CRITICISM OF "KUBLA KHAN"

APPROVED:

Thomas Hall
Major Professor

Donald L. Vaisse
Minor Professor

Eugene Wright
Consulting Professor

William F. Becher, Jr.
Chairman of Graduate Studies in English

Robert B. Toulouse
Dean of the Graduate School
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The problem with which this study is concerned is analysis of the criticism of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan." This poem, one of the poet's most widely anthologized poems, has been the subject of forty-five articles. The poem has also been treated extensively in a number of books.

The criticism of the poem is organized in accordance with a suggestion made by Richard Gerber. This organization of the criticism is the only known system that has been suggested. In this arrangement the criticism is divided into three categories: psychological, literary, and archetypal. A count of the forty-five articles by categories gives the following results: psychological criticism, nineteen; literary criticism, twenty-three; and archetypal criticism, three. The psychological criticism is concerned with the origins of the poem and the processes which produced it. The literary approach concentrates on the poem as a finished work of art. In this criticism the meaning, structure, or imagery may be analyzed. The archetypal approach is concerned with the archetypes and archetypal patterns which lie behind the images of the poem. The psychological category is further divided into criticism stressing unconscious composition, criticism stressing conscious composition, and criticism of a general approach.
This organization of the criticism is outlined in Chapter I. In this chapter the three kinds of criticism are defined, and the early reviews of "Kubla Khan" are cited. The few comments which Coleridge himself made on the poem are also included. Chapter II is devoted to a study of psychological criticism. The criticism of John Livingston Lowes, J. B. Beer, and Elisabeth Schneider is studied in detail as major examples of the psychological approach. In Chapter III the literary and archetypal approaches to the poem are examined. The conclusions are presented in Chapter IV.

Criticism of the poem was slow to reflect the discovery in 1934 of the Crewe Holograph MS., which revealed that Coleridge worked consciously on the surface of the poem in spite of his statement of unconscious composition in the preface of 1816. This fact is indicated by Coleridge's use of the word "Reverie" in the note in the Crewe MS., instead of the stronger "profound sleep" of the other prefatory note, and by subsequent alterations which are evident from a comparison of the Crewe MS. and the printed version of the fifty-four line poem. This additional knowledge of the composition of the poem eventually led to new interpretations. In both the psychological and literary categories, a number of critics are in agreement that "Kubla Khan" is about the composition of poetry. The speaker is presumed to be a poet in these interpretations, and the subject of this poet's discourse is the creative process. An interpretation such as
this one, however, is true only up to a certain point because of the complexity of the imagery.

Psychological criticism has proved the most adequate. The psychological approach is responsible not only for the great achievements in the criticism of the poem, but also to some extent for the lesser achievements of the other categories. The literary approach, with one or two exceptions, has been effective only in dealing with certain aspects of the poem such as the imagery. Literary analysis of the poem, however, has improved greatly. Finally, the contribution of the scarce archetypal criticism to knowledge of the poem is relatively slight. There may be bases for more archetypal criticism.
CRITICISM OF "KUBLA KHAN"

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James D. Culpepper, B.A.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The importance of "Kubla Khan" is established by its rank as one of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's four major poems in terms of popularity, together with "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Christabel," and "Dejection: An Ode." This popularity of "Kubla Khan" is attested by the fact that the poem has been anthologized innumerable times. A count of the articles which have been located on the poem gives a grand total of forty-five. Although the interest in the poem as reflected in the anthologies and articles reaches these proportions, no systematic study of the criticism, so far as is known, has ever been attempted. The purpose of this paper, then, is to provide such a survey. The only known schematization which has been suggested for the criticism of the poem is that of Richard Gerber,\(^1\) and in accordance with Gerber's suggestion the criticism is divided into two principal categories: psychological criticism and literary criticism. In addition to these two categories, however, Gerber suggests a third category of archetypal criticism, which is of less significance because of its infrequent occurrence.

In describing the three kinds of criticism, Gerber says of the psychological approach that it "is concerned with the origins and the processes which produced the poem." Of the literary approach he says that it "considers the poem as a work of art like any other work of art with no, or only a minor, consideration of its strange origin." Gerber observes of the archetypal approach merely that it is the method used by Maud Bodkin. According to Bodkin, her aim is to examine C. G. Jung's hypothesis of "the stirring in the reader's mind . . . of unconscious forces which he terms 'primordial images,' or archetypes." Gerber states that there have been "two major examples" of psychological criticism, John Livingston Lowes and J. B. Beer, of whom he says:

Lowes is concerned with the exotic verbal surface of the poem and considers the dream-process in a somewhat Lucretian or Lockean way as a chaotic whirl of hooked atoms so that it is not surprising that he can only see the poem as a pointless phantasmagoria and meaningless concatenation of images. Lowe's method may be called atomistic. Beer's method is the very opposite of Lowes's.

\[2\text{Ibid., p. 370.}\]
\[3\text{Ibid.}\]
\[4\text{Ibid., p. 371, and note.}\]
He envisages an extremely detailed and complicated Coleridgean thought-structure which is realized or clothed in a number of images. While Lowes remains on the outside or surface of the poem Beer steps behind the poem into the realm of constitutive ideas which he sees in a strongly cabbalistic context. His method might be called idealistic.\(^6\)

The forty-five articles of criticism on the poem include every article which has been uncovered through all available means within certain limitations of time. A division of these articles according to the categories gives the following results: psychological criticism, nineteen; literary criticism, twenty-three; and archetypal criticism, three. Referring to the great bulk of criticism on the poem, Gerber says:

> It is fairly safe to say that no poem in the English language has provided more pages of comment per line than 'Kubla Khan'. Even if we disregard the large volume of separate articles it remains in an unique position since it is the only 54-line poem to have inspired three voluminous books of criticism.\(^7\)

Gerber lists the three books as follows: Lowes's *The Road to Xanadu* (New York, 1927), Elisabeth Schneider's *Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan* (Chicago, 1953), and J. B. Beer's *Coleridge the Visionary* (London, 1959).\(^8\) Since Gerber's article was published, however, a fourth and a fifth, though perhaps not as voluminous as the others, have been added to the list:

\(^6\)Gerber, pp. 370-371.

\(^7\)Richard Gerber, "Keys to 'Kubla Khan,'" *English Studies*, XLIV (October, 1963), 322.

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 322, n. 2.

