travelling, and Indian women complaining" (54). Prickett proposes that the terms "fragment" and "experiment" are useful terms when considering the Romantic commitment to seeing unity within multiplicity. Furthermore, he anticipates a term not yet in use in the period: "pluralism." That is, the poems about the poor, children, the supernatural, all have something in common: "their sense of the sheer diversity and complexity of the society they portray" (56). Pluralism, refers to "the kind of society whose inhabitants held widely differing views about themselves and about how that society should operate" (57)—a term that potentially can render the wide-ranging *Lyrical Ballads* intelligible as an organic whole.

This "nascent pluralism of Wordsworth and Coleridge" is more fully articulated in the 1820s by one of their most devoted followers: Julius Hare. He was one of the finest scholars of German in England, a theologian and

clergyman, and the co-author of an important collection of literary, philosophic, and religious fragments entitled *Guesses at Truth,* first published in 1827, which Prickett identifies as "perhaps the best source of second-generation romantic critical theory in the English language." He surmises that "If the pluralism of the *Lyrical Ballads* is still inarticulate and embryonic, even that odd title, *Guesses at Truth*, indicates a much more explicit sense of a world so fragmented and undergoing such complex transformations, that no single account of it is adequate" (60). Hare's criticism is a prescient voice for pluralistic modes of envisioning society, and was responsible for "developing the contradictions of the first Romantics into an aesthetic" (63), identifying another deeply influential afterlife of Coleridgean thought.

Afterlives in Literature: De Quincey, Wilde, Eliot, and others

Coleridge's influence on an ever-widening sphere of literary figures is a burgeoning field, as demonstrated by Elinor Shaffer's recent volumes like the *Reception of S.T. Coleridge in Europe* (Continuum, 2007). Several essays forge new ground in this area, detailing Coleridge's importance for a surprisingly broad range of figures, including De Quincey, Oscar Wilde, T.S. Eliot and a variety of authors influenced by the "narrative compulsion" of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

Frederick Burwick's sensitive and probing essay "De Quincey on Coleridge" dramatically redefines the interconnection between the two men. The relation has been traditionally cast in a negative light, since

> Opium-eating and plagiarism, the two monstrous monuments erected by De Quincey in the field of his commentary, have overshadowed much else that he wrote about Coleridge. The fault is entirely De Quincey's because he built them even higher in his revisions. Absent entirely from the early versions of the *Confessions* in 1821, they loom large in the late revision of 1856 (44)

which, Burwick notes, became the primary source for understanding the connection between the men for the next 150 years. Once the relation is restored to its original context, Burwick reveals a much fuller and complex interrelation between Coleridge and De Quincey: "Coleridgean ideas inform his critical vocabulary, his choice of themes and topics, and—most integrally—even the imagery of his dream-visions and imaginative prose" (45).

Burwick's analysis of "Coleridge's thoroughly integrated presence in De Quincey's dream-visions" suggests a much more intimate connection between the two writers—indeed a true meeting of minds. He relates a remarkable incident in which Coleridge described to De Quincey a set of Piranesi prints called *Dreams*, which depict nightmarish Gothic halls filled with engines, machinery, and Escheresque staircases:

> Although he had never seen these engravings by Piranesi, neither then

> nor since, and more than ten years have passed, De Quincey retrieves from memory the scenes as Coleridge described them to him… What is remarkable in this ekphrasis of visual conjuring is the apparent ease of the imagistic transference from the mind of Piranesi, through the mind of Coleridge, into the mind of De Quincey… The images of Piranesi's delirium become the defining reference for the 'architecture' of De Quincey's opium-dreams (46).

Burwick enumerates other similar acts of "visual conjuring," such as when De Quincey re-enacted Coleridge's ascent of the Broken in *Suspiria de Profundis* and the Dream Fugue in *The English Mail Coach* that directly invoke Coleridge's accounts of similar events. These examples demonstrate Burwick's striking assertion that "Indeed, Coleridge himself seemed to be assimilated into [De Quincey's] dreams as an alter ego" (50)—certainly a much more complex and more positive legacy than previously imagined.

