"Faith that inly *feels*": Protolanguage, the Logos, and affective experience in "The Eolian Harp"

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THE CONCEPT OF THE 'PROTOLANGUAGE' HAS THUS FAR been neglected in critical examination of Coleridge's works. This is despite texts, such as "The Eolian Harp", acting as exemplary discussions of the concept, intimately entwining reverence for 'protolanguage' with discussion of God, the 'Logos', and affective experience. The term 'protolanguage' holds multiple denotations: from the primitive or first form of a systematised language—such as Proto-Indo-European—to a child's pre-linguistic 'babble', to psychosomatic symptoms, and even to music. In this paper, it will be defined as a comparatively spontaneous and holistic, linguistic form which is either the basis of 'conventional' (systematised) language, or exists alongside it, expressing that which conventional terminology cannot. Debates concerning the value of protolanguage can often habitually approach it disparagingly as a primitive or underdeveloped form of 'elite' systematised languages (c.f. Deutscher; Milroy). This essay, however, discloses "The Eolian Harp" as the poetic antithesis of this view. It finds that, in the poem, protolanguages are not treated disparagingly, but are reverenced, wherein they interact and indicate a shared common source: the divine 'Logos'. The 'Logos', or 'the Word', derives in its Christian conception from the Gospel of John which stated: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (*King James Version*, 1 John 1.1). Coleridge similarly identified the Logos with "divine energy" (*CN* IV.2445): as both the source and living power of all language, and the source and living power of all nature and humankind. Indeed, for Coleridge, the Logos is "the word from the Beginning that includeth every word of God" (*CN* 5813 f35). Access to this "divine energy"(*CN* IV.2445), or "the Good!" (CN V.6918) is seen as in opposition to fully systemised languages—if only a believing Mind were thoroughly purged from the refracting film of Nominalism" (CN V 6918). And yet, this same Logos is "that speech that needeth no translation but the first language of which all others are but the imperfect versions" (*OM* 109).

The focus of this paper is to explore how conceptions of protolinguistic Logos in "The Eolian Harp" are intimately woven with notions of affect and affective experience. It will achieve this first by examining the protolinguistic, and 'Logosophic' (of the Logos), elements of the natural world revealed through the affective experience. It will then discuss how Coleridge's affective protolanguages present God as capable Himself of affect. This work will examine the poem's self-conscious analysis of its own use of conventional language and will then investigate, through ideas of protolanguage, how Lockean Empiricist ideas of passivity are rebuked (c.f. Locke *An Essay*

Concerning Human Understanding XXI.74)[1]. It will, lastly, explore how the belief that "God is Love" (*King James Version*, 1 John 4.8) is able to unite all protolanguages, and experiences of affect, into an interpretation of the essence of Logos as the essence of love. Ultimately, this paper will theorise that, in "The Eolian Harp", affect is presented as fundamental in the revelation of protolinguistic Logos: as the essential means by which Logos can be understood and communicated, as a marker of the will and the subjective faith it necessitates, and as an elemental sociality that facilitates communication between, and the unification of, the divine, the material, and the human.

The natural world in "The Eolian Harp" is presented as protolinguistic, and a form of Logos, the "more perfect language than that of words—the language of God himself" (*AR* 486). However, where the natural world in the poem is deemed as an example of a divine protolanguage, the conventional language employed to describe it is considered its "imperfect version" (*OM* 109). Stanza one pays particular attention to the natural world as a Logosophic form. Nature's "scents" (9), for example, are described as "exquisite" (9). Here, as well as denoting beauty, "exquisite" (9) refers to language itself, and the careful selection of words. Where the Logos is perceived as both source and living essence of protolanguages (Perkins 27-8)[2], this terminology aptly implies both the linguistic form of the natural world, and alludes to its creator as a careful *selector* of 'words'. It thus echoes the notion of there being a divine order to the natural world. Indeed, for Coleridge, Nature was "a symbolic language [...] a Word, a Symbol! It is the Logos the Creator" (*CN* II. 2546). This idea became increasingly popularised during the poem's conception as was evidenced in the works of Herder, Kant, and Coleridge's own "Scale of Creation" (139) in *Aids to Reflection*. In "The Eolian Harp", moreover, this idea is furthered and the divine order is considered to be expressly linguistic. Stanza One closes:

> How exquisite the scents
> Snatched from yon bean-field! and the world *so* hushed!
> The stilly murmur of the distant Sea
> Tells us of silence. (9-12)

Where the scents are said to be "Snatched from yon bean-field!" (10), the verb "snatched" (10) implies a verbal utterance through its root denotation. The verb's connotation of ceasing to grasp fully, however, aids the stanza's introduction of the idea that the divine language of the Logos is hindered by attempts to translate it into conventional language, and is most effectively revealed within a subjective experience whereby one listens to, and absorbs,

[1] Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. 1689.* Ed. Peter Nidditch. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. Print.