It may seem strange in retrospect that the early reviews of "Kubla Khan" were so unfavorable.® The *Edinburgh Review* declares of the volume *Christabel* in September, 1816:

> Upon the whole, we look upon this publication as one of the most notable pieces of impertinence of which the press has lately been guilty; and one of the boldest experiments that has yet been made upon the patience or understanding of the public. . . . The other productions of the Lake School have generally exhibited talents thrown away upon subjects so mean, that no power of genius could ennoble them. . . . But even in the worst of them, if we except the White Doe of Mr. Wordsworth and some of the laureate odes, there were always some gleams of feeling or of fancy. But the thing now before us, is utterly destitute of value.¹⁰

Although the author has never been positively identified, James Dykes Campbell remarks that this early reviewer of "Kubla Khan" was believed to be William Hazlitt, who "did not think it so bad as *Christabel*, or 'mere raving' like *The Pains of Sleep*."¹¹ But Hazlitt is believed now to have been the reviewer of the volume for the *Examiner* in June, 1816. In the

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Examiner the reviewer states: "Kubla Khan, we think, only shows that Mr. Coleridge can write better nonsense verses than any man in England. It is not a poem, but a musical composition." 12

Coleridge attributed the attacks of 1816 on both The Statesman's Manual and Christabel to Hazlitt. 13 But Henry Crabb Robinson notes in his Diary, on December 21, 1816, that Coleridge "ascribes to Lamb the best ideas in Hazlitt's articles." 14 Charles Lamb expresses his doubts about the poem in a letter to Wordsworth, dated April 26, 1816:

Coleridge is printing 'Christabel,' by Lord Byron's recommendation to Murray, with what he calls a vision, 'Kubla Khan,' which said vision he repeats so enchantingly, that it irradiates and brings heaven and elysian bowers into my parlor while he sings or says it; but there is an observation, 'Never tell thy dreams,' and I am almost afraid that 'Kubla Khan' is an owl that won't bear daylight. I fear lest it should be discovered by the lantern of typography and clear reducting no better than nonsense or no sense. 15

Coleridge himself was strangely quiet about "Kubla Khan" beyond the few remarks he made in the prefatory note published.

14 Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, in ibid., p. 397.
with the poem in 1816. Another note, found in the Crewe holograph MS., was revealed by Alice D. Snyder in 1934. This note reads:

This fragment with a good deal more, not recoverable, composed, in a sort of Reverie brought on by two grains of Opium, taken to check a dysentery, at a Farm House between Porlock & Linton, a quarter of a mile from Culbone Church, in the fall of the year, 1797.

S. T. Coleridge

An unpublished note of November 3, 1810, reproduced in part by Wylie Sypher, was believed by Ernest Hartley Coleridge to link the quarrel between Coleridge and Charles Lloyd with the "retirement" to the farm-house where the poem was written. The note reads as follows:

... on my side, patience, gentleness, and good for evil--yet this supernatural effort injured me--what I did not suffer to act on my mind, preyed on my body--it prevented my finishing the Christabel--& at the retirement between Linton and Porlock was the first occasion of my having recourse to opium. ...
Finally in 1952, an entry, dated September 26, 1830, in the manuscript of Henry Nelson Coleridge's *Table Talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, was made available. Morchard Bishop, using the entry in his effort to locate the farm-house of the "retirement," quotes this terse statement by Coleridge on the composition of the poem: "I wrote *Kubla Khan* in Brimstone Farm between Porlock and Ilfracome--near Culbone."\(^{20}\)

Critics of the twentieth century for the most part have looked upon "*Kubla Khan*" with more favor than did the early reviewers, although modern critics have puzzled over Coleridge's strange silence about the poem. The criticism dealt with in this study has been selected for its importance to the categories. This importance has been determined by the contribution of the criticism to a particular category. It will be observed that the criticism has been organized roughly according to importance and chronology. In this arrangement the criticism of the past decade is considered last in each classification. For only too often critics build their interpretations on those of earlier critics, and as a result there is not enough difference to warrant further space. It is perhaps worth noting, however, that in the case of "*Kubla Khan*" the diversity is more pronounced than the similarity.


\(^{21}\)Ibid.
Lowes's interpretation of the poem provided the impetus for a great deal of psychological criticism through the nineteen-fifties. Psychological criticism will therefore be considered first.
CHAPTER II

PSYCHOLOGICAL CRITICISM

The preponderance of psychological criticism is perhaps a result of the peculiar nature of "Kubla Khan." Coleridge brought the psychological critics down on himself with his prefatory note in the 1816 volume, in which the poem was first published together with "Christabel" and "The Pains of Sleep." In the note he offered the poem to the reader "rather as a psychological curiosity, than on the ground of any supposed poetic merits."\(^1\) Referring to himself in the third person, the poet tells how, in ill health, he "had retired to a lonely farm-house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire."\(^2\) The note continues:

In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in 'Purchas's Pilgrimage': 'Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall.' The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep,


\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 295-296.
at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort.  

"On awaking," Coleridge says, he "instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved." Then he was interrupted "by a person on business from Porlock," and when he returned to his room more than an hour later, he found that "with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but alas! without the after restoration of the latter!"

Belief or disbelief in the prefatory note usually determines the stand that a critic takes on whether the poem was consciously or unconsciously composed. If the critic believes the note to be substantially true, the criticism is generally unconscious as pertains to the composition of the poem. If, on the other hand, the critic doubts Coleridge's veracity in the note, his criticism tends to stress conscious composition. Another indication of the critic's position is found in the sources for the poem. If the

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3 Ibid., p. 296.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
sources are more or less confined to those which might be expected to have sunk to the unconscious level of Coleridge's mind, the interpretation is classified as unconscious. For example, the travel books which provided Lowes with most of the images of what was for him the dream would come under this classification. But if the sources cited are contemporary with the period when the poem was composed, or if they are works which Coleridge might reasonably consult with a view toward writing the poem, then the interpretation is classified as conscious. Examples of this classification would include the poems with an oriental background in which Elisabeth Schneider found the origins of the poem.

Psychological Criticism Stressing Unconscious Composition

John Livingston Lowes, tracing the origins of "Kubla Khan" to Coleridge's reading, developed the theory of "hooked atoms" in The Road to Xanadu. Lowes's book, one of the most influential and important works of modern critical scholarship, deserves detailed scrutiny in this paper. But the emphasis will be centered on Lowes's contributions to psychological criticism. Lowes begins his long search for the hooked atoms with a string of suppositions:

Suppose a subliminal reservoir thronged, as Cole-
ridge's was thronged, with images which had flashed
on the inner eye from the pages of innumerable books.
Suppose these images to be fitted, as it were, with
links which render possible indefinite combination.
Suppose some powerful suggestion in the field of
consciousness strikes down into this mass of images
thus capable of all manner of conjunctions. And
suppose that this time, when in response to the
summons the sleeping images flock up, with their
potential associations, from the deeps—suppose
that this time all conscious imaginative control is
for some reason in abeyance. What, if all this were
so, would happen? 

Lowes asserts: "That hypothetical question fairly covers, I
think, the case of 'Kubla Khan.'"8 The "hooked-atom" theory,
which was fundamental to Lowes's explanation of "the processes
which produced the poem,"9 went back to Coleridge's asso-
ciation of ideas. Phrasing his question again, with this
fact in mind, Lowes says:

I propose, then, first of all to consider very
briefly, but more explicitly than we have hitherto
considered them, Coleridge's association of ideas.
'Représentons-nous,' says Henry Poincaré in that
weighty account of his own unconscious processes
which I have already quoted—'représentons-nous les
eléments futurs de nos combinaisons comme quelque
chose de semblable aux atomes crochus d'Épicure.'10
How did Coleridge's 'hooked atoms'—those impressions

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7 John Livingston Lowes, The Road to Xanadu (New York,
1927), p. 343.

