The Romantic Nightingale between Coleridge's Divergence and Keats' Adherence: A comparative Study between Coleridge's 'The Nightingale' and Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale'

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Abstract

'Ode to a Nightingale'(1819) is a typical poem of a Romantic poet like John Keats, but 'The Nightingale'(1798) is an uncharacteristic poem of a Romantic poet like Coleridge.

The paper proposes a comparison between Coleridge's 'The Nightingale' and Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale'.Coleridge's poem diverges from the Romantic norm; it carries some characteristics new to Romantic poetry like the realistic and objective portrayals of nature and the nightingale, while Keats' poem adhere to the characteristics of Romantic poetry; it portrays nature and the nightingale subjectively and unrealistically. Coleridge's poem is very much influenced by the scientific approaches to environment, and natural history which have emerged at the end of the 18th C., and this influence has led Coleridge to diverge from the Romantic norm, while Keats' Ode does not react to this emergence, it preserves the prominent features of Romantic poetry, though it follows Coleridge's poem in not more than twenty one years.

The paper is divided into two sections, and a conclusion. The first section, 'Coleridge's Divergence from the Romantic Norm'starts with presenting Coleridge as the conventional Romantic poet who is not different from Keats nor any other major Romantic poet in depicting nature and the nightingale in most of his poems, with the aim to highlight his sudden divergence from his Romantic line in 'The Nightingale'. The part moves to discuss Coleridge's abandonment of the characteristics previously mentioned of Romantic poetry in his 'The Nightingale' through his realistic and objective approaches to the nightingale which come as a reaction to the occurrence of natural and ornithological studies.

The second section, 'Keats' Adherence to the Romantic Norm' discusses Keats' preservation of the prominent characteristics of Romantic poetry in his 'Ode to a Nightingale' like escapism, allusion, imitation of Milton, the unrealistic and subjective approaches to nature and the nightingale,and degenderization of the nightingale which all point out Keats' disregard for the occurrence of scientific approaches to nature and the bird at the time.

Finally, the conclusion sums up the findings of the study.

العندليب الرومانسي بين ابتعاد كولرج وثبات كيتس
دراسة مقارنة بين قصيدة كولردج "العندليب" وقصيدة كيتس "نشيد للعندليب"

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الخلاصة

(نشيد للعندليب ١٨١٩) هي قصيدة نموذجية لشاعر رومانسي ك(كيتس) ولكن قصيدة (العندليب ١٧٩٨) هي قصيدة غير معهودة لشاعر رومانسي ك(كولرج). يقدم البحث مقارنة بين قصيدة كولردج "العندليب"وقصيدة كيتس "نشيد للعندليب" تخرج قصيدة كولرج عن النمط الرومانسي فتحمل بعض الخصائص الجديدة على الشعر الرومانسي مثل التصوير الواقعي والموضوعي للطبيعة والعندليب, بينما تثبت قصيدة كيتس على خصائص الشعر الرومانسي فتصور الطبيعة والعندليب

بصورة ذاتية وغير واقعية. تتاثر قصيدة كولرج وبصورة كبيرة بالاتجاهات العلمية للبيئة و التاريخ الطبيعي والذي ظهر في نهاية القرن ١٨ فقاد هذا التأثر الشاعر للخروج عن النمط الرومانسي, بينما لم تتأثر قصيدة كيتس بهذا الظهور حيث انها تحافظ على السمات الاساسية للشعر الرومانسي بالرغم من انها تتبع قصيدة كولرج بليس اكثر من احدى وعشرون سنة.
ينقسم البحث الى قسمين واستنتاج .يبدأ القسم الاول "ابتعاد كولرج عن النمط الرومانسي"بتقديم كولرج الشاعر الرومانسي التقليدي الذي لايختلف عن كيتس او اي شاعر رومانسي اخر في تصوير الطبيعة والعندليب في اغلب قصائده. والهدف من ذلك هو تسليط الضوء على الخروج المفاجئ لكولرج عن خطه الرومانسي في (العندليب) ويستمر الجزء في مناقشة تخلي الشاعر عن الخصائص المذكورة انفا في قصيدته من خلال الاتجاه الموضوعي والواقعي للعندليب الذي يأتي كرد فعل على الدراسات العلمية للطبيعة والطيور.
يناقش القسم الثاني" ثبات كيتس على النمط الرومانسي" حفاظ الشاعر على السمات الاساسية للشعر الرومانسي في قصيدته (نشيد للعندليب) مثل: الهروب, التلميح, تقليد ملتون والاتجاه الذاتي والغير واقعي نحو العندليب والطبيعة وكذلك اللاتصنيف للعندليب وكلها تشير الى تغاضي الشاعر عن الدراسات العلمية للطبيعة والطير التي ظهرت انذاك.
اخيرا, يلخص الاستنتاج نتائج البحث.