[2] Perkins, Mary Anne. *Coleridge's Philosophy: The Logos as Unifying Principle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Print.

divine protolanguage. Conventional language as an "imperfect version" (*OM* 109) is further signified when the meter, which builds tempo through a tightly formed iambic pentameter in the majority of the stanza, is broken in its final two lines: "The stilly murmur of the distant Sea/ Tells us of silence" (11-12). Here, the use of dactyl "Tells us of" (12), slows the reading to mirror how the protolinguistic Logos of the natural world resists conventional language, further implied by the "stilly murmur" (11) which indicates a secrecy to this language, not fully translatable into conventional terms. The oxymoronic nature of "Tells us of silence" (12) negates conventional language once again by signalling a resistance to the rules of conventional meaning. "[S]ilence" (12) is promoted over conventional language, and the secret, non-auditory protolanguage of the natural world is what "Tells us" (12) of, and reveals, the Logos. By ending on a half line with a verse break that follows, literal silence is evoked. In this illustrative poetic moment, it is, crucially in an *absence* of conventional language whereby meaning is produced.

This celebration of silence can be understood as an edification of the means by which one can receive and absorb the Logos. This is accomplished through allusions to the Orthodox Christian 'Prayer of The Heart': a form of contemplative prayer that often features silence, and affective experience as requisites for divine communication (Wong and Cam 41)[3]. The prayer calls for meditative silence and stillness and begins with observation of the outside world. It then involves a repetition of the mantra: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner', until its incantation accentuates sound over meaning and a perceived transcendence of consciousness and union with God is achieved (Moffett 238)[4]. This prayer, crucially, is one of inducing, and observing the affective experience (Wong and Cam 43), and it is through affect, that the divine Logos is said to be apprehended. In stanza one, the poetic voice similarly meditates upon the outside world in silence and stillness. The verbs associated with the poetic voice and Sara emphasise stillness and silence, in contrast to the dynamic activity of the Logos in the natural world. The pair are "reclined" (1) as they "sit" (3), and "watch" (6) while the divine Logos proceeds to "Shine" (9) and "murmur" (11) as it "Tells us" (12) of itself. Detailed attention is given to the poetic voice's contemplation on the natural world, evoking the 'watchfulness', or observance of one's affections, fundamental to The Prayer of The Heart (Wong and Cam 38). In contemplation they "watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,/ Slow saddening round" (6-7). Here, the natural world is imbued with connotations of divinity through "light" (6), which, in Diadochus' version of the Prayer of The Heart, is a metaphor for the Holy Spirit (Wong and Cam 43). The revelation of this divinity in the poem is, crucially, enabled through affective

[3] Wong, Joseph, and O.S.B Cam. "The Jesus Prayer and Inner Stillness". *Religion East and West* 5.1 (2005): 85-97. Web. 14 November 2015.

[4] Moffett, James. "Writing, Inner Speech, and Meditation". *College English* 44.3 (1982): 231-246. Web. 23 November 2015.

experience. It is the "saddening round" (7) of the clouds, which allows them to "mark the star of eve" (7) and to reveal the original source of light, or the divine Logos. Where "mark" (7) alludes to language through its associations with writing, the affective experience is indicated as the requisite for the realisation of the Logos. In the final stanza, the poem linguistically mirrors the mantra of The Prayer of The Heart, stating: "I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels;/ Who with his saving mercies healèd me,/ A sinful and most miserable man" (60-62). In addition the sentiment is mirrored: just as the prayer is said to cause healing through the invocation of the Logos, so is affective faith, "Faith that inly *feels*" (60), presented as the requisite for the "saving mercies" (61) of the "divine energy" (*CN* IV.2445) of the Logos.