8 Ibid.

9 Richard Gerber, "Cybele, Kubla Khan, and Keats: An Essay
on Imaginative Transmutation," English Studies, XLVI (October,
1965), 370.

10 Henri Poincaré, Science et Méthode (Paris, 1908), p. 60,
as cited by Lowes, p. 344.
and images equipped, in his own phrase, with 'hooks and eyes of the memory'—behave? That is the first question which demands an answer.12

Before considering Lowes's answer to this question, it should be helpful to return to Coleridge's statement on the association of ideas which Lowes quoted earlier, one that is fundamental to Lowes's own theory of unconscious composition. Lowes observes, in regard to this statement on the association of ideas, that "it is conceivable" that the images mentioned by Coleridge "might so coexist thereafter in the brain that no one of them could emerge without trailing with it the blended phantasms of the rest."13 Thus the statement is related to Lowes's theory of "hooked atoms" and, subsequently, to his theory of the processes of poetic composition. The statement, as quoted by Lowes, is as follows:

'Seeing a mackerel,' says Coleridge in an attempt to elucidate the association of ideas, 'it may happen, that I immediately think of gooseberries, because I at the same time ate mackerel with gooseberries as the sauce. The first syllable of the latter word, being that which had coexisted with the image of the bird so called, I may then think of a goose. In the next moment the image of a swan may arise before me, though I had never seen the two birds together.'14


12Lowes, pp. 343-344.

13Ibid., p. 91.

Thus, it will be observed that the sources Lowes could uncover for the poem would give him all the material he needs to show how it was composed.

In answer to the question he himself has raised, Lowes cites four or five examples from Coleridge on the association of ideas, thus establishing the basis for his interpretation, one which illustrates perfectly the category of psychological criticism. The fact that his interpretation does illustrate the category so well should not be surprising since Lowes pointed the way, as it were, for much of the criticism that followed. One or two of the examples that Lowes cites on the association of ideas should suffice to answer his question for the purposes of this paper. The "singular instance of such amalgamation" is related to Coleridge's distinction between imagination and fancy.15 It will be necessary to recall the distinction that Coleridge made between the two in order to understand fully Lowes's example. Imagination is either "primary" or "secondary":

The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency. . . . It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize

15Lowes, p. 346.
and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead.16

In contrast, fancy "has no other counters to play with but fixities and definites. The fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order to time and space . . . ."17

First, in his example from Coleridge on the association of ideas, Lowes quotes a portion of Crabb Robinson's Diary, dated November 15, 1810, in which Coleridge uses Otway's "seas of milk and ships of amber" as an illustration of "one of his favourite notions . . . of a correspondence between fancy and imagination on the one hand, and delirium and mania on the other."18 The distinction appears again in the Biographia Literaria in the familiar passage comparing Milton and Cowley:


17Coleridge, Biographia Literaria (1884), III, 364.

Milton had a highly imaginative, Cowley a very fanciful mind. If therefore I should succeed in establishing the actual existences of two faculties generally different, the nomenclature would be at once determined. To the faculty by which I had characterized Milton, we should confine the term imagination; while the other would be contradistinguished as fancy. Now were it once fully ascertained, that this division is no less grounded in nature, than that of delirium from mania, or Otway's

'Lutes, lobsters, seas of milk, and ships of amber,'

from Shakespear's

'What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?'...

the theory of the fine arts, and of poetry in particular, could not, I thought, but derive some additional and important light.  

Lowes continues: "Now Otway's line is taken from Venice Preserved, or A Plot Discovered, a play the sub-title of which, with its veiled reference to the contemporary 'Popish Plot,' had given Coleridge as early as 1795 the title for his own political pamphlet, The Plot Discovered." Coleridge had misquoted the line, however. Lowes says that

Otway wrote:

Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber.

\[19\] Coleridge, Biographia Literaria (1907), I, 62 as cited by Lowes, pp. 346-347.

\[20\] Act V, sc. ii, last line.

\[21\] Lowes, p. 347.
The line as Coleridge recalled it is
Lutes, lobsters, seas of milk, and ships of amber.

How did the lobsters get into the list?\textsuperscript{22}

The answer to the question about the lobsters is to be found in another of Coleridge's illustrations of fancy appearing in \textit{Table Talk} for June 23, 1834, in which he quotes a passage from \textit{Hudibras}:

\begin{quote}
'The sun had long since in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap,
And like a lobster boil'd, the morn
From black to red began to turn.'\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

Lowes admitting that 1834 was the earliest known year in which Coleridge used the lines from \textit{Hudibras}, "whereas the lobsters slipped into Otway's line nineteen years earlier,"\textsuperscript{24} then cites another passage, this time from Frederick Martens, about a crawfish shaped like a lute. And he concludes: "I am not deeply concerned to decide whether Butler or Martens provided the channel through which the lobsters floated into seas of milk."\textsuperscript{25} The important fact was that "a new combination was effected."\textsuperscript{26} A dream in miniature has been formed. The example is important because it shows how Lowes explained the composition of the poem, for in both the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[22]\textit{Ibid.}, italics Lowes's. Hereafter in Lowes's criticism all italics will be his unless specified otherwise.
\item[23]\textit{Hudibras}, Part II, Canto ii, ll. 29-32, as cited by Lowes, p. 347.
\item[24]Lowes, p. 348.
\item[25]\textit{Ibid.}, p. 349.
\item[26]\textit{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
illustration of fancy and the poem the creative force—
Coleridge's unconscious—is the same. Thus, Lowes's expla-
nation of the creative processes stresses the unconscious.

Lowes recalled similar combinations from his study of
"The Ancient Mariner" in order to clarify the hooked atoms.
He states that "the point involved is fundamental to our
understanding of the genesis of 'Kubla Khan'—so fundamental,
indeed, that the obvious course of referring back to the
earlier pages will scarcely serve our ends." The hooked
atoms are in fact the backbone, as it were, of Lowes's theory
of the creation of the poem, and for that reason they require
space here. Lowes observes that two passages, one from
Frederick Martens' *Voyage into Spitzbergen and Greenland*
(London, 1694), and the other that of Father Bourzes in the
Philosophical Transactions, coalesced for this memorandum
which Coleridge made in the Notebook:

> Sun paints rainbows on the vast waves
during snow storms in the Cape.  