Perhaps Oscar Wilde's name does not immediately spring to mind when thinking about Coleridge's legacy, but Jane Wright makes a persuasive argument that there are important connections between the two figures. Both were accused of writing immoral works and living immoral lives; both responded similarly to attacks by critics by claiming that if anything, their works had too much of a moral rather than too little, as in the cases of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Moreover, Wright observes many Coleridgean ideas taken up by Wilde, such as novelty, the need for reflection, the necessity of paradox, and developing one's personality in a process of "becoming." Most saliently, Wright suggests that "some of Wilde's most awkward but central critical views find an important antecedent in Coleridge"—in particular the link between "sin" and sincerity" in their views about art and morality. For Wilde, "both aesthetic experience and sin offer 'modes' (a favourite word of Wilde's) of breaking down or challenging limitation… (156) and realizing the self. The suppleness of Coleridge's thought appealed to Wilde, as did his ability to juggle opposites and paradoxes: "Coleridge emerges, as he does repeatedly in this volume of essays, as a cultural authority on walking fine lines. One facet of his afterlife in this regard might be thought of as the method that his example offers to later writers of progression by opposition—the paradoxical, the dialogical, even the sinful becomes more explicitly means and modes of self-realisation" (167)

T.S. Eliot is another unlikely figure for a Coleridgean afterlife given his espoused antipathy to Romanticism, but a strong connection is forged by Seamus Perry in his essay "Eliot and Coleridge." Perry carefully traces Eliot's reactions to Romanticism as a movement, while finding an "unexpectedly intricate" relationship to Coleridge. He beautifully expresses the indeterminancy of the relation: "What might have proven most fertile for Eliot's thinking was an altogether less resolved or consistent sort of inheritance; and the history of his response would then be less one of gradually coming round to Coleridge's view and more a deepening exploration of

contradictions and perplexities common to them both." (228-9)

Eliot clearly respected Coleridge: he called Coleridge a man "of my own type" and expressed admiration for his learning and subtlety of mind. A picture of Coleridge hung prominently in his home. However, this respect was intermingled with grave ambivalence: for example he called *Biographia Literaria* "one of the wisest and silliest, the most exciting and most exasperating books of criticism ever written" (230). Eliot's sympathy runs deeper when considering Coleridge's poetry, especially works like "Dejection: An Ode" which Perry describes as

> a poem which grows from the impossibility of poetry[…] stand[ing] at the head of a long tradition of modern verse which discovers imaginative power in the course of lamenting imaginative desolation… [Eliot's] greatest poetry, too, often begins in the collapsed hopes of a grander or more self-assured sort of art (245).

In the afterword to *Coleridge's Afterlives*, John Beer elegantly encapsulates the complex interrelation:

> Eliot met Coleridge's ambiguities with ambiguities of his own, therefore. He was alive to many of the things that made Coleridge a great critic and an acute writer, yet had less sympathy with the searching, inquisitive speculative quality in the man that went along with his status as someone continually questioning the universe, trying to make it yield up the secrets of its meaning. (256)

While Perry identifies a literary legacy originating from Coleridge's highly original poems like "Dejection", Daniel Karlin takes us in a similar direction with his essay "'I Have Strange Power of Speech': Narrative Compulsion after Coleridge." *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is famous for its narrative voice and the Mariner who holds the wedding guest captive with his "glittering eye" until his tale is told. Karlin states that the poem "presents us with a narrative design unprecedented in the genre to which it ostensibly belongs, that of the ballad" (132) While there are earlier instances of magical storytelling and spellbound listeners in earlier literature, there are no precedents for Coleridge's "compulsive narrative" in which the Mariner *must* tell his tale and his hearer *must* listen. Karlin investigates later incarnations of the motif in a wide range of works, including Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Involved in the narrative voice is "a fantasy of authorial power" in which authors "consciously represent the compelling power of narrative within works which cannot, themselves, exercise that power" (141-2).

International Movements

Two essays explore Coleridge's importance not only to English letters but to international movements: Laura Dassow Walls charts Coleridge's importance

for Emerson and the American Transcendentalists and Daniel Robert's examines his influence on Indian culture. In "Ralph Waldo Emerson and Coleridge's American Legacy" Walls rightly claims that "Emerson without Coleridge can scarcely be imagined, so central is the Englishman to the American's development as a writer, philosopher, and public intellectual" (112). However, like many Coleridgean afterlives, his ideas were appropriated in distinctive ways: Emerson "refocused Coleridge's ideas into a distinctively Emersonian vision and a distinctively American Romanticism: away from British centralized hierarchy toward a sprawling democratic American national literature, away from religious orthodoxy toward a new church of science and the intellect" (112). James Marsh, president of the University of Vermont and an avid Coleridgean, paved the way for Coleridge's American reception with his highly influential preface to the American edition of *Aids to Reflection*, published in 1829. Walls notes that "In his 'Preliminary Essay,' Marsh outlined the grounds for discontent with the old and progress toward the new" which entailed rejecting Lockean materialism and embracing Kantian Transcendentalism, although this was Kant filtered through Coleridge: "But few Transcendentalists read Kant, while all read Coleridge; over and over they celebrated the release from Locke's materialism… Coleridge's Reason became the sun or 'focal orb' that illumined the universe into meaning, the lens that brought it into focus" (115).