This argument for a Logosophic natural world in "The Eolian Harp" can, moreover, be seen as an almost predictive refute of Ruskinian notions of 'pathetic fallacy'. In 1856, Ruskin deployed the term for what he saw as an irrational transference of affect or emotion onto the landscape in Romantic artforms (c.f. *Modern Painters* 166)[5]. Contemporary to Coleridge, the idea was also expressed by Kant who said that in observations of the natural world one perceives "not so much the object, as our state of mind in the estimation of it" (qtd. in Modiano 104)[6]. Prominent theologians such as Jonathan Edwards also stated that the natural world could "*signify* and *indigitate* spiritual things" (qtd. in Wainwright 523)[7] (emphasis mine), or the Logos, but did not exist as its essence. In contrast, the poem describes the natural world as objectivity emitting the divine language of Logos. This is stressed when the linguistic "exquisite scents" (9) are "Snatched" (10) and the clouds are "rich" (6) with light, both terms denoting moments of possession. The affect imbued in this protolanguage, too, is presented as emitting from nature, rather than human projection. The clouds, for example, take on active agency in their "saddening" (7). Appositely, for Coleridge:

> Nature has her proper interest; & he will know what it is, who believes & feels, that every Thing has a Life of its own, & that we are all one Life. A Poet's Heart & Intellect should be combined, intimately combined & unified with the great appearances in Nature – & not merely held in solution & loose mixture with them, in the shape of formal Similies.
> (*CL* II.864)

These "formal Similies" are ironised in the poem. It describes, for example: "our Cot o'ergrown/ With white-flowered Jasmin, and the broad-leaved Myrtle,/ (Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love!)" (3-5). Here, "that

[5] Ruskin, John. *Modern Painters: Of Many Things*. 1903. Cook, Edward Tyas, and Alexander Wedderburn, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Print.
[6] Modiano, Raimonda. *Coleridge and the Concept of Nature*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 1985. Print.
[7] Wainwright, William J. "Jonathon Edwards and the Language of God". *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 48.4 (1980): 519-530. Web. 23 November 2015.

speech that *needeth* no translation" (*OM* 109) (emphasis mine), is conceived as a speech that *cannot* be translated. The natural world is "o'ergrown" (3) and resistant to conventional terms. While some critics (i.e. Rookmaaker 34)[8], notably, conflate the natural forms simply and entirely with their signifiers, "emblems of Innocence and Love", this interpretation of the natural world overlooks the polyvalent significance of "meet" (5) which suggests voluntary congregating of two distinct entities, or at least in its denotation of being 'apt', implies some comparison, some separation, between signifier and sign. The union of these entities is incomplete, however, and the poem depicts a resistance to emblematisation or translation. Moreover, the pyrrhic foot "and the" (4) within an otherwise regular iambic pentameter mirrors the natural world's state as "o-ergrown" as they spill from the meter, accumulatively stressing the protolinguistic natural world's resistance to conventional translation. The affect of "Love" (5), in this ironic portrayal of attempted emblematisation, is presented as separated from the natural world: bracketed, contained, and disunited. Perhaps it is this very separation of affective "Love" (5) and protolinguistic nature, which is presented as hindering the revelation of divine Logos.

In addition to the presentation of Logosophic protolanguage as imbued with affective qualities, the poem suggests that God too, in his Logosophic form, is capable of affect. As in the affective Prayer of the Heart where the Holy Spirit joins man in prayer (Wong and Cam 46), the Logos is portrayed as a two-way communicative and affective experience in the poem. This presentation is situated against theories of the 'impassibility' of God posited by thinkers, such as John Calvin, who felt that God could not be said to feel affect or emotion, as it negated from his 'perfection' (McWilliams 14)[9]. In "The Eolian Harp", however, affect is presented not only as a requisite for religious experience and the understanding of the divine Logos, but also as a condition whereby, through 'Prophetic sympathy', humankind and God can dually communicate and share in the divine Logos. 'Prophetic sympathy', or the sharing of affective experience with God, (Heschel 4)[10], is exemplified in a much-quoted passage from Coleridge's notebooks wherein he discusses the "symbolical language" of nature:

> I have always an obscure feeling as if that new phaenomenon were the dim awaking of a forgotten or hidden Truth of my inner Natue/ It is still interesting as a Word, a Symbol! It is Logos, the Creator! [and the Evolver!] *CN* II.2546

[8] Rookmaaker, H.R. *Towards a Romantic Conception of Nature: Coleridge's Poetry up to 1803*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1984. Print.