SECTION ONE

Coleridge's Divergence from the Romantic Norm

S. T. Coleridge is a pillar in the Romantic shrine, and a typical Romantic poet. His poetry about nature is not devoid of the reflection of his mood or the workings of his imagination, especially in 'Kubla Khan' in which he makes the unreal atmosphere outside the known 'as real as the air about us'[1] all woven and created by the power of imagination and the effect of opium on the brain.

Another Coleridgean characteristic, which is also a Romantic characteristic, is idealistic and supernatural portrayal of nature. It is known that great Romantics have alleged the divinity of nature, which has later become a characteristic of Romantic poetry, and this has led them to be egocentric when facing the real and sensory nature, expressing their feelings of awe and wonder in the presence of 'nature's sublime power and beauty'.[2] They have refused modernity's conception of nature especially the rational modernity's materialism, and this has allowed the idealistic and supernatural portrayal of nature.

Like Keats in 'Ode to a Nightingale', Coleridge in 'Kubla Khan', creates a mythical realm from the real nature, a realm of shadows, holy and enchanted. This is clear from the description of the romantic chasm:

But oh! That deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! As holy and enchanted
As e'ver beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon- lover.[3]

(Kubla Khan 11-5)

The world described here does not differ very much from Keats's world of embalmed and mysterious darkness.

Coleridge also does not differ from other Romantics in considering Milton his ideal. The Romantics are influenced by Milton's works, the reason that they imitate his views. Milton is the first English poet to associate the nightingale to melancholy; ' most musical most melancholy' , a connection that no Romantic poet has broken in his poetry. In his II *Penseroso*, Milton refers to the nightingale as Philomel[4], in an allusion to Ovid's tragedy *Metamorphoses* where Philomel is transformed into a nightingale in an escape from her rapist and brother-in-law, king Toreus:

And the mute silence hist along
Less Philomel will daign a say,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Something the rugged brow of night[5]

(55-8)

Milton has related the nightingale to melancholy and darkness in his Invocation to Muse in *Paradise Lost*, as mentioned earlier in the first part of this paper, in other words he has reflected his mood on the way he depicted the nightingale, and the Romantics have upheld Milton's view on the nightingale; Keats's nightingale is a subtle Philomel that sings in the dark and makes Keats contemplate death as explained earlier. Shelly believes that sorrow is the source of the nightingale's 'sweet sounds' in his 'Defense of Poetry'.[6] Akin to this is Coleridge's endorsement of the Miltonic nightingale in his 'To the Nightingale',(1795).[7] He follows the cliché about the melancholic characteristic of the nightingale's song and he addresses it as Philomel and describes its song as ' sad pity-pleading strains' (11), and above all, he addresses it using Milton's line 'most musical most melancholy'.

In 1798, in one of the poems of his first edition of *Lyrical Ballads,* 'The Nightingale', Coleridge changes his mind and considerably diverges from his Romantic line which has been quite obvious in his previous poems and especially 'To the Nightingale'. Unlike Keats's subjective and unrealistic approach, he describes nature and the nightingale visually and ornithologically, and he quotes Milton again, but this time, he mocks his view of the nightingale as a melancholic bird, turning away from the poetic convention to nature viewed more objectively. And again he calls the nightingale 'Philomel', and its song, 'pity-pleading strain'[8] (39) but this time, he mocks these views and considers them absurd and based on a misconception of true nature. He says that ' in nature there is nothing melancholy' (15), and asserts the joyfulness of nature. 'A melancholy bird? Oh! Idle thought'(14). Mahoney believes that this line has exemplified and cleared the way towards a new kind of poetry; new poetics which rebel against the pathetic fallacy of relating the nightingale's song to melancholy.[9]Coleridge also accuses those poets who relate melancholy to the nightingale's song of being imitators of Milton, who have found in the song an outlet for their pent-up sadness:

But some night-wandering man whose heart was
Pierced With the remembrance of grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch! Filled all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale,
Of his own sorrow, he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit .

('The Nightingale'16-23)

He accuses them of deception and lying to gain fame, because they write about nature far away from it, and they recite their poetry to those 'youths and maidens most poetical' (35) who are ignorant of nature's pleasant voices as they confine themselves to 'ballrooms and hot theatres'(37). Hence, they 'heave their sighs o'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains' (38-9)and they find their joy listening to the poetry that carries wrong conception of nature and the nightingale .

Opposite to those youths is Coleridge's son, Heartly, whom Coleridge mentions in the last lines of the poem. He shows how nature has its own influence upon the Child, filling him with joy when in 'distressful mood': 'I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,/And he beheld the moon ,and hushed at once,/Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently' (103-5)which asserts the realistic nature of the poem being based on a true situation. Moreover,This positive influence of nature upon the child, could have been mentioned because Coleridge does not want to be accused of committing the same pathetic fallacy in 'attributing mirth to the nightingale's song'[10] that he has accused earlier poets of making when they have named these notes a melancholy strain.

Coleridge hasn't diverted from the Romantic norm thematically only but also stylistically. He has chosen a new poetic form to present his unconventional poem, the conversational genre which he himself has devised in a collection of eight poems between the years (1795 & 1807) which has also included famous poems like, 'Frost at Midnight' and ' Dejection: An Ode'. This form tends to be informal and chatty although it has quite serious subject matters[11]and it has assisted the poet in involving two realistic characters in the poem, two human companions, addressed as ' my friend; and then our sister'(40) who are said to be William Wordsworth and Dorothy Wordsworth, the listeners party in the conversation.

Frank Doggett describes the nightingale in 'The Nightingale' as 'a voice of nature, rather than a symbol of poetry, and its song is an imitation of … primal reality'.[12]Coleridge rescues the bird from the mythic associations and he presents a flock of real birds living ina real English grove in spring time: 'But never elsewhere in one place I knew,/So many nightingales; and far and near, /In wood and thicket, over the wide grove'.(56-8).He describes these birds realistically rather than imaginatively. For example in line 68, ' their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full' gives the impression that the description is based on visual contact, and what adds to the realism of the description is the onomatopoeic language 'swift jug jug' of the actual bird's song.[13] As for the gender of the bird there is also an antithesis of the mythical and literary idea of the femininity of the singing nightingale. Coleridge presents the singing nightingale as a male, singing to attract the female of his species:

...Tis the merry nightingale,
That crowd and hurries, and precipitates,
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night,
Would be too short for him to utter forth,
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul,
Of all its music.

(43-9)

Coleridge may have contradicted the literary concept, yet he is in complete accord with natural history, which corroborates that male nightingales sing to woo females in the spring time, and that females give signals rather than warble i.e., they shriek, twitter or call when defending their young.[14]

The question that raises itself here is, why does Coleridge present the nightingale as a real bird and diverges from the Romantic norm of presenting the bird as a literary concept, a Romantic symbol or a mythical creature? And the answer might be that the end of the Eighteenth Century has witnessed the evolution of natural history and ornithological studies which has formed a contribution to the developing field of Ecocriticism;the study of the relationship between literature and the environment, and it has its own significant influence upon the presentation of the natural world in literary texts, and Coleridge's 'The Nightingale' is perhaps one of these texts.In 1797, that is a year before the publication of 'The Nightingale', Thomas Bewicks*History of British Birds* has appeared followed by another illustration by Jean Jacques Aubusson who also has provided guides to the detailed appearance of birds.[15] They are not the first guides but the most reasonable and all-encompassing ones that have extended the influence of natural history over poetry.
Bewicks*History of British Birds* hasn't been the only source of inspiration for Coleridge's realistic tendency, but it has paved the way for more natural history readings; he has also read Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selborne* , annotating his copy with marginal notes. Furthermore, Coleridge has described the book as a 'sweet, delightful book'.[16]Coleridge's interest in natural history in ' The Nightingale' is very obvious as he draws far more on the

natural history of the bird than Keats does or even Shelly or Wordsworth who are interested in the symbolic power of the hidden singer. Coleridge's following and reading of environmental studies at the time has had its impact upon his style of writing as well as his view of nature and its creatures. This impact has resulted in writing a unique poem like 'The Nightingale' and its uniqueness lies in being a realistic poem written by a major Romantic poet.