Lowes points out that "in the narrative which inspired the
note nothing whatever is said of the size of the waves, nor


76a; and also "S.T. Coleridges Notizbuch aus den Jahren 1795-
1798," in Herrig's *Archiv fur das Studium der Neueren Sprachen
und Literaturen*, translated by Alois Brandl, XCVII (1896), p. 268,
both as cited by Lowes, p. 350. See also Samuel Taylor
Coleridge, *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, edited by
is there a word which even hints at snow-storms." He concludes that the "hooked atoms" are in the "two pictures of sea-rainbows." "And when Coleridge jotted down his note," Lowes says, "whether he was conscious of what was happening or not, the visual imagery called up by the words of Father Bourzès and the imagery which Martens's page had earlier stamped on his memory, had telescoped into a single picture." The suggestion here is that perhaps Coleridge was unconscious of the fusion of the two pictures. But Lowes's chief purpose in this example was to show that hooked atoms do exist, and not only that they exist, but also that they are manifest in Coleridge's own writing, thus illustrating the "imagination creatrix," the process which he believed produced "Kubla Khan." It is possible with the understanding thus gained of Lowes's hooked atoms to take up this analysis of the origins of the poem, the phantasmagoria of "sleeping images." But before beginning with Lowes's criticism dealing with the

29 Lowes, p. 350.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., pp. 350-351.
32 Ibid., pp. 56, 426 ff. The term "imagination creatrix" is the heading of Lowes's final chapter. It is derived from a statement by Coleridge in Anima Poetae.
33 Lowes, p. 358.
sources or origins, perhaps it should be noted that Lowes did not like the term "sources." He says:

They are not that. . . . What they did for Coleridge was to people the twilight realms of consciousness with images. And the thing they enable us to do is to gain some inkling of what those subliminal 'atomes crochus' were--those mysterious elements out of whose confluences and coalescences suddenly emerged the poem.\textsuperscript{34}

Lowes considers it most fortunate that "we know, from Coleridge himself, what it was that struck down into the dark and waked the sleeping images to an intense activity."\textsuperscript{35} It was this passage from\textit{Purchas His Pilgrimage}:

\begin{quote}
In Xamdu did Cublai Can build a stately Palace, encompassing sixteene miles of plaine ground with a wall, wherein are fertile Meddowes, pleasant springs, delightful Streames, and all sorts of beasts of chase and game, and in the middest thereof a sumptuous house of pleasure, which may be removed from place to place.\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

The passage from Purchas, like Lowes's other sources or origins, was of great interest to him for a very good reason, which he states as follows:

For in 'Kubla Khan' the complicating factor--the will as a consciously constructive agency--was in abeyance. 'All the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort.' The

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{34}]Ibid., p. 357.
\item[\textsuperscript{35}]Ibid., p. 358.
\item[\textsuperscript{36}]\textit{Purchas His Pilgrimage} (London, 1617), p. 472, as cited by Lowes, p. 358.
\end{footnotes}
dream, it is evident, was the unchecked subliminal flow of blending images, and the dreamer merely the detached and unsolicitous spectator. And so the sole factor that determined the form and sequence which the dissolving phantasmagoria assumed, was the subtle potency of the associative links. There was this time no intervention of a waking intelligence intent upon a plan, to obliterate or blur them.37

But it should be evident that the passage from Purchas does not supply all the images in the first stanza of the poem. Lowes must find the sources or origins before he can explain the processes of composition beyond the hooked-atom theory, for the more complete is his search for the origins, the less chance there will be of a major error in his explanation. He was not primarily interested in the meaning of the poem, because for him the meaning existed only in the origins.

Lowes's search for the missing links in the first stanza began with his attempt to determine which edition of the Pilgrimage Coleridge was reading. In the editions of 1614, 1617 (Wordsworth's copy), and 1626 the name of Kubla's city was "Xamdu."38 And in the first edition of 1613 the form was "Xaindu."39 But the name "Xanadu" is more like the form "Xandu" used in Purchas His Pilgrimes, which Coleridge also knew well.40 Thus, Lowes gives credibility to his second

37Lowes, p. 401, italics Coleridge's.
38Lowes, p. 360.
39Ibid.
40Ibid.
source. He quotes a passage from the account of the Old Man of the Mountain in the Pilgrimes in order to supply at least some of the missing images:

His name was Aloadine, and was a Mahumetan. Hee had in a goodly Valley betwixt two Mountaynes very high, made a goodly Garden, furnished with the best trees and fruits he could find, adorned with divers Palaces and houses of pleasure, beautified with gold Workes, Pictures, and Furnitures of silke.41

The Old Man of the Mountain also provided Lowes with the key to the last stanza of "Kubla Khan," in the originals, or at least the counterparts, for the "damsel with a dulcimer" and the youth with "flashing eyes" and "floating hair." The key is to be found in "the inmates of Aloadine's Paradise: the "goodly Damosels, skilfull in Songs and Instruments of Musicke" and the "certaine Youthes," the "Assasines," to whom were ministered "Meates and excellent Drinkes, and all varieties of pleasure... insomuch that the Fooles thought themselves in Paradise indeed."42 This demonstration of correspondence between a source and the poem, as indicated by the italics, makes the reader loath to look elsewhere for the elements of the dream, so to speak, and this fact was essential to Lowes's method, because his explanation of the processes involved in the composition of the poem had to stand or fall on this totality of effect.

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41Purchas His Pilgrimes, Vol. XI (Glasgow, 1905-07), pp. 207-208, as cited by Lowes, p. 361.
42Ibid., pp. 208-209, as cited by Lowes, p. 362.
Comparing the long passage on Aloadine's Paradise with the poem, Lowes says: "They are at once the same and not the same, as you and I have known their like to be a hundred times in dreams. Nobody in his waking senses could have fabricated those amazing eighteen lines." Lowes detected the influence of opium and the product of an opium dream. The concluding lines were proof to him of the unconscious mind as the controlling factor in the composition of the poem. And he adds, as though for emphasis: "Coleridge's statement of his experience has more than once been called in question. These lines alone, in their relation to the passage which suggested them, should banish doubt." In short, Lowes believed that the final eighteen lines possess a dreamlike quality, recognizable as such and which could not be simulated.

Using Coleridge's letters and the "Gutch Memorandum Book," Lowes traced additional images to Bartram's Travels. Lowes relates both a letter Coleridge wrote to his brother George in April, 1798, and an entry in the Notebook for the same period to Bartram's Isle of Palms with its "blessed unviolated spot of earth" and its "enchanting spot." Coleridge's letter was about the relief laudanum had given him for "an infected tooth":

43 Lowes, p. 363.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
Laudanum gave me repose, not sleep; but you, I believe, know how divine that repose is, what a spot of enchantment, a green spot of fountain and flowers and trees in the very heart of a waste of sands. And in the Notebook Coleridge writes of "some wilderness-plot, green and fountainous and unviolated by Man." Lowes, noting the similarities, says: "Of one thing, then, we may be certain: impressions of Bartram's 'inchanting little Isle of Palms' were among the sleeping images in Coleridge's unconscious memory at the time when 'Kubla Khan' emerged from it." The images from Bartram coalesced with those from Purchas, rounding out the first stanza of the poem. The apparent completeness of the sources was Lowes's immediate objective. It will be observed that thus far the sources, in keeping with Coleridge's statement about the sentence from Purchas in the prefatory note, are from the printed page, and that they are books of travel widely read at the close of the eighteenth century. This fact perhaps lends added credibility to the idea of unconscious composition.