[9] McWilliams, Warren. *The Passion of God: Divine Suffering in Contemporary Protestant Theology*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 1985. Print.

[10] Heschel, Abraham J. *The Prophets*. Vol. 2. New York: Harper and Row, 1962. Print.

In "Eolian Harp", the famous 'one Life' passage produces a similar effect:

> O! The one Life within us and abroad,
> Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
> A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,
> Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere (27-30)

Here, the divine "one Life" (27) emerges from a description of the musical protolanguage and proceeds to reference "sound" (29), consequently evoking the protolinguistic Logos. Indeed, both linguistic and musical elements of the Logos are synonymous in that the pre-linguistic, abstracted nature of protolanguage precedes this differentiation. Moreover, where Coleridge saw the "Logos both as the Creator and indwelling Life of nature and as the Light of mind" (qtd. in Perkins 33) it is, in the poem, both "within us and abroad" (27), as within humankind as well as outside of one's potential solipsism. Where the poem associates "light" (29) with the divine, the line asserts the Logosophic nature of protolanguage. Its use of chiasmus presents God and Logosophic protolanguage as synonymous, and as both creator and creation. Where the divine Logos is then equated to affect through the "one Life" (27) and "joyance" (30), both of which are "everywhere" (30), this passage can be seen as a description of prophetic sympathy and the communicative union of Logos within humankind and God. However, the passage asserts that the conditions of protolinguistic absorption and affective experience are necessary for this union, evoking the denotation of sympathy as "openness of a person for the presence of another" (Scheler 25)[11]. Humankind, here, must "meet" (28) with the divine. Crucially, "motion" (28) not only denotes life force, but also proposal. The union of the divine Logos with the human "soul" (28) thus becomes a requisite of this mutual sympathy. However, while the poem asserts its ability to *indicate* the means for unification, it also emphasises its inability to self-sufficiently actualize this union within its poetic form.

This gesturing towards union, but inability to fully accomplish it, is stressed in the poem's tension between descriptions of music as a protolanguage, and the conventional terms which cannot translate it. The notion that primitive language began as a form of song had already been theorised by thinkers such as Rousseau, and music had begun to be considered protolinguistic. Music, moreover, was, and is, repeatedly considered both emotional and divine (Mithen 20). Böhme even equated it directly with the Logos, "as an element in the triune nature of God which manifests itself throughout the creation" (qtd. in Abrams 468)[12]. Indeed, for Coleridge and his notebooks, music, as protolinguistic, was conversational, but in a means that seemed to precede or bypass conscious thought:

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[11] Scheler, Max. *The Nature of Sympathy*. Ed. Peter Heath. London: Routledge & Kegan Press, 1954. Print.

[12] Abrams, Meyer Howard. "Coleridge's 'A Light in Sound': Science, Metascience, and Poetic Imagination". *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 116.6 (1972): 458-476. Web. 23 November 2015.

> Music seems to have an immediate communion with [my] Life; I have no power of tracing it thro' my Ear, no consciousness of it in it's march or passage [...] It converses with the life of [my] mind, as if it were [itself] the Mind of my Life. (CN V. 6742)

In "The Eolian Harp" the divine and affective qualities of music as protolanguage are continually reverenced. The praise of a "light in sound" (29) is, too, a praise of "joyance everywhere" (30), portraying the communication of protolinguistic Logos as intimately entwined with the experience of affect. Descriptions of music are moreover embedded within those of the natural world, implying the two protolanguages share the Logos as their form and as their source. This is exemplified in stanza two which, following the religious euphoria of the "one Life" (27) passage, describes how "the breeze warbles" (33). Here, the verb "warbles" (33) denotes musicality and connotes the natural world, specifically birdsong. Moreover, these protolanguages are presented as unremitting and infinite Logosophic forms. The stanza ends by describing how "the mute still air/ Is Music slumbering on her instrument" (33-4), with the pun in "air" (33) evoking its superfluous musical denotation of sound creation. Silence in the realm of the Logos therefore, is never silent. The stanza, furthermore, praises musical protolanguage within a description of "birds of Paradise" (25). In an allusion to the myth that these birds are unremittingly in flight, Coleridge describes how they neither "pause, nor perch," (26) thus evoking the idea of infinity, as well as a continual motion or life-force. This mirrors the Logos which, as Hedley states, is "unlike the word of human speech which is temporally limited. This Word is the eternal" (120). Appositely, poetry and conventional language is stressed as finite and limited. The birds which neither "pause, nor perch," are contrastingly framed within halting commas. Moreover, the "[f]ootless and wild" (25) birds of musical protolanguage are differentiated from the 'foot' as poetic metrical unit. The mythical nature of the birds is also important. Music as a language of emotion (Mithen 3)[13] is linked by Coleridge to myth and, consequently, faith. As such, revelation or communication of the Logos is presented as reliant not only on affective experience, but on faith in that which is inexpressible in conventional terms. As Hampton states in his study of 'Mythos', or myth, it is "faith-requiring mythos that ultimate realities necessitate in order to be communicated" (69)[14].