NOTES

[1]Arthur Symons, *An Introduction to Poems of Coleridge*(NP: Kessinger, 2004), p.18.
[2]Michael E. Zimmerman, *Integral Ecology: Uniting Multiple Perspectives On the Natural World*(Massachusetts: Shambhala Publications, 2009),pp.29-30.
[3]Paul Rajinder, *S. T. ColeridgeAn Evaluation of his Poetry*(Delhi: Rama Brothers, 2009), p.240.
[4]Sir Adolphus William Ward & Alfred RayneyWaller,*TheCambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 11.(*Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970), p.130.
[5]*PenserosoII*(https://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/penseroso/ text.shtml) retrieved on 25thFebruary, 2013.
[6]LeonardLutwack, *Birds in Literature* (Florida: Florida Univ. Press, 1994), p.48.
[7]CatharineMaxwell, *Milton to Swinburne: Bearing Blindness* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2001), p.26.
[8]William Wordsworth & Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems in Two Volumes*, Vol.1, 4th ed. (London: R. Taylor and Co.,1805), p.92. All quotations from 'The Nightingale' are taken from this edition.
[9]CharlesMahoney, *A Companion to Romantic Poetry* (Sussex: Blackwell, 2011), p.308.
[10]Ibid., p.309.
[11]Sunil KumarSarker, *S. T. Coleridge* (New Delhi: Atlantic, 2001), p.364.
[12]Quoted in Thomas C.Gannon,*Skylark Meets Meadowlark: Reimagining The Bird In British Romantic & Contemporary Native American Literature*(Nebraska: Nebraska Univ. Press, 2009), p.150.
[13]Wordsworth Circle, no.38. ' The Return of The Nightingale', 2007.
[14]MarinaWarner, *Monsters of Our Own Making: The Peculiar pleasures Of Fear*(Kentucky: Kentucky Univ. Press, 2007), pp. 229-30.
[15]Debbie Sly, 'With Skirmish and Capricious Passagings: Ornithological and Poetic Discourse in the Nightingale Poems of Coleridge and Clare', *Worcester Papers in English and Cultural Studies,*3 (October 2005), pp.6-19.
[16]R. Mabey, *Gilbert White*(London: J. M. Dent, 1993), p.6.

SECTION TWO

Keats' Adherence to the Romantic Norm

Nature in Keats's poetry is not free from his imagination's brush strokes. He depicts it depending on how his imagination sees it. The reason is perhaps that he hasn't been raised in the embrace of nature. Keats is rather as Hayman puts it 'the Londoner who never dreamt of physical toil'[2]and this might have made him quite subjective in determining what he considers beautiful in nature, an example for this is the way he views the nightingale in 'Ode to a nightingale' versus the way he views forests in 'Lines to Fanny'. The nightingale represents the beauty in nature that has stimulated him to communicate an Ode to it, in which he celebrates the beauty of the landscape and the perfection of its creatures, while the forests''bad flowers have no scent, birds no sweet songs,/ And great unerring nature once seems wrong'[2] (42-3).

'Ode to a Nightingale' starts with the poet's response to the song of the nightingale. It begins with the speaker conveying his happiness for the nightingale's happiness and his desire to escape the actual world:

My heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains,
One minute past, and Lethe-Wards had sunk[3]

(1-4)

This passage carries a contrast between the weary speaker and the joyous nightingale[4]which causes paralysis followed by death or as a draught from the mythical river Lethe; 'the river of forgetfulness'[5] and all havecompletely benumbed and desensitized the speaker.

Experiencing the effect of the bird's song emanates the speaker's desire for wine and spirits; 'O for a draught of vintage! That hath been/Cooled along ago in the deep delved earth' (11-12).It is a scientific fact that wine could be a tool for gaining pleasure and relaxation;however, large amounts of it could lead to 'stupor, impaired sensation, total memory black out, and loss of consciousness[6]and the speaker is seeking the second effect in order to 'leave the world'(19), the actual world and 'fade away' with the nightingale. He wants to lose memory, 'forget' about the world he lives in and disappear far away which suggests the long distance and the wide gap between the speaker's actual world and the chimerical world of the nightingale.