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47 Coleridge, fol. 32a; and also Archiv, p. 359, both as cited by Lowes, p. 364. See also Coleridge, Notebooks, I, 1, No. 220 G.216.

48 Lowes, p. 365.
An account in Bartram of the "inchanting and amazing chrystal fountain" produced still more images for Lowes. Although Ernest Hartley Coleridge did not see the account of the fountain, he called attention, in 1906, to Bartram's description of the "Alligator Hole," in which there is a story of the last eruption from the orifice. Lowes asserts that the "two descriptions could not but recall each other, and in the dream their images coalesced." Thus Lowes's dream, the important fact here, gained another source. And there was also a third fountain described by Bartram, the "Manate" Spring, which "added, with fresh emphasis on the "ceaseless turmoil," the suggestion of the 'swift half-intermitted burst.'

The basic pattern of the psychological method consists for the most part of a tireless search for the origins of the poem. Lowes accepted the idea of unconscious composition as Coleridge claimed in the preface. It was for this reason that the poem was visualized by Lowes as a singular opportunity to study the processes of poetic creation in operation.

Lowes's search toward this end centered next on Bruce's Travels, a book with "hooks and eyes of the memory" which was widely read during the time when the elements of the dream

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50 Lowes, p. 369.

51 William Bartram, Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, etc. (Philadelphia, 1791), p. 231, as cited by Lowes, p. 370.
would have come together.\textsuperscript{52} Bruce's river coalesced with the stream which "meanders six miles" from Bartram's "amazing chrystal fountain."\textsuperscript{53} And Lowes concludes with obvious implications: "Only in a dream, I once more venture to believe, could the phantasmagoria which now for the first time it is possible to estimate, have risen up."\textsuperscript{54}

Lowes had few, if any, genuine precursors. If there were any at all, one of them was surely Lane Cooper,\textsuperscript{55} who at an early date had suggested the travel books and Milton's \textit{Paradise Lost} as sources for "Kubla Khan."\textsuperscript{56} Lowes followed Cooper in accepting Milton's Mount Amara as a source for Coleridge's Mount Abora: "Nor, where Abassin kings their issue guard, / Mount Amara (though this by some supposed/ True Paradise) under the Ethiop line. . . ."\textsuperscript{57} And Lowes showed how close the "landscape of the dream" was to Bruce's description of Abyssinia near the fountain of the Nile.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{52}Lowes, pp. 370-372.

\textsuperscript{53}Bartram, p. 165; and also James Bruce, \textit{Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile, in the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773} (Edinburgh, 1790), III, 644, both as cited by Lowes, p. 372.

\textsuperscript{54}Lowes, p. 372.

\textsuperscript{55}Another was perhaps Ernest Hartley Coleridge. Robert Graves's \textit{The Meaning of Dreams} (London, 1924), in which the poem is interpreted as a dream, did little to establish the pattern of psychological criticism.

\textsuperscript{56}Lane Cooper, "The Abyssinian Paradise in Coleridge and Milton," \textit{Modern Philology}, III (January, 1906), 327 ff.

\textsuperscript{57}\textit{Paradise Lost}, IV, 11. 280-282, as cited by Lowes, p. 375.

\textsuperscript{58}Lowes, p. 377.
It is significant that Lowes did not see the traditional image of the poet in the speaker of the last stanza, with his "flashing eyes" and "floating hair." Instead, he says the imagery owes its "startling vividness" to Bruce's description of the incident involving the king of Abyssinia, with his "long hair floating all around his face, wrapt up in his mantle, or thin cotton cloak, so that nothing but his eyes could be seen..." Lowes's interpretation of this figure points up what Gerber meant by his statement, already quoted in the introductory chapter, that "Lowes is concerned with the exotic verbal surface of the poem..." Apparently Lowes refused to read any meaning into the poem.

Lowes, continuing his search for the origins, found this entry in the Notebook helpful:

Hymns Moon
In a cave in the mountains of Cashmere an Image of Ice, which makes its [sic] appearance thus--two days before the new moon there appears a bubble of Ice which increases in size every day till the 15th day, at which it is an ell or more in height: then as the moon decreases, the Image does also till it vanishes.

Read the whole 107th page of Maurice's Indostan.61

60Gerber, p. 370.
61Coleridge, fol. 45b; and also Archiv, p. 363, both as cited by Lowes, p. 379, italics Coleridge's. See also Coleridge, Notebooks, I, 1, No. 240 G.236.
One result of the entry was the caves of ice being "drawn into the dream. . . ." The success in finding this source is an example of what psychological criticism can hope to achieve. In Maurice's "Preliminary Chapter" Lowes cites a sentence referring to a "very accurate map of Hindostan, presented to the world by Major Rennell," and in the Notebook he cites this brief entry: "Major Rennell." Lowes states: "Now the work to which Maurice had referred, the Memoir of a Map of Hindoostan (1793), contains an uncommonly inviting description of the landscape of Cashmere." Major Rennell's work provided Lowes with certain images: the "romantic" in "deep romantic chasm" and the "holy" in "holy and enchanted." Unfortunately this example may also demonstrate the fallacy into which psychological criticism is liable to fall: that of mistaking what is merely a similarity for a genuine source. Indeed, given similar landscapes to describe, there would seem to be some likelihood at least that the choice of words in the two descriptions would be

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62Lowes, p. 381.


64Coleridge, fol. 47a; and also Archiv, p. 363, both as cited by Lowes, p. 382. See also Coleridge, Notebooks, I, 1, No. 241 G.237.

65Lowes, p. 382.

66Ibid., pp. 382-383.
somewhat similar. Robert F. Fleissner called attention to a parallel which may illustrate such a coincidence, since the parallel has not been accepted as a source. It comprises the third paragraph of the fourth chapter of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, a book Coleridge is not known to have read before writing "Kubla Khan." The passage reads:

In the midst of the grove was a fine lawn, sloping down towards the house, near the summit of which rose a plentiful spring, gushing out of a rock covered with firs, and forming a constant cascade of about thirty feet, not carried down a regular flight of steps, but tumbling in a natural fall over the broken and mossy stones ...; then running off in a pebbly channel, that with many lesser falls winded along, till it fell into a lake at the foot of a hill .... Out of this lake, which filled the centre of a beautiful plain ... issued a river, that for several miles was seen to meander through an amazing variety of meadows and woods, till it emptied itself into the sea ....

But Lowes seems unaware of the possibility that his sources might merely be similar descriptions. He notes, however, that both Maurice and Major Rennell refer to Bernier's *Voyage to Surat*, where Coleridge could have read "a lively account of Cashmere itself, set down with a wealth of picturesque detail--an account which is extraordinarily rich in its links with that other reading which we know to

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have poured its imagery into the dream." In Bernier Lowes found one sight which had previously eluded him: a dome surrounded by water.