For Wheeler, the poem's words "function like music" (74) and are able to "reach back into remote and pre-linguistic intelligence and feeling" (74)[15]. As"pre-linguistic" (74), the poem presents itself as an "imperfect version" (*OM*

[13] Mithen, Steven. *The Singing Neanderthals: The Origins of Music, Language, Mind and Body*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005. Print.

[14] Hampton, Alexander J.B. "The Conquest of Mythos by Logos: Countering Religion with Faith in Irenaeus, Coleridge and Gadamer". *Forum Philosophicum* 12.1 (2007): 57-70. Web. 23 November 2015.

[15] Wheeler, K. M. "The Radiating Imagination and Censorious Reason in 'The Eolian Harp'". *The Creative Mind in Coleridge's Poetry*. London: Heinemann, 1981. 65-92. Print.

109) of divine protolanguages, such as music. The poem as such embodies its own 'middle position', between the divine Logos and conventional language. This can be seen to mirror the theological and psychological 'middle positions' of Christian faith: man's position between creation and the fall, the infinite divine and the finite bodily existence (Hampton 57). Such a frustration is revealed in Coleridge's early notebooks:

> O that I had the Language of Music/ the power of infinitely varying the expression, & individualizing it even as it is/—My heart plays an incessant music/ for which I need an outward Interpreter/—words halt over & over again! (*CN* II.2035).

Music, here, contrasts the limitations of 'halting' words. However, for Coleridge, poetry was "mediatress" ("On Poesy or Art" 216), and the 'middle position' can be seen as a site of mediation. The poem arguably stresses its musicality in order to strive toward this divine protolanguage. Where for Kant and Hegel the immersion in sound is what caused music to be inferior to poetry (Barry 157)[16], for Coleridge, the sound of words is what can aim to partially abstract them from their conventional form and social and historical impediments. With attention to music, one must note the central figure of the harp. While many literary critics view the lute, or harp, as a metaphor for nature inspiring the poet (Rookmaaker 34), the harp can also be understood as a—perhaps slightly awkward—attempt to represent music and its protolinguistic ability. Even Coleridge eventually came to reject the harp as a symbol, because it couldn't imply "the distinct conception in itself" (*PL* 166) we can arguably take to be music[17]. Thus, the poem's musicality rather than its metaphor, is perhaps the more effective 'mediator'. One can read the poem through the thesis of Cooke's *The Language of Music,* whereby specific sound and rhythm can signify specific and universal affective 'meanings'. In stanza two the strings of the harp are described:

> And now, its strings
> Boldier swept, the long sequacious notes
> Over delicious surges sink and rise,
> Such a soft floating witchery of sound (18-21)

In this instance, the employment of sibilance draws attention to the texture, musicality and sound, perhaps even surpassing attention to meaning. The vowel sounds, when read in a received pronunciation accent, moreover mirror the 'sinking and rising' of the notes, employing a mixture of flatter vowel

[16] Barry, Kevin. *Language, Music and the Sign: A Study in Aesthetics, Poetics and Poetic Practice from Collins to Coleridge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Print.
[17] Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Philosophical Lectures*. Ed. Kathleen Coburn. London: Pilot Press, 1949. Print.

sounds, for example the repetition of the **əʊ** vowel sound ("The Phonetic Alphabet" 225) in "[b]oldier" (19), "notes" (19), "[o]ver" (20), and "floating" (21), and short vowel sounds suggestive of higher pitch such as "its" (18), "strings" (18) and "sink" (20) with the repetition of the **ɪ** vowel sound ("The Phonetic Alphabet" 225). These eventually culminate in a crescendo of higher pitched vowel sounds and a poetic mirroring of a musical rising of pitch that Cooke equates with joy. However, the mention of "witchery" (21) again points to myth, and the requisite of Logosophic revelation on both the affective experience, and faith in the uncertain. As such, the poem gestures towards notions of the 'middle position'.