The wine the speaker yearns for possess mythical qualities, the same thing is with the nightingale which Keats refers to as 'Dryad' in the first stanza which is 'a tree nymph in Greek mythology'[7]and since the nightingale is invisible, cloaked in the darkness of dense bushes, for this reason Keats has made the nightingale a part of what Kauvar describes as ' Keats's visionary imagination'[8]:

That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot,
Of beechen green, and shadow numberless,
Singest of summer in full throated ease.

(7-10)

Hence, the wine which the speaker yearns for is also a mythical wine that springs from the mythical fountain 'Hippocrene'; a water fountain on Mount Helicon, which is created by the horse Pegasus when he stamps his hoof. However, in stanza IV, the speaker dismisses intoxication as a momentary transportation medium to reach the nightingale's realm 'not charioted by Bacchus and his pards'(32) but he would rather resort to the 'viewless wings' of his 'poesy' to transfer him to that realm.

The speaker expresses his desire, in a sad tone, to escape his actual world where human suffering prevails and 'youth grows pale, and specter-thin and dies'(26). Many critics have referred to this line as an allusion to the death of Keats's brother, Tom, who died seven months before Keats has composed his Ode. A few months before Tom's death, Keats has read *King Lear*and has underlined the words 'poor Tom' as well as Edgars sentence 'The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale'.[10]

Stanza III embodies the climax of the poem, and carries an explanation to escapism through bringing two contrasts between the speaker's realm and the nightingale's realm. First; the speaker sees himself in a terrible place of fever, sadness, death, anguish, and hopelessness, a place where old age conquers beauty, youth and love: 'where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes, /or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow'(29-30)and 'groans' are heard antithetical

to the nightingale's summer song in its 'melodious plot', the Arcadia where the nightingale 'hast never known' the woes of the physical world.

The nightingale's bower is described as 'embalmed darkness'(43) which alludes to Milton's darkness in his invocation to light in *Paradise Lost* Book III. Both Milton and the nightingale sing in the dark, but what makes them different from each other is that the nightingale sings deliberately in the dark while Milton is forced to sing in it. As Milton reflects on his own sightless eyes, his thoughts turn to the nightingale singing in darkness:

Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers, as the wakeful Bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note.[11]

Unlike Milton, the speaker in Keats's ode has deliberately reached the nightingale's dark realm lifted on the wings of his poetry in order to be away from humanity and be part of the nightingale's bower.

The second contrast is between humans' art and nature's art. The nightingale's song has an aspect which is not found in humans'art, it is immutability of the song contrasted with the alteration of humans'art. The repetition of the word 'same 'in the images:

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth,

(65-6)

The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

(68-9)

emphasizes the immutability of the song. While human art is alterable as 'hungry generations', which perhaps refer to human artists of every epoch, come ready to revolutionize what previous generations have already revolutionized. The alteration is negative as it is an outcome of hunger for either fame or wealth.

Bennett says that Keats's ode is 'a voice of intense subjectivity'[12]it provokes 'the allusion or hallucination of overhearing a poet speaking to himself'.[13]The subjectivity could lie in the poet's allusion to his personal life and in expressing his own views on nature being the ideal world, and human world 'where but to think is to be full of sorrow'.(27)

The poem also expresses Keats's feelings of confusion and depression.This is obvious in stanza VI where contradictorily the nightingale's happy song turns into a sad note that arouses the desire for death inside the speaker. The speaker expresses his willingness, in a depressive tone, 'to cease upon the midnight with no pain' (54) and the bird's song becomes a dirge, a 'requiem' sung in his ceremony.

Confusion is also obvious in the negative mood at the end of the poem, when the speaker realizes his desolation and loneliness, after the bird flies away, it makes him realize that 'fancy cannot cheat so well'(73) and he becomes aware of his hopelessness in escaping the actual world, a some sort of 'dying into life'.[14]Hence, he uses interrogative mood in the form of unanswerable questions; first questioning the validity of the bird, whether it has been a vision or a day dream, and second his own state of mind, whether he is awake or only dreaming in his sleep. These questions even make readers wonder if the nightingale's song is the same real song we hear or is it a different one;a magical song only heard in far off fairy lands as it is described in the poem. The nightingale is not areal bird in this poem, we see no physical description of the bird, and it only appears as an ethereal figure, a mythical creature

or 'music' that flees at the end of the poem. It is more of a voice than entity, and the degenderization of it emphasizes this idea.