Turning, finally, to the sacred river of the poem, Lowes asserts: "'Caverns measureless to man' had been for twenty-three centuries associated with the legend of the Nile." His sources for the sacred river range from Athanasius Kircher and Thomas Taylor's translation of Pausanius to Strabo and Seneca. In the last three is found that prized link between the Nile and the Alpheus. This completes Lowes's search for the origins of "Kubla Khan," with the exception of one or two details which, though perhaps of no small importance, are omitted because they furnish no additional insight into his psychological method.

On the basis of his analysis of the origins which he has uncovered along the road to Xanadu, Lowes concludes:

In 'Kubla Khan' the linked and interweaving images irresponsibly and gloriously stream, like the pulsing, fluctuating banners of the North. And their pageant is as aimless as it is magnificent.

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69 Lowes, p. 385.

70 Ibid., p. 391.

71 Ibid., pp. 389 ff.

72 Ibid., pp. 393-395.
But through the merging flow of reminiscences from all the seven seas and the four corners of the earth moves, in 'The Ancient Mariner,' a conscious will intent upon the execution of a complex structural design. And the streaming continuum of association is as clay in the potter's hand. The stuff of dreams has become the organ of the shaping spirit. And the key to the difference lies in that other pregnant phrase of Coleridge himself: 'the streamy nature of association, which thinking curbs and rudders.'

To the making of both poems went the ceaseless, vivid flow of the linked images. But in 'The Ancient Mariner,' 'thinking' was imperially present; in 'Kubla Khan' it had abdicated its control.

Lowes indicated his uneasiness with his conclusion, however, in the following note: "What is one to say of the paradox of a seemingly conscious control of sheer metrical technique displayed in the marvellous rhythms of 'Kubla Khan'?"

Finally, Lowes formulated his convictions about the poetic process, the end toward which the psychological method gropes in the case of "Kubla Khan." But his explanation may sound a trifle shallow in the light of his vast explorations: "Intensified and sublimated and controlled though they be, the ways of the creative faculty are the universal ways of that streaming yet consciously directed something which we

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74 Lowes, pp. 412-413.

75 Ibid., p. 413,n. See Schneider, pp. 262-288, for a discussion of the metrics and sound patterns of "Kubla Khan" in connection with conscious composition.
know (or think we know) as life."\textsuperscript{76} "Kubla Khan" emerges from his study as "a work of pure imaginative vision."\textsuperscript{77} This was true for Lowes because of the remarkable influence which he believed the unconscious had exerted on the composition of the poem through the hooked atoms. Subsequent criticism has attempted to determine whether Lowes's conclusions followed inevitably from the sources which he located; at least this has often been the case in the category of psychological criticism in which the creative process is a major concern.

Thomas Copeland, writing almost fifteen years after Lowes, illustrates an important facet of psychological criticism with his "suggestion, which is in the nature of a note to Professor Lowes's book."\textsuperscript{78} His professed recognition of Lowes is an indication of his acceptance of Lowes's position on the composition of the poem. Copeland's "note" provided a possible source for three lines of "Kubla Khan" for which Lowes found no source. Copeland observes that these are lines which "Kipling once nominated, in his journalistic

\textsuperscript{76}Lowes, p. 431.

\textsuperscript{77}Ibid., p. 432.

way, for the distinction of being the most purely magical in all English poetry." The lines read:

A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
by woman wailing for her demon lover!

Copeland suggests that "Coleridge found the main elements of the passage in the apocryphal book of Tobit," and his reasons are as follows:

The scene in Chapter Three where Sara, the woman who had been persecuted by Asmodeus the demon lover, "prayed toward the window", lamenting her lot, surely bears a resemblance to Coleridge's picture. The glimpse in Chapter Seven of Sara in tears on her wedding night may reinforce the resemblance. The scene in Chapter Eight where Sara and Tobias, having driven off the demon by burning the entrails of a fish, rise up in the night and pray to God for permanent deliverance, is also suggestive: it contains two unromantic elements, a husband and a fish, which do not occur in Coleridge, but it also contains the romantic elements of his striking picture. If we put together the three scenes from the Book of Tobit and note their common features, we can find: a woman lamenting, a demon lover, a strange enchantment, the holiness of prayer, and the darkness of night.

Copeland's source is psychological because it can be assumed that he accepts Lowes's explanation of the creative process. His approach differs from Lowes's, however, in that

79Ibid. See Hilde Scheuer and Donald Thayer Bliss, "Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan,'" American Imago, VI (December, 1949), 272-273, for Kipling's other nominations.
80Copeland, p. 87.
81Ibid., pp. 87-88.
it is determined altogether by similarities of the "elements" rather than parallels in expression. Perhaps Lowes, who pointed out Coleridge's interest in the Book of Tobit, as Copeland noted, rejected it as a source because of a lack of verbal parallelism. But Copeland admitted that there were certain discrepancies which need to be resolved. "How, for example," he asks, "are we to explain the fact that Coleridge's maiden, instead of fearing her demon, is full of nostalgic longing for him? How are we to account for the disappearance of the dry and literal details of the husband and the fish?"^83

Copeland's criticism serves more or less as a footnote to that of Lowes, as Copeland himself observed. But it will be recalled that Gerber cited J. B. Beer as the second major example of psychological criticism.^84 As Gerber noted, Beer illustrates in Coleridge the Visionary a method quite different from Lowes's. Indeed, Beer's approach, which differs to such an extent from Lowes's, is so comprehensive that it warrants individual treatment. Like Lowes, Beer emphasized the sources of the poem, but Beer did not view the poem as a meaningless phantasmagoria of unconscious associations. On the contrary, his sources are consistent with, if not actually

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^83Copeland, p. 90.

^84Gerber, pp. 370-371.
the origins of, the basic pattern of the poem. Beer's criticism is classified as stressing unconscious composition because of his citing of the dreamers discussed by R. Dalbiez in *Psychoanalytic Method and the Doctrine of Freud*, translated by T. F. Lindsey. Dalbiez demonstrated, Beer says, that "very intricate mental processes can take place in states of imperfect consciousness. . . ." Beer's stress on the unconscious is, however, relatively weak, as will be seen.

Although Beer, unlike Lowes, saw the pattern of meaning in the poem, he insists that

... the imagery is so complicated and interwoven that a complete interpretation cannot be presented in one straight-forward exposition. Instead, one is forced to establish the dialectic of thesis, antithesis, static harmony and desired consummation in the four stanzas, and then suggest how various images and ideas pass through it.  

It will be observed that Beer divides the poem into four stanzas for purposes of organization. Beer viewed the poem as having two major themes: "genius and the lost paradise." But closely related to both themes, Beer thought, was the mythology of sun-worship.

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86Beer, p. 267.