Where, the 'middle position' can be conceived as humankind's situation between the creation and the fall, it is also posited by Hampton as between the fall and a the divine aspects of humanity (59). Hampton asserts that, for Coleridge, this middle position "not only defines the human condition, it provides a vocation. It calls upon the individual to use the freedom it provides to move toward God-likeness" (63). The middle position is thus an indication of man's free will through moral choice. Where the middle position demands faith that the Logos will be revealed, and individual faith in God, the poem portrays Empirical ideas as products of a psychological uncertainty or "intellectual impatience" (Hampton 57), produced by the insecurity of this position. For Empiricists such as Locke, the mind was an "empty cabinet" (Locke 55) acquiring knowledge merely from the senses. Coleridge alludes to this in stanza three, which begins with a physical positioning on a "midway slope" (35):

> Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
> And many idle flitting phantasies,
> Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
> As wild and various as the random gales
> That swell and flutter on this subject Lute! (40-44)

Here, the natural world is presented as "random" (43) in contrast to the assertion of its divine order in previous, and following, stanzas. Fitting with Coleridge's critique of Locke, the "passive brain" (42) here appears to eliminate concepts of free will; thoughts are involuntarily "uncalled" (40). Moreover, the mind is "undetained" (40) and the association of "[t]raverse" (42) with crossing boundaries reflects an avoidance of the intellectual impatience of the middle position, through an elmination of the concept of distinct 'self' (Hampton 64). However, the notion of free will is also eliminated in this move, and as such is undermined. The poem moves into an assertion of the active agency of humankind, and begins with the use of the term "subject" (44) to employ both the rhetoric of passive subjection and, conversely, linguistic agency. Appositely, Coleridge critiqued Empiricism for ignoring the human existent's innate and universal moral laws (*OM* 19). He deemed the moral impulse as infinite, in

contrast to the Empirical devotion to the finite senses. For Coleridge, the middle position was not just a vocation to *meet* with a divine external Logos, but to *act* according to the law of universal morality which is already present in the self. In opposition to the passivity of Empiricism, Coleridge posits a "rhythm in all thought" (30) which does not control thought, but which provides its universal moral protolinguistic underpinning. Drawing on the conception that affect is "the more vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and will of the soul" (Edwards 237), the affective experience thus becomes a marker of free will, and of the middle position. As such, the very means by which protolanguages and affect are intimately interwoven in the poem, becomes the very means by which free will as a notion is affirmed from the outset.

For "The Eolian Harp", revelation is requisite of faith, produced by the uncertainty of the middle position. It requires *fides quae*, a trust in the Logos, and *fidas qua*, an openness to the Holy Spirit (Hampton 59). In the poem, affective experience produces spiritual vocation, and reveals the will and the human existent as receptive to the revelation of the divine Logos through this experience. The final stanza states:

> For never guiltless may I speak of him,
> The Incomprehensible! save when with awe
> I praise him, and with Faith that inly *feels*;
> Who with his saving mercies healèd me,
> A sinful and most miserable man (59-62)

Here, the experience of divinity is focalised on interiority. In contrast to Empirical claims that divinity can only be conceived in "outward signs that convince of the Author of those revelations" (Locke 705), this stanza promotes the necessity of being receptive to the Logos, in this instance through affective "praise" (60). As Scheuerle describes, "[f]eeling, of course, is a necessary prerequisite to the realization of 'joy', for the passive man sees only the multeity—the vernal mead, the high grove, the sea, the sun, and the stars—but the active man feels that they are true impressions of God" (596)[18]. Feeling, too, in this instance asserts that Christianity is not about empirical evidence, but relies on faith and free will, and that true understanding of the Logos relies on the uncertainty of the middle position. This is portrayed through the description of divinity as "[t]he Incomprehensible!" (60) which denotes both an inability to fully compute the divine within the finite brain, and also that which is limitless and infinite. The word thus stresses the middle position, mirrored in the breakdown of iambic pentameter in the middle of line 60. The dense verbs in the passage, however, mirror the Logos as life-force