The poet has used apostrophe; a widely used mode in writing odes, perhaps to help him in degenderizing the bird. He does not explicitly hint at the gender of the bird, though there are some implicit references of femininity as in 'Dryad', the female nymph. However, this does not contradict the idea of the bird being unrealistic, but rather makes it the same female bird of Ovid's *Philomela,* and of Milton's *Paradise Lost*; a singing female nightingale. This demonstrates that Keats' nightingale is not a real bird, but rather a symbol that communicates the poet's ideas concerning nature, humanity, and art, which in turn proves that Keats has been indifferent to the ornithological studies of his contemporaries, Bewick and White. However, Keats conformity to the Romantic line and his indifference to the scientific approaches to nature and birds come as no surprise if one considers the fact that Keats has preferred art over science for a career.[15]

NOTES

[1]RichardHayman,*Trees, Woodlands & Western Civilization* (London: Hambledon& London, 2003), p.186.

[2]John Keats, *The Complete Poems of John Keats* (GB: Wordsworth Editions, 2001), p.419.

[3]Sara Thorne, *Mastering Poetry*(NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp.212-13. All quotations from 'Ode To a Nightingale' are taken from this book.

[4]Ibid., p.210.

[5]Ramji Lall,*John Keats: An Evaluation of His Poetry* (New Delhi: Rama Brothers,2009), p.159.

[6]AmitavaDasgupta, *The Science of Drinking: How Alcohol Affects Your Body & Brain*(Maryland: Rowman& Little Field, 2011), p.39.

[7]Kathleen N. Daly, *Greek & Roman Mythology A to Z* (NY: Facts on File, 2004), p.91.

[8]Gerald B Kauvar,*The Other Poetry of Keats*(New Jersey: Associated Univ. Press, 1969), p.180.

[9]Daly, p.59.

[10]Tomichan Matheikal, *English poetry from John Donne to Ted Hughes* (New Delhi: Atlantic, 2007), p.66.

[11]Quoted in Harold Bloom,*The Visionary Company: A Reading in Romantic Poetry* (NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1971), p.410.

[12]Andrew Bennett, *Keats, Narrative& Audience:The posthumous Life of Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994),

[13] Ibid.

[14]Kauvar, p.69.

[15]See Donald C. Goellnicht, *The Poet Physician Keats and Medical Science* (London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984), p.45.

Conclusion

Coleridge and Keats differ in their response to the emergence of the new scientific studies of nature and birds, although both of them are Romantic poets who share the same characteristics in their poems. Coleridge embraces the emergence of natural history and ornithological studies. He describes nature and the nightingale visually and realistically, and shows an ornithological knowledge in this description of the bird and its habits. The effect of the studies is so profound upon Coleridge that hediverges from the Romantic norm in his portrayal of the nightingale. He also considers those poets who depict nature and the bird subjectively and unrealistically ignorant of nature, despite the fact that he has been one of these poets in his depiction of the nightingale in a poem he had written before 'The

Nightingale' entitled 'To the Nightingale'. Coleridge diverges from his Romantic line in 'The Nightingale' when he depicts the bird in a manner new to Romantic poetry; a male nightingale singing in a grove to attract females. Keats, on the other hand, shows an adherence to the Romantic characteristics in portraying nature and the nightingale subjectively and unrealistically in his Ode. Albeit these characteristics contradict the facts presented in natural history and ornithological studies, nevertheless Keats ignores this contradiction and conforms to his Romantic line. He presents the nightingale in the same unrealistic way Milton presents the bird in his poems; immortal mythical bird that lives in a chimerical ideal world to which the speaker in the poem aspires to escape his actual world.

The effect of the ornithological studies upon Coleridge leads us to believe that if this effect has found its way to other Romantic poets, they would have changed their Romantic course to become realistic. Hence, Keats' adherence to the Romantic line is more positive than Coleridge's divergence from it, in that it has preserved the essence of Romantic poetry until this day.

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