In addition to appropriating Coleridge's reading of Kant, Emerson began in 1829 to incorporate many Coleridgean themes in his writing, including "the divinity within each human being, the necessity of self knowledge and self-reflection, reason as the true basis for self-reliance… Perhaps most important, as Emerson began to question orthodox Christianity, he found in Coleridge the foundation for his restorative turn to a new faith grounded not in the Bible but in Nature, as interpreted not by Lockean empiricists but by Coleridgean scientific Method" (116). Emerson's groundbreaking essay "Nature" is "saturated with Coleridgean concepts, centered on the concept of 'Reason'" (119). Finally, Coleridge's concept of a "Clerisy" appealed to Emerson, whose prominence as a public intellectual put him in the center of several important "activist societies of educated gentleman" such as the American Transcendentalists and the Saturday Club two decades later (124).

Coleridge's concept of a national clerisy, or an educated and moral elite invested with social responsibilities, influenced another nineteenth century international movement in India, as Daniel Sanjiv Roberts details in "'The Luther of Brahminism': Coleridge and the Reformation of Hinduism." Raja Rammohun Roy and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay were two central figures in the Bengal Renaissance, "the intellectual and reformist movement of nineteenth-century India which questioned the orthodoxies and traditions of Hindu society, seeking to establish Hinduism on a new foundation of scriptural and cultural authority" (86). Coleridge was very interested in Hinduism throughout his life and very supportive of this project, calling Rammohun Roy

"the Luther of Brahminism" in a letter to Southey (86).

Roberts focuses upon the role of Coleridge as "a cultural critic, one of the first of the Victorian sages, who sought to reconcile English civil society with theological orthodoxy through the promotion of a national culture" a program that "was not without its consequences in a wider colonial arena" (89). While Rammohun Roy and Bankim are quite different from one another, and from Coleridge, Roberts sees them as "heirs of a Coleridgean legacy… seeking to reform Hinduism theologically as well as culturally by turning Coleridge's conception of a clerisy or 'national church' to the Hindu/Indian national context" (91). While both were Brahmins who worked in the colonial establishment, they also "made their mark as writers in apparent opposition both to traditional and colonialist points of view, conducting running arguments with both sides in their publications (100). All three writers "addressed their criticism to a changing and profoundly challenging new order of culture which they diagnosed as being in danger of the loss of religious sensibility" (106). In an interesting parallel to Walls essay, the end result of Coleridge's Indian legacy is "more a hybrid growth perhaps than an 'afterlife'" since "the seeds of Coleridge's thought seem to be productive of new and exotic blooms of spiritualized nationalism" (108)—illustrating again the malleability of Coleridgean thought in different contexts, which has been an ongoing theme in this volume of essays.

Philosophy and Aesthetic Theory

Three essays illuminate enduring strands of discourse emanating from his aesthetic theory and philosophical ideas. Ross Wilson's essay "Coleridge's German 'Absolutism'" claims that the controversy surrounding Coleridge's plagiarism of German sources has obscured a more nuanced view of his complex, and often ambiguous relationship with Kant. He addresses the history of responses to Coleridge's engagement with German philosophy, including nineteenth century views, and concludes that Coleridge's "assimilation of Kant's aesthetics" is a refusal of "the apparently absolutist consensus of German philosophy" (172). Although Coleridge was famously derided by Hazlitt for worshipping Kant in a "lonely idolatry," other 19th century commentators, such as F.J.A. Hort, claimed that Coleridge "neither attempted to advance ideas derived without considerable alteration from Kant nor scrupulously to represent Kantian doctrine" (177). More specifically, Wilson investigates Coleridge's "understanding of Kant's account of reflective judgment in general and aesthetic judgment in particular" in which he sees a refusal of "the bad choice between old metaphysical absolutism on the one hand and new empirical relativism on the other" (180). He argues convincingly that, in contrast to Pater's view of Coleridge and German philosophy, he did not turn

> to German philosophy for so much absolutist metaphysics. Rather, at least in Kant's view of aesthetic judgment, he found a model of

> criticism that required the search for principles but did not lay such principles down prior to any judgment of any work of art. What Coleridge found in German philosophy was not… merely reducible to absolutism. His turn to Kant's aesthetics at least was precisely in the service of the refusal of arbitrary, absolute rules (185).

Once again, Coleridge's commitment to continual inquiry as opposed to fixed dogma enriches his afterlives immeasurably. As Matthew Arnold wrote "that which will stand of Coleridge is this: the stimulus of his continual effort" (x).