[18] Scheuerle, William H. "A Reexamination of Coleridge's "The Eolian Harp". *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 15.4, (1975): 591-599. Web. 23 November 2015.

running through language, by signalling the infinite in present progressive tense and aspect. Ideally, the poem reconstructs affective circumstances and the reader "*feels*" (60) as the poet does. However, in any reading, the poem gestures toward the means by which the Logos can be revealed in affective condition. As Wallace states, in Coleridge's linguistics "[w]ords signify not ideas, nor things, but the relation between an idea and its object [...] [T]ruth depends on a human willingness to accept it" (qtd. in McVeigh 67)[19]. The poem thus becomes a medium through which to point to the relationships of words with affect, words with divinity, and conventional language with Logosophic protolanguage. The experience of affect, or divinity, must be invited by the reader in their subjective *fidas qua.*

In "The Eolian Harp", humankind, too, is presented as a 'linguistically' composed "imperfect version" (*OM* 109) of God in his Logosophic realisation. Discussing the middle position, Hampton asserts that for Coleridge "the finite nature of man consists in his individual personhood, while the universal or infinite in man consists of his moral conscience. Man's middle position provides the freedom to unite the two by acting on his conscience" (63)[20]. Thus, the infinite conscience, just as in affect, becomes a linguistic vocation, and a Logosophic entity. This is most clearly seen in the poem's description of "Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere" (30). Here, "[r]hythm" (30) implies an order innate to thinking beings. In a reading of this Logosophic rhythm as the infinite and divine moral conscience, this "[r]hythm" can be read as a divine 'Universal Grammar' referring to a universal, and linguistic, moral conscience. Coleridge, after all, asserts that moral law is not only "our Guide, but likewise our Impulse" (*CN* 1: 1705). Moreover, that this "[r]hythm" (30) is linked to affect and "joyance" (30) mirrors the linguistic vocation of affect, and the belief that "[b]ecause affections are grounded in God, it is natural that true affections will cause one to be more like God" (Edwards 276). The ambiguity of the line moreover implies both that thoughts are rhythmically constructed, or that all thinking existents have innate rhythmic ability, or moral accord. "[T]hought" (30), for Coleridge, is what differentiates humankind from the natural world, through free will and the middle position (Abrams 471)[21]. The human existent therefore, is presented as a linguistic "imperfect version" (*OM* 109) of the Logosophic natural world. This is further emphasised in the poem through emphasis on Schelling's psycho-natural parallelism, and the presentation of communication with nature as "a two-way movement from man (mind) and from nature" (Scheuerle 594). The divine imbued clouds, for example, are said

[19] McVeigh, Daniel M. "Coleridge's Doctrine of the Imagination and the Enigmatic Name of God". *Religion & Literature* 17.1 (1985): 61-75. Web. 23 November 2015.

[20] Hampton, Alexander J.B. "The Conquest of Mythos by Logos: Countering Religion with Faith in Irenaeus, Coleridge and Gadamer". *Forum Philosophicum* 12.1 (2007): 57-70. Web. 23 November 2015.

[21] Abrams, Meyer Howard. "Coleridge's 'A Light in Sound': Science, Metascience, and Poetic Imagination". *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 116.6 (1972): 458-476. Web. 23 November 2015.

to "[s]hine opposite!" (9) as they are meditatively and prayerfully watched in stanza one. Here, "opposite" (9) perhaps denotes a reflection of light, or the Logos, refracting from the watchful speaker a light which stemmed from divinity, creating a communicative "two-way movement" (Scheuerle 594) that renders human existents linguistic entities. Coleridge's letter which states that "every Thing has a Life of its own, & that we are all one Life" (*Collected Letters* 864) is often considered in sentiment to be a biblical allusion to Acts 17.28 which reads: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being [...] For we are also his offspring" (*King James Version*). Like Christ, considered by thinkers such as Ignatius to be "the Incarnate Word of God" (qtd. in Barth 8)[22], humankind is also "his offspring" (*King James Version,* Acts 17.28). Thus, as Christ is the incarnate Logos, humankind is presented as partially Logosophic, but an "imperfect version" (*OM* 109) of the divine.