87Ibid., p. 266.
Beer's search for the interrelated origins and meaning of the poem began with this entry in the Gutch Notebook:

Ham--lustful rogue--Vide Bayle under the Article Ham.
Nimrod, the first king, taught Idolatry, & persecuted for Religion's sake. He was the first who wore a crown--(according to the Persian writers) having seen one in the Heavens--made war for conquest--

Beer observes that Coleridge's two notes illustrate that he was seeking symbols

... particularly of the origins of lust and violence. I am inclined to think that Coleridge went further, and identified Cain and Cham as varying personifications of the fallen man who has lost the light of the Shechinah, and therefore lives by heat--whether the heat of violence, like Cain, or the lust of violence, like Ham.

Beer's use of the Gutch Notebook indicates, as it did for Lowes, the presence of the unconscious in the creation of the poem. But the entry also shows Beer's emphasis on Coleridge's reading of the Bible which places the poem in a typically Coleridgean environment. It should already be evident that Beer was not merely repeating Lowes. The importance of the entry to "Kubla Khan" lies in the tradition, Beer says, that "the sons of Ham, having rebelled against the other tribes,

88 Coleridge, fol. 80v; and also Notebooks, No. 280, both as cited by Beer, p. 214.
89 Beer, p. 214.
were driven into the wastes of Tartary: this being made to explain both the violence of the Tartars, and the fact that Tartarus became a name for Hell."\textsuperscript{90}

Beer also saw "Kubla Khan" as possessing certain affinities with Milton, and he expanded this relationship considerably beyond what it had been for Lowes. The following example illustrates how Beer opened up a whole new area of thought for the psychological criticism of the poem with his search for interrelated origins and meaning. The lines, quoted from the eleventh book of \textit{Paradise Lost}, make Kubla's pleasure-garden a fallen world in Beer's interpretation:

\begin{quote}
His Eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern Fame, the Seat
Of mightiest Empire, from the destind Walls
of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can. . . .\textsuperscript{91}
\end{quote}

Beer suggests that when Coleridge read the words from Purchas cited in the prefatory note, "it was, no doubt, the beginning of this vision, where Adam is led into the highest part of Paradise, which leapt to his mind. . . ."\textsuperscript{92} The fact that these lines had been quoted by Jacob Bryant, in \textit{A New System}, or \textit{An Analysis of Ancient Mythology}, caused Beer to speculate that "Kubla Khan is directly connected with the sons of Ham,

\begin{footnotes}

\textsuperscript{90}Ibid., pp. 214-215.
\textsuperscript{91}Paradise Lost, XI, 11. 385-388, as cited by Beer, p. 216.
\textsuperscript{92}Beer, p. 216.
\end{footnotes}
the violent ones who worship the sun as a substitute for the lost Shechinah."93

The ideas of sun-worship and an earthly paradise are thus closely related in the poem. Beer explains their interdependence as follows:

Because fallen man fears and propitiates all things which remind him of the inward Shechinah which he has lost, his cult focuses itself on the sun; similarly the memory which persists through his fallen nature leads him to strive to re-create a paradise-garden for himself.94

Beer adds: "But like Cain in The Wanderings of Cain, he yearns to break the shackles which enslave him, and to regain the happiness of paradise before the Fall."95 Beer's emphasis here is on Coleridge's thought-structure, which in Beer's interpretation is the psychological explanation of the poem's composition. It should also be evident that Beer's psychological criticism relies on suggestion rather than direct statement. The example that follows is a good illustration of Beer's method of merely suggesting sources. Noting an "interesting resemblance" between an entry in the Gutnch Note-book and Campanella's City of the Sun,96 he cites the entry first:


94 Ibid., p. 222.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid., p. 225.
Air &c.--Five Mathem. spend every night in
the lofty tower--one directs his eye to the
Zenith--2nd to the E. 3rd to the W. 4.S. 5th.
N. They take notice of the Wind and rain & stars--
Grand Observatory in Pekin--

And of the City of the Sun Beer says: "Philosophers of
the city stood in the dome, making observations of the
heavenly bodies. The heavenly bodies were not worshipped,
however: they were highly honoured, but worship was offered
only to God." There is no statement at all of Campanella's
work being a source. But Beer, emphasizing the religious
aspect of his interpretation, connects the two citations
with the poem as follows:

It was traditionally believed that the secrets
of the universe had been revealed to Adam in
the paradise-garden, and that the garden itself
had been laid out in a form which provided a
picture of the workings of the universe. This
knowledge was for the most part lost at the
Fall; but men were continually striving to re-
discover it: and Kubla's dome is an apt symbol
of that striving.

Thus Kubla's dome has a religious aspect through the secrets
of the universe believed to have been revealed to Adam.
Although Beer did not make the statement, he must have be-
lieved that the dominance of religion in Coleridge's life,

97 Coleridge, fol. 49; and also Notebooks, No. 245, both
as cited by Beer, p. 225.

98 T. Campanella, Civitas Solis, as cited by Beer, p. 225.

99 Beer, p. 225.
especially at the time the poem was written, might very well have caused his unconscious mind to function in that channel.

Kubla had to have genius to build the pleasure-dome, and Beer, using once more his method of suggesting sources, compared him to Milton's Satan as visualized by Coleridge in *The Statesman's Manual*. Tracing the distinctions between men of commanding genius and men of absolute genius as they existed in Coleridge's mind, Beer observes that "the man of commanding genius has an ambivalent nature, which moulds itself to the demands of the age." And he notes further that "Kubla Khan is the man of commanding genius in time of peace." The stress on the unconscious is weak here. Beer has merely shown that the idea of Kubla Khan as the man of commanding genius would have been in Coleridge's mind.

Beer did not always stop at merely suggesting sources. He cites the ninth book of *Paradise Lost*, for example, as a source for "the echoes in the second stanza" of the poem. These lines, Beer says, gave the poem its "cedarn cover": "nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd/Of stateliest Covert, Cedar, Pine, or Palme... ..." Beer states that


101 Beer, p. 228.


104 *Paradise Lost*, IX, 11. 434-435, as cited by Beer, p. 234.
the cedars "recur, with more tragic significance, in Adam's lament at the end of the same book. . ."\textsuperscript{105} In a speculative manner once more, Beer says: "Perhaps the word 'cover' here helped change the 'Covert' of the previous passage into Coleridge's 'cover'."\textsuperscript{106} The lines from Adam's lament in which the trees occur read: "Cover me, ye Pines,/Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs,/Hide me, where I may never see them more."\textsuperscript{107} This source is an example of Beer's stress on the unconscious.

In the same cautious mood, Beer says that the relation between Coleridge's fountain and that of Milton is "an oblique one, and has to be approached by way of the ninth book of Milton's poem."\textsuperscript{108} Milton's fountain is "a symbol of immortality. . ."\textsuperscript{109} But Beer finds that Coleridge's fountain . . . is an image of that which replaces eternal life—the distortion of angelic energies into daemonic, so that that which should be a quiet, steady welling up becomes an untamable force, a spirit of ruin, rising up in destruction, proceeding in tumult, and finally sinking to the lifeless ocean of death.\textsuperscript{110}

The meaning of the two fountains is different, as Beer was

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\textsuperscript{105}Beer, p. 234.

\textsuperscript{106}Ibid., p. 336, n. 13.

\textsuperscript{107}Paradise Lost, IX, 11. 1088-1090, as cited by Beer, p. 234.

\textsuperscript{108}Beer, p. 236.

\textsuperscript{109}Ibid., p. 237.

\textsuperscript{110}Ibid.
careful to point out. This fact shows that the sources Beer found did not always determine the meaning for him, but at the same time he did not ignore altogether the meaning in his sources. In this case he went so far as to compromise, concluding that Coleridge's fountain was indeed two fountains in one. 111 He explains the importance of this organizing principle to the poem as being

... on the one hand the fountain of the lost paradise, fountain of the sun, cyclical and immortal; on the other the river of oblivion, its cycle broken and its fountain a whirling intermittent pillar of destruction. This latter is the fountain of the second stanza, and it brings us back to the Isis-Osiris theme in the poem. 112

Continuing his search for the origins and meaning of the poem in the basic psychological procedure, Beer found himself often in agreement with Lowes, at least as to the sources. For example, Beer accepted as a source Maurice's description of the cave in Cashmere with its bubble of ice. 113 But in Beer's view the "image of ice, waxing and waning in unison with the phases of the moon would be, in Coleridge's eyes, a unique symbol of \textit{natura naturata} in harmony with \textit{natura naturans}." 114 This example illustrates Beer's penchant for

\begin{footnotes}
112 \textit{Ibid.}
113 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 247.
114 \textit{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
viewing the poem in a Coleridgean light. The terms "natura naturata" and "natura naturans," called by Beer "the two creative principles," perhaps came to Coleridge's attention in his reading of Berkeley, whose philosophy he studied with enthusiasm just before his trip to Germany in September, 1798, and for whom he named his second son. Beer's silence on the creative process at this point should be observed. His effort was directed for the most part toward finding the interrelated sources and meaning which seem true in terms of what is known about Coleridge.

Beer's interpretation is thus both cautious and comprehensive in its psychological aspects. His caution is evident in his weak stress on the unconscious and in his sources. It is also evident in his avoiding disputes in which Lowes became so inextricably involved as, for example, the idea of "Kubla Khan" as a dream poem. Perhaps Beer was uncertain of the answers to some of the questions surrounding the poem. But on the other hand it may be that he thought Lowes had already said everything there was to say for unconscious composition. It is probable that there is some truth in each of these possible explanations for his silence.

115 Ibid., p. 110.
116 Ibid., p. 107.
In contrast to the example previously cited of Coleridge's fountain, Beer's origins for the "Abyssinian maid" seem to have determined his conception of her. He says of the "damsel with a dulcimer" in connection with the poem:

She is its redemptive figure, the complement to the woman wailing for her demon-lover beneath the waning moon in the second stanza. Like the Indian maid of Keats's *Endymion*, she stands at last revealed as the radiant white moon goddess.\(^{117}\)

Beer's explanation of the psychological origins of the nymph pointed to the fact that Coleridge had associated the nymph Mathesis with both harmony and learning even before he went to Cambridge in 1791.\(^{118}\) Identifying the nymph as "a guardian of knowledge,"\(^{119}\) Beer explains that Coleridge may have derived the image "from Porphry's allegorical interpretation of the Cave of the Nymphs in Homer, which had been included . . . in Thomas Taylor's translation of Proclus' *Philosophical and Mathematical Commentaries* a few years before."\(^{120}\) Beer notes that the idea was also available in discussions of the troglodytes--"cave-dwellers who were associated with the


\(^{119}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{120}\) *Philosophical and Mathematical Commentaries of Proclus*, translated by T. Taylor (1788), II, 278-307, as cited by Beer, p. 252.
guardianship of hidden knowledge" in Bruce's Travels and in Herodotus.

Pursuing troglodyte lore further, Beer found evidence that the troglodytes invented the sambuca, an ancient musical instrument which the English called a "culcimer," the instrument played by the Abyssinian maid in the poem. Beer rejects the idea that the instrument occurs in the poem merely because Coleridge may have been familiar with it, as suggested by W. D. Templeman. Beer's reason for rejecting this explanation is relevant to his method of determining origins. He states: "There was some interest in the dulcimer at Bristol in Coleridge's time, but that does not explain how it should have found its way into a poem where every other image seems to refer to ancient history and mythology."

Beer's dissatisfaction with his interpretation of the Abyssinian maid, however complete it may seem, is an indication of his contribution to psychological criticism. The key to a more complete interpretation lay in Heliodorus' Aethiopian

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121 Beer, p. 252.
122 Ibid., pp. 252-253.
123 Ibid., p. 253.
125 Ibid., as cited by Beer, pp. 253, 339, n. 92.
Beer observes that in 1795, when Coleridge and Southey were working on a poem together, Southey used the Aethiopian History in his own poem and referred to this stanza in a footnote:

The holy prelate owns her power;
In soft-ning tale relates
The snowy Ethiop's matchelss charms
The outlaws den, the clang of arms
And love's too-varying fates.

And Beer says of Coleridge's Abyssinian maid that "the likelihood that he also followed Heliodorus in regarding her as an Isis-figure is strengthened when we remember that he borrowed a Latin volume of Apuleius containing the Metamorphoses in November, 1796." The date of Coleridge's borrowing of the book is perhaps an indication of unconscious composition. This example underlines the importance of the psychological category to literary criticism, for no interpretation of the Abyssinian maid would be complete without at least some consideration of Beer's analysis of her origins and meaning, which, as has been shown, he thought to be interrelated. The meaning in this instance is far beneath the surface of the poem.

126 Beer, pp. 254-255.

127 R. Lovell and R. Southey, Poems (Bath, 1795), pp. 18-19, and note, as cited by Beer, p. 255.

One characteristic which stands out in Beer's criticism is that after taking the lead from Lowes, he would often expand a source, a fact which confirms Beer's stress on the unconscious in the composition of the poem. Beer's treatment of Milton is one example of this characteristic; his discussion of Collins' odes is another. Lowes noted earlier that "the mingled measure" of the poem came directly from "The Passions," and that "haunted" and "holy" also came, in part at least, from the ode, as did "Through wood and dale" from Collins' "Thro' glades and gloom." Beer, on the other hand, notes "a strange resemblance" in the metrical pattern of Collins' "Ode on the Poetical Character" to the last stanza of "Kubla Khan." And Collins was responsible for an addition to Mount Abora, as Beer explains:

Mount Abora is not simply the lost paradise of the past, where the secrets of the universe lay hid: it is also the mountain of inspiration, where the bard attains his creative ecstasy. For Coleridge, as for