Douglas Hedley examines another overlooked afterlife in "Imagination Amended: From Coleridge to Collingwood." R.G. Collingwood, an important English philosopher of the twentieth century whom Hedley refers to as "one of the last and greatest British Idealists" (217), was in turn deeply influenced by John Ruskin: Hedley suggests their shared aesthetic theories are "an instance of the remarkable and enduring legacy of Coleridge" (211). The three figures are united by their theory of aesthetics which "opposes any crudely mimetic, mechanical model of artistic creation… All three share an insistence upon the moral component of true art. All share the Neoplatonic concern for a robustly metaphysical theory of art together with an insistence upon the value of the inner eye of the artist and audience. Coleridge's reflections upon imagination, combined with his theory of the clerisy, provide a good model for appreciating the interests and obsessions of both Ruskin and Collingwood" (211). Although Collingwood's volume *The Principles of Art* was published in 1938, his aesthetic theory is "at odds with the dominant positions of the twentieth century, which tended to define art in external terms" (213); instead, he draws upon romantic concepts of art, like the imagination, conceived of as a power at work in both artistic and religious creation. Hedley notes that "Coleridge and Ruskin were both deeply influenced by this lofty strain of Platonic theorising about art as metaphysical. Art mirrors the divine order through the work of imagination" (214). Additionally, "the artist, in Collingwood's view, fulfils the role of Coleridge's clerisy: one who diffuses spiritual cultivation as a counterweight to the dominance of the utilitarian-commercial spirit" (216). While Ruskin's connection to Coleridge is difficult to trace, Hedley examines Collingwood's account of their relation in *The Art Teaching of John Ruskin*, which espouses Coleridgean ideas such as the imagination, notions of the artist as seer, and other Platonic concepts. He concludes "in Collingwood's metaphysics we find a magnificent development of some of Coleridge's deepest interests in the relationship between art, mind, and society" (222).

The aesthetic theory of Ruskin, particularly in his commentary on Turner, is also taken up in Paul Hamilton's "The Consummate Symbol: A Coleridgean Tradition." Hamilton discusses Coleridge's coinage of the term "tautegory" which was admired by Schelling, and which Coleridge calls "the consummate Symbol" (193). *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines tautegory as "the base of symbols and symbolical expressions" and tautegorical as "expressing the same subject but with a difference in contradistinction from metaphors that are

allegorical (i.e. expressing a different subject but with a resemblance)." In *Lay Sermons*, Coleridge complained that there was a need for a term "lying between the literal and the figurative…" and the missing link he christened a 'symbol'. "It takes its shape from outside nature, and so seems figurative, but is partially the same as what it signifies" (191). Hamilton sees tautegory at work in Turner's art, as interpreted by Ruskin:

> One of the most egregious creations of a critical object in the years following Coleridge's era, an object which appears reciprocally to create the discipline adequate to it, was Ruskin's Turner. In Turner, Ruskin found or invented a subject that could expatiate the discourse of art criticism with which he wished to rehabilitate general commentary—commentary on art, clearly, but also on politics, ethics, society, and the host of topics mandatory for a Victorian sage… In line with the open-ended drive of Coleridge's thinking, Ruskin's Turner can, without much forcing, be read as fluently applying Coleridge's philosophical idiom and furthering its project through Ruskin's idiosyncratic socialism (197)

Hamilton also connects I.A. Richards' criticism on Coleridge as partaking in this tradition: "Coleridge's ambition, for Richards, is to get on terms, philosophically, with our containment within a world-picture of whose painterliness we become aware through the further awareness that we cannot say anything about it directly that isn't tautologous" (204).

There are several recurring themes that knit together the wide spectrum of Coleridge's afterlives detailed in this important volume of essays. Hamilton refers to "the open-ended drive of Coleridge's thinking" (197) and Perry evokes "the rich confusion of Coleridge's literary thinking" (244)—these are phrases that capture the suppleness, subtlety, and contradictions in Coleridge's thought and life that have yielded such an intriguing array of afterlives. The relevance for far-reaching and even diametrically opposed figures is another interlinked motif, whether it be Coleridge's relevance for intellectual movements like Modernism, Transcendentalism, or the Bengal Renaissance, or for modern critical stances, such as gender and pluralism. The conflation of his personal life and intellectual life, particularly regarding revelations of the poet's flaws, also knits together many of these essays in a common concern. Finally, to end where we began, it is indeed the ambiguity of Coleridge's thought, as John Beer notes, that is the true overarching theme of these afterlives. This volume has opened a rich vein of discourse, and we can expect many more productive conversations on the wide-ranging and contradictory nature of Coleridge's afterlives: for an author whose favorite maxim was "Extremes Meet," we can expect nothing less.