Coleridge stated that, in this incarnation, "communication is Love" (*OM* 210). In his Sermons, too, he describes: "God is LOVE [...] For what is Love? Union with the deisre of union -/ God therefore is the Cohesion and the oneness of all Things" (*Sermons* LXXX) in an allusion to 1 John 4.8. Equally, love provides the basis of, and cohesion for, the poem's Logosophic protolanguages. Love as a social phenomena indicates sociality, and sociality is emphasised with each protolanguage which are, in turn, associated with love. As a conversational poem, this sociality is underlying, further stressed by descriptions of the protolanguage. The natural world, for example, through the symbolism of "Jasmin" (4) and "Myrtle" (4) implies a honeymoon scene, while music undertakes the seductive quality of a "lover" (16), provoking the poetic voice to "love all things in a world so filled" (32) with it. The structure, too, regularly features Sara's presence as a reference point for love. Where these protolanguages are both Logosophic and imbued with notions of love, the poem can be read as an endorsement of the idea that all affect stems from love as the originating and primary affect, with all forms of love being "imperfect versions" (*OM* 109) of Love for God (Dixon 18)[23]. "The Eolian Harp" exemplifies this structurally by presenting the affective experience, "joyance everywhere" (30), as the catalyst for a declaration of love for the world (32). The world as "filled" (32) uses a past perfective active verb to indicate the existence of both creation and creator. It thus identifies affect with love for God, through love for His creation. Sara, who is consistently associated with love (c.f. 35; 51), is often treated disparagingly by critics of the poem (Wendling 27). However, arguably Sara's depictions are reminders of love that interweave and underpin the poem. Where for Coleridge love is "essentially the same, whether the Object be a helpless Infant, our Wife or Husband, or God himself" (*Notebooks* 4: 5463), love for Sara in the poem is arguably part of a

[22] Barth, J. Robert. *Romanticism and Transcendence: Wordsworth, Coleridge, and the Religious Imagination*. London: University of Missouri Press, 2003. Print.

[23] Dixon, Thomas. *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Print.

love for God. Claims that Sara's presence destroys the poem's unity (Rookmaaker 35) can also be revoked when reading the poem through this underpinning notion of love. One can see in the final praise of "Peace, and this Cot, and thee, heart-honored Maid!" (65), which is a mirroring chiasmus of the first stanza with its reverse order: "Sara [...] Cot [...] Silence" (1-12). A common trope of Hebrew psalms, this technique further indicates religious love. Sara, moreover, is "heart-honored" (65), with 'honor' implying reverence to the divine, and the Trinitarian structure of the final line evokes ideas of the Trinity as producing an "incarnate Word of God" (Ignatius qtd. in Barth 8)[24], or the Logos, with love as its essence. Thus, for the poem, this "[f]aith that inly *feels*" (61) is a faith with its foundations in love.

Ultimately, "The Eolian Harp" argues for the fundamentality of the affective experience in the revelation of the protolinguistic Logos. The divine Logos is posited as reliant on this affect as a condition for it to be understood, and to be communicated, as seen through descriptions of the natural world, and of prayer. Moreover, affect is deemed a marker of the middle position, and thus of the will and of faith, a notion in contrast to the intellectual impatience of Locke's Empiricism. Poetry itself is deemed part of a, linguistic, middle position, with the poem presenting its form as an "imperfect version" (*OM* 109) of the Logosophic protolanguages it describes, and the subjective affective experiences they entail. Where sociality is posited as the basis of all existence, the presentation of the world's quintessence as both *of* the divine Logos, and *imbued* with the divine affect of love, deems existence itself as a continued communication with God, and affective experience as belonging to His fundamental essence. Previous study of "The Eolian Harp" has been saturated by fixations on its fragmentary conception and apparent contradiction in ideas (c.f. Rookmaaker; Vallins). This work, in contrast, has aimed to enrich the study of a text which is in many ways a discussion of its own unity. This work has sought to explicate the essentiality of communicative connections in "The Eolian Harp", as affectively linguistic. In many ways the poem's reading depends on some faith in objective existence of Logosophic linguistic forms, or even the objective existence of others, in an anti-solipsist assertion that the world exists as, fundamentally, a social form. As such, this points to potential future research whereby one may read the poem in relation to the increased association of alienation with Capitalist economic structures during the poem's penning. Moreover, it begs the question of whether, in an increasingly hyper-individuated climate, affect, protolanguage, or even a "[f]aith that inly *feels*" (60) can help society rediscover its underlying, and essential, sociality, in a movement from Babel, to the Pentecost.