

Loneliness in S. T. Coleridge's Trio¹ and "Dejection: An Ode"

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: December 06, 2018 Accepted: January 12, 2019 Published: January 31, 2019 Volume: 2 Issue: 1 DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.1.38	The aim of this study is to explore the paradox of loneliness in company with nature in Coleridge's Trio and "Dejection: An Ode." Loneliness plays the role of vital connector between nature and the poet or between nature and the characters within the poems under study. This loneliness leads to a communion between the poet and nature, and, consequently, the poet is able to create and be illuminated by a better understanding of himself and others. However, loneliness could not always bring the poet and nature into communion, and so there is sometimes a failure in connection. This success and failure reflect the fluctuations in the poet's life as a creator. This communion represents the organic relationship between the romantic poet and nature, which is a vital part of his survival as a poet. Nature is a container for the romantic poet, but a relationship with it cannot be established without loneliness.
KEYWORDS <i>Christabel, Dejection, Kubla Khan, loneliness, nature, solitude, Mariner</i>	

1. INTRODUCTION

Loneliness is the salient feature of the four poems under study. However, there is nothing in Coleridge's writings that showed he differentiated between the loneliness of a man surrounded by others with whom he cannot establish contact, and the form of solitude in which man is physically alone. Consequently, in this article the two terms, loneliness and solitude, are used interchangeably.

There are two types of loneliness in Coleridge's poetry; I have termed the first "romantic or creative," and I call the second the "ordinary or fruitless." The former is the fruitful, which helps the poet to interact and have communion with nature. This communication between the poet and nature inspires his imagination and enables him to convey his message through poetic creativity. The second type, on the other hand, is experienced by common people. It cuts off the individual from others and has negative effects on the individual's psychology.

Readers can notice that both types of loneliness are present within Coleridge's poetry, the desirable with its associations and the ordinary which may lead to alienation. However, romantic loneliness is used to show the poet's solitude within nature, whom Coleridge and the romantics considered to be a mother, teacher, and their main source of poetic imagination and creativity. This communion with

nature triggers the poet's creative imagination, which enables him to delve deeply into both his own soul and the spirit of nature itself. This organic bond between nature and the poet enables the romantic poet to penetrate the veil of appearances, to access the essence of nature, and to then merge with its spirit. There is not only a collaboration between the romantic poet and nature, but between the poet's individuality and nature as well. Therefore, the importance of loneliness is that it brings the poet and nature together in a special interaction that results in spiritual vividness. However, if this connection fails, the result is dryness. For example, the lonely Abyssinian Maid with her dulcimer in "Kubla Khan" represents a fruitful interaction with nature and, consequently, she is able to create music. In *Christabel*, on the other hand, the barrenness in nature reflects the fruitless loneliness of the title character and the unhappy events and sad consequences that later occur to her.

Coleridge's reflections on loneliness in the Trio, and other poems such as his Conversation Poems, are the manifestation of his integrity and represent a time when he was faithful to and in communion with nature. In "Dejection: An Ode," however, this connection is disintegrated. Coleridge changed his romantic outlook toward nature and began to view it as a collection of objects without spirit. He wrote in a letter (Griggs, 1957, Vol. 2, p. 797), "I were sunk low indeed, did they no solace give; But oft I seem to feel, & evermore

¹ Scholars refer to Coleridge's three famous poems, "Kubla Khan," *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, and *Christabel*, as the Trio.

I fear, They are not to me now the Things, which once they were." The romantic poet expresses what he feels faithfully, beautifully, and accurately when he is in communion with nature in his loneliness. Psychologically, the romantic poet seems to be satisfied and contented with his relationship with nature. Lord Byron summarized his own romantic loneliness in "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" in a magnificent way. "There is a pleasure in the pathless woods, / There is a rapture on the lonely shore" (Canto 4, ll. 1594-95). This romantic outlook toward nature is not dead due to the passing of time but rather (Read, 1963, 11, 16) "is still active" and alive.

Images of loneliness are abundant in the romantic poets' poetry because, as we know from their work, individualism was an important concept. Wilson (1967, p. 10) says that the romantic "writer is his hero, and the personality and emotions of the writer are presented as the principal subject of interest." The loneliness in Coleridge's poetry may have perhaps been intensified by his personal life. Even during his early childhood, Coleridge lived as an isolated student at Christ Hospital School. While there, he felt happiness only when he noticed the "film, which fluttered on the grate" (l. 15, p. 240)². In Holmes' opinion (1989, p. 18), "the idea of being the abandoned," which strengthened Coleridge's loneliness, was born there. Loneliness was Coleridge's incurable disease, and he was (Worsley, 2014, p. 12) "particularly attracted to loneliness and lonely places." He seemed to be fascinated by the idea of loneliness. This is clear in his description of a wild duck in a letter to his wife on 30 October 1798 (Griggs, 1956, Vol. 1, p. 426):

At four o'clock I observed a wild duck swimming on the waves—a single solitary wild duck—you cannot conceive how interesting a thing it looked that round objectless desert [sic] waters.

Coleridge also realized the importance of loneliness in a letter to Matthew Coates (Papper, 1995, p. 96). He wrote, "the good and pleasurable thoughts, which had been the support of my moral character, departed from my solitude." Therefore, loneliness in Coleridge's poems is associated with creativity. Harper (1975) enlisted Coleridge's poem "Fears in Solitude" to be part of his "Poems of Friendship" because he realized that solitude, for Coleridge, was defined as a friendship with nature. The romantics (Hill, 1983, 53) see the "literary Nature," while others see the "literal"

one. Therefore, solitude for the romantic poet is a moment of rich intimacy and unique companionship with his beloved nature. This intimacy is also the main source of his creative innovation and unique characteristics, such as his completely fresh emotional, intellectual, and aesthetic orientation. Isolation for the romantic poet is a new kind of solitude that is different from the associations common people have attached to it. Loneliness is a step toward a new social life with nature.

Not only is solitude present within Coleridge's poetry, but also within the writing of all the romantic poets. This is because they considered loneliness to be a path that enabled them to have a mutual understanding with nature. For example, Wordsworth writes in *The Prelude*, Book III (ll. 230-31), "Yet could I only cleave to solitude / In lonely places."

Contrary to the romantics' belief in loneliness, a number of critics were against this creed and practice. For example, Jeffrey (Hayden, 1991, 41) attacked their loneliness. He considered it to be a passive feature of the romantics and believed that "all the greater poets lived or live in the full current of society." Warren (1946, pp. 391-427) attempted to prove that the romantic poet was an outsider, an outcast, a wanderer cut off from the society of men. These allegations seem to be logical because it is easy to believe that the impulse that incites the romantic poet to seek solitude arises from his dissatisfaction with human society. However, this is not true. Throughout my extensive study of the romantic poets, and Coleridge in particular, I have not found any direct comment against society or social life.

In order to clarify the role of loneliness in connection with the poet and nature, I will examine the concept within each individual poem in Coleridge's Trio and "Dejection: An Ode."

2. Relations between the romantic poet and nature in brief

It is necessary to write something about the relationship between the romantic poets and nature because it is important in the understanding of their work. First and foremost, the romantic poet's outlook toward nature is revolutionary because he conceives nature as a living organism with a spirit and not as a static mechanism following rigid laws. The relationship between the romantic poet and nature may appear to be simple. In reality, it is the complicated

² Hereafter, I use pages or page and line numbers (in parentheses) to refer to quotations from Coleridge's poetry taken from *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Ed. E. H. Coleridge. (1967). London: OUP.

awareness of the poet's intimacy with nature that plays a vital role in nourishing and promoting his imagination. Therefore, they engage in a form of cross-pollination. This is clear within Wordsworth's declaration of his position on nature in his "Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey." In the piece, he writes that he knows "that Nature never did betray / The heart that loved her" (ll. 23-24). This love of nature forces the poet to imitate its spirit because, as Coleridge says (*Biographia*, II, p. 56), "we unconsciously imitate those whom we love." Wordsworth's famous autobiographical poem *The Prelude* depicts the poet as a lonely boy who communicated with nature. In the poem, nature plays the role of a nourishing mother and develops the poet's creativity through its beautiful "rocks and streams." At the same time, nature is a teacher who educates and punishes the poet, a concept that is manifested in the famous boat stealing episode:

I heard among the solitary hills
 Low breathing coming after me, and sounds
 Of undistinguishable motion, steps
 Almost as silent as the turf they trod. (Book
 I, ll. 329-332)

This is also true for Coleridge, who believed in ("On Poesy and Art," 1963, p. 253) "the power of humanizing nature, of infusing the thoughts and passions of man into everything which is the object of his contemplation; color, form, motion, and sound, are the elements which it combines, and it stamps them into unity in the mould of a moral idea." In Roe's opinion (2001, p. 263), there is "the beneficent influence of Nature to moral good." This creed, that defines nature as a living creature, is known as pantheism.

Because the romantic poets are tied with nature, nearly all the images they use to express what is within themselves are also reflections of what is in nature. Ontologically speaking, one cannot separate the romantic poet from nature, which is for him what water is for fish. Everything in nature is symbolic of what is within the poet. Coleridge wrote (Coburn, 2002, II, 2546):

In looking at objects of Nature while I am thinking, as at yonder moon dim-glimmering thro' the dewy window-pane, I seem rather to be seeking, as it were asking, a symbolical language within me that already and forever exists, than observing anything new.

He believed (*Biographia*, II, 258) that in "every work of art there is a reconciliation of the external with the internal." Therefore, in Shepherd's opinion (2008, 22), Coleridge's "symbolic language" is "tied" to his "natural world" that "might be termed as the 'language of nature.'" Coleridge expressed this in a letter to Thelwall when he wrote (Griggs, I, p. 348):

My mind feels as if it ached to behold & know something great -- something one & indivisible -- and it is only in the faith of this that rocks or waterfalls, mountains or caverns give me the sense of sublimity or majesty!

Therefore, nature promotes the poet's creativity and imagination.

Fry (2002, pp. 123-124) asserts the "ontological importance" of the "nonhuman" elements in the romantics' poetry and declares that "the sole purpose of describing the natural world in poetry is to illustrate human characteristics or thoughts and to enliven metaphors for human feeling." The romantic poet is not simply recording the information he has sensed in nature, but rather he is coloring these observations with his imagination. This process enables him to turn diversity into unity, which Coleridge calls ("On Poesy or Art", pp. 257, 262) "the unity in many fold" or "multeity in unity."

3. Loneliness in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

Images of loneliness are abundant in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The ship is sailing alone through a lifeless, cold, icy sea in which "Nor shapes of men nor beast we ken— / The ice was all between" (ll. 57-58). The Mariner and the rest of the crew "were the first that ever burst / Into that silent sea" (ll. 105-106, p. 189). After days of sailing, the first life form to appear before the Mariner and the crew is a lonely bird, "an Albatross," which is described in Coleridge's marginal notes as "a bird of good omen" (p. 189). This creature is representative of the lonely Mariner, who will be singled out as a person with special powers. The killing of the lonely Albatross, without any reason, has a great impact on developing events. This act deepens the Mariner's loneliness because he has severed his relationship with the creatures of the universe. The Albatross is a symbol of all forms of life; therefore, the Mariner's (Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. 1, p. 168)

spiritual intercourse is interrupted, not only with others, but even with himself. No wonder then, that he remains incomprehensible to himself as well as to others. No wonder, that, in the fearful desert of his consciousness...no friendly echo answers, either from his heart, or the heart of a fellow being.

The Mariner's extreme loneliness is tangible when we see him depicted alone on the sea. Coleridge writes, "Alone, alone, all, all alone, / Alone on a wide wide sea!" (ll. 232-33, p. 196). This feeling of ordinary loneliness and agony cannot be cured from without. The Mariner realizes this fact when he says, "And

never a saint took pity on / My soul in agony" (ll. 234-35, p. 196). Therefore, the Mariner is spiritually paralyzed when he is won by "Life-in-Death."

The Mariner's loneliness is heightened by the death of the crew. He is left as the only sufferer, and he describes the horror of their dead bodies, which he believes to be looking at him. "Each turned his face with a ghastly pang, / And cursed me with his eyes" (ll. 214-15, p. 196). The Mariner remains for "Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse, / And yet I could not die" (ll. 261-62, p. 204).

The Mariner's loneliness reaches its peak when he pulls with his "brother's son" "at one rope" without speaking a word to him (ll. 342, 344, p. 200). In this scene, the birds are also described as singing "like a lonely flute" (l. 365, p. 200). At this stage, the Mariner is experiencing ordinary loneliness and cannot communicate with nature.

After a period of inactivity, a lonely spirit, coming "From the land of mist and snow" (l. 379, p. 201), appears in order to torture the Mariner and avenge the killing of the harmless Albatross. The Mariner's ordinary loneliness is emphasized when he is compared to a lonely, frightened person being pursued by a fiend:

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round
walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread. (p.
203, ll. 446-51)

This ordinary loneliness paves the way to creative loneliness, which eventually carries the Mariner to a new level of spiritual communion with nature.

A new stage begins when the Mariner realizes and appreciates the beauty of the water-snakes around him. His former loneliness, which was the cause of his suffering, begins to fade. Although, at this new stage, the Mariner is still lonely, he is also elevated spiritually. His agony comes to an end because his loneliness is able to connect him with nature. This invokes within him an appreciation for beauty, and he begins to see the water-snakes with different eyes. They are elevated from being "slimy things did crawl with legs / Upon the slimy sea" (ll. 125-26, p. 191) in the first stage to "O happy living things! no tongue / Their beauty might declare" (ll. 282-83, p. 198) in the second. The Mariner's new loneliness, experienced in the company of nature, is the cause of his spiritual elevation. The Mariner declares, "A spring of love gushed from my heart / And I blessed them. Unaware"

(284-85). In other words, in the first stage of his loneliness, he is deprived of nature's gifts. In the second, he is exposed to nature's spirit and to what nature is ready to offer. When the Mariner restores his relationship with nature through his appreciation of the water-snakes, the course of events changes. A gush of love comes from within the Mariner, and he is no longer experiencing ordinary loneliness but a romantic and creative one. In Zohdi's opinion, this is a (2016, p. 32) "transformation from static mechanism to dynamic organicism."

The Mariner undergoes a spiritual transition when the wind begins blowing, and his ordinary loneliness recedes. This is followed by the arousal of vague feelings, but these are still welcomed by the Mariner, because they represent a new type of loneliness that is connected to nature's spirit. It is the wind of spiritual revival and imagination. The Mariner says, "It mingled strangely with my fears, / Yet it felt like a welcoming" (ll. 459-60, p. 204). Therefore, the reader of *The Ancient Mariner* realizes that the Mariner's loneliness is affecting him positively when the "breeze," the symbol of poetic creativity, "blew" on him alone, "Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze— / On me alone it blew" (ll. 463-64, p. 204).

The lonely Wedding-Guest is especially important in this work because there is an analogy between his type of loneliness and the Mariner's. When the Wedding-Guest first meets the ancient Mariner in the beginning of the poem, he is in great agony. He wants to attend the wedding party, and he demonstrates his resentment at the Mariner's attempt to draw him away from his social life. "The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast" (l. 31, p. 188). However, he could not leave due to the Mariner's mesmerizing power. This power forced the Wedding-Guest to not attend the wedding party and to instead be the Mariner's lonely addressee. This domination of the Mariner over the Wedding-Guest's will is useful at the end of the poem. The Wedding-Guest is elevated to a new, spiritually--higher level, which causes him to be wiser and more profound. Taken more broadly, the relationship between the Mariner and the Wedding-Guest, in the beginning, is representative of an outside power exercising special influence over a person's will. Later on, however, the relationship between the Mariner and the Wedding-Guest is similar to that of a lover and a beloved, as opposed to a more dominative relationship between a colonizer and a person who is colonized. The reader acts in a similar capacity to the lonely Wedding-Guest as they share the Mariner's experience. The reader is elevated to a higher level in his/her understanding of others and awareness of the importance of appreciating creatures. The role of the reader through

the Wedding-Guest is a post-modern element that Coleridge anticipated.

By the end of the poem, the Hermit, who is associated with holy loneliness and simplicity, mirrors and enhances the Mariner's fruitful loneliness. The Mariner is rewarded when he experiences illumination and can distinguish his path from the creatures in the universe. This form of love is represented by the appreciation the Mariner has for the beauty of the water-snakes. This leads the reader, in Coleridge's opinion (*The Major Works*, 2000, p. 49), to "contemplate in the mind, as in a picture, the image of a grander and better world." In Yarlott's opinion (1967, p. 167), the Mariner's voyage represents an "archetypal situation of utter loneliness" which "bore everywhere the stamp of Coleridge's individual touch."

4. Christabel's loneliness

In the beginning of *Christabel*, nature forebodes the character's painful experience with the hooting of owls in "the middle of the night" (ll. 1-2, p. 215). As is traditional in English literature, the owl and its hooting are linked with the sinister side of life and used to symbolize loneliness and melancholy. Coleridge, in Harding's opinion (1974, p. 66), accepted "the general convention of Gothic writing that owls are sinister." Coleridge used the owl in a similar way in other poems. For example, in "Fears in Solitude" "the owlet Atheism" is "hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven" and "Cries out, 'Where is it'" (p. 259, ll. 82, 85-86).

Christabel is alone on a trip outside a lonely castle and in a desolate place at mid-night when she meets Geraldine alone. "What makes her in the wood so late, / A furlong from the castle gate?" (ll. 25-26, p. 216). Loneliness is felt deeply in the chilliness of the night, the moaning of the old mastiff bitch, and the barrenness in nature, which is represented by the lonely oak tree outside the castle where Christabel first sits down. "And naught was green upon the oak / But moss and rarest mistletoe" (ll. 33-34, p. 216). The images of the owls and the lonely mastiff bitch are repeated to emphasize Christabel's loneliness. This loneliness is visible in nature through the:

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at
the sky. (ll. 49-52, p. 217)

This image represents fruitless, ordinary loneliness. Christabel cannot establish a relationship with nature in order to illuminate herself. Her feelings are too vague to determine whether her vision of Geraldine's horrible bosom is true or just a kind of hallucination,

"With such perplexity of mind / As dreams too lively leave behind" (ll. 370, 381, 385-86, p. 228).

Coleridge's survival as a poet, or the survival of any poet, was intertwined with his ability to access his lively imagination. When he could not express himself, he was similar to Christabel who could not utter but few words when she became spellbound by Geraldine's charm. "For this is alone in / Thy power to declare" (ll. 272-73, p. 225). Geraldine's mighty spell can be taken to symbolize the kind of loneliness that hinders the romantic poet from having communion with nature and, therefore, causes them to lose their ability to create. Christabel attempts to find redemption outside herself and from her father, Sir Leoline. This is useless because she needs, similarly to the Mariner, a fountain from within. Ordinary loneliness dominates Christabel's life, which is exemplified when she stumbles "on the unsteady ground / Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound" (ll. 582-93, p. 223). For Christabel, creative loneliness is far-fetched. The powers that obstruct her imagination are so strong that Christabel "had no power to tell," and because of an incomprehensible reason, "so mighty was the spell" (ll. 474-75, p. 230). This crippling of Christabel's will may represent the danger that Coleridge in particular faced, and that any artist may face as well; that which would stop his imagination and cripple his creativity forever.

Ordinary loneliness is so intense that Christabel could not see any sight "but one!" (l. 598, p. 233). Over the course of time, Christabel's ordinary loneliness deepens, and she is compared with a lonely "hermitess" in a beautiful "wilderness" (ll. 320-21, p. 226). This also offers a ray of hope that Christabel may one day obtain a deeper spirituality, penetrate the appearances of nature, and, as the hermitess, see its spirit.

This loneliness does not only affect Christabel, but also the two intimate friends Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine and Sir Leoline. The work reads that they were separated and "stood aloof" "Like cliffs which had been rent asunder" (ll. 421-22, p. 229). The relationship between these two friends reflects Christabel's situation, who finds it difficult to restore her own relationship with her father. Loneliness is a prominent feature in the description of Roland's castle, which would stand alone "and threaten Scotland's wastes" (l. 499, p. 231).

Leoline cannot see the evil influence Geraldine has upon Christabel, and he mistakenly believes that he is "Dishonored by his only child" (l. 645). He feels this way when his daughter asks him by her "mother's soul" to send Geraldine away (ll. 618-19). Her father

cannot understand his lonely, only daughter. Misunderstanding prevails, and the bond recedes that brings hope, illuminates hearts, and triggers the romantic poet to compose.

On the other hand, the poem also includes opposing images, which express ideas of spontaneity and hope. For example, the birds are still at night but eventually burst out singing. "The night-birds all that hour were still. / But now they are jubilant anew" (ll. 307-08, p. 226). This represents the hope that Christabel may one day triumph over Geraldine, and creative loneliness will bring her to a spiritual marriage with nature. Therefore, hope is always present, and spiritual dryness is not a permanent curse. There is an implied moral lesson in the poem that optimism is always present and possible no matter how often darkness prevails or dominates.

5. "Kubla Khan"

In "Kubla Khan," all inanimate things are unique such as Mount Abora and Alph. The same is true about the work's four unique and lonely characters: Kubla Khan, the woman wailing for her demon-lover, the Abyssinian maid, and the frenzied person at the end of the poem with "His flashing eyes, his floating hair!" (l. 50, p. 298). These characters are both isolated and in complete communion with nature, apart from the "woman wailing for her demon-lover!" (l. 16, P. 297) who Hogsette (1997) believed to not be a real human being. She is, instead, "a metaphor," or at least she belongs to a "world surpasses human understanding" and that (Jones, 2018) "transcends" readers' "familiarity."

Kubla Khan lives within his gardens, which are isolated and separated from the outside world by towers and walls. Everything in Kubla Khan's garden, such as the dome, the sacred river, and the chasm, are alone but also unique. They mirror the creative person's uniqueness, such as the poet or even Coleridge himself. At the end of the poem, a lonely, creative person is in complete harmony with nature. This reflects Kubla Khan's productivity at the beginning of the work when he "In Xanadu did ... / A stately pleasure-dome decree (ll.1-2, p. 297). Furthermore, all images of loneliness are presented under the dominant image of the "pleasure-dome" and are associated with happiness. For example, there is the unique music of the Abyssinian maid, alone on her dulcimer. This is a prelude to the climax reached by the end of the poem, where the dominant image is that of a lonely, unique person, such as a poet, united in his loneliness with nature. However, according to Schelling (Delius, 2000, 79) "a new high synthesis could be reached" in poetic production represented by his special food, "on honey-dew hath fed, / And drunk

the milk of paradise" (ll. 53-54, p. 298). Therefore, we find only creative loneliness in "Kubla Khan." The poem is as unique as the unique person at the end, who procures what Coleridge has termed (*Biographia Literaria*, Vol. 2, p. 6), "the moment, which constitutes poetic faith."

6. "Dejection: An Ode"

"Dejection: An Ode" is different from the Trio because the entirety of the poem is devoted to explicitly expressing the poet's complete hopelessness in both his ability to compose poetry and his confidence in nature. Agony curbs the poet. In this state, he is unable to communicate with nature and, therefore, feels ordinary loneliness. This is clear in the response of the lute, which symbolizes poetic creativity, to the wind, which is no longer being used as it was in the past. Its sound is like a "dull sobbing draft" and it "moans and rakes / Upon the strings of this Æolian lute, / Which better far were mute" (ll. 5-7, p. 363). Its creative music is now no more than "a scream / Of agony by torture lengthened out / That lute sent forth! (ll. 97- 99, p. 367).

The concept of loneliness is present in the epigraph of "Dejection: An Ode," which mirrors the poet's dejected mood. The captain and his crew are alone on a stormy sea. There is no one to help them in the face of the expected and probable danger of drowning. The loneliness of the captain and his crew in the epigraph is reflected in the lonely elements of nature. The first of these elements is the moon. "Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew / In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue" (ll. 35-36, p. 364). The second element is the wind, which is described by the poet as blowing over places that are all characterized by loneliness and impending difficulty. These places are:

Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or
blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman
never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the
witches' home. (ll. 100-102, p.
367)

Coleridge's ordinary loneliness is extremely high when he compares himself to the lonely child in Otway's pathetic tale. The tale describes an image of a lost lonely child in "a lonesome wild" who "hath lost her way" and "moans low in bitter grieve and fear" (ll. 122-24, p. 368). This demonstrates Coleridge's isolation and bewildered spirit. He could not establish a relationship with nature, even though he was then, like the child, alone with nature. Her "screams" are in vain, similar to those of Coleridge's. This tale represents the poet's repeated endeavors and struggles to regain his lost poetic creativity. His attitude toward nature in this poem is different from that in the Trio

because he viewed nature as no more than elements and spiritless objects:

O Lady! we receive but what we give, And
in our life alone does Nature live: Ours is
her wedding garment, ours her shroud! (ll.
47-49, p. 365)

This is, in Read's opinion (1963, p. 36), the result of his outlook in "a conscious dichotomy" of "what had, and had not."

There were perhaps a number of factors that caused Coleridge's dejection and spiritual crisis. In "Dejection," however, the main cause is his inability to practice romantic, creative isolation. There were other factors that caused his agony, as we know from several of his biographies, including James Gillman's *Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. These factors may include his hopeless love for Sara Hutchinson, his addiction to opium, his large number of physical illnesses, and his procrastination. The poet's agony in "Dejection" reaches its highest peak because he "finds no natural outlet, no relief, / In word, or sigh, or tear" (ll. 23-24, p. 364). This excruciating suffering is the result of his cutting himself off from nature's gifts, and so he is, in Siferd's opinion (1995), "emotionally frigid" and "feels nothing in response." Because of this, Harper (1975, p. 198) described "Dejection" as "one of the saddest of all human utterances."

Coleridge's changed outlook toward nature is the cause of his creative crisis. When he ceased to communicate with nature and stopped viewing it as a living, organic creature, he felt the ordinary loneliness of other people. Consequently, his poetic imagination began to decline, became devoid of any value, and gazed "with howblank an eye!" (l. 30, p. 364). There is no reliable partner for the romantic poet apart from nature, which is a force deeply rooted within him. Nature and the romantic poet's creative imagination are organically intertwined. If the two are separated, the poet will also experience a spiritual death as a creator.

As a result of Coleridge's inability to access his creative loneliness, he could not have communion with nature. Therefore, he screamed because he considered himself primarily to be a creative poet. This is clear in his letter to Humphry Davy (Griggs, 1956, Vol. 1, p. 557): "We poets: Down with all the rest of the world!". Coleridge believed that poetry was his way to achieve immortality. He wrote in his notebook that (Sastri, 1971, p. 106) "poets leap over Death." His agony was so great because he considered the killing of the poet within himself to be an unbearable loss:

But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at
my birth,

My shaping spirit of Imagination.
(ll. 84-86, p. 366)

7. CONCLUSION

Coleridge and the romantic poets believed that, through solitude, a poet can pursue insight into nature's spirit. This then enables him to mingle with the whole universe. Coleridge began his poetic life with strong ties to nature. He operated within the romantic, creative loneliness that allowed him to produce his greatest poems. When he began to view nature as a collection of inanimate objects, however, he ceased to be a poet, or at least he ceased to produce great and unique poems. Instead of seeing the spirit in nature, which Coleridge ("On Poesy or Art," 1927, p. 257) termed "natura naturans," he began to view nature as a mass of spiritless elements, which he called "natura naturata." For the romantics, there is a moral virtue in loneliness because it teaches the poet new lessons through a fresh understanding of the universe, the illumination of the self, or both. This concept is what happened to the Mariner, when he understood the universal bond of love between all creatures.

In the poems under study, readers have found that there is a communion between the lonely characters and nature in "Kubla Khan." In *The Ancient Mariner*, on the other hand, this connection is interrupted and then restored. In *Christabel*, which is a fragment, readers are left without certainty on whether or not the communion will take place. In "Dejection: An Ode," there is a disconnect between the poet and nature.

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Read, review and discuss the Dejection: An Ode poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge on Poetry.net. Dejection: An Ode. Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon, With the old Moon in her arms ; And I fear, I fear, My Master dear ! We shall have a deadly storm. Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence O pure of heart ! thou need'st not ask of me What this strong music in the soul may be ! What, and wherein it doth exist, This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist, This beautiful and beauty-making power. Joy, virtuous Lady ! Dejection: an Ode. Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon, With the old Moon in her arms; And I fear, I fear, my Master dear! We shall have a deadly storm. (Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence). I. Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made. The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me. What this strong music in the soul may be! What, and wherein it doth exist, This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist, This beautiful and beauty-making power. Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given "Dejection" is a central ode among Coleridge's poems. When we have broken through to its riches, we will know much about the man himself and his poetry. We will know much about his life, about his personal set of symbols, and about the ideas that made up his intellectual life. We will begin with a study of the poem itself and then ask some questions about it which will guide the research for the rest of the thesis. "An Ode," by Coleridge, is that published by his grandson, Ernest Hartley Coleridge, in the standard edition of his works. In the critical apparatus accompanying "Dejection," Mr. E. H. Coleridge states that the poem was written on April. 4 The poet almost seems to identify his bitter grief and loneliness and fear. Selected Letters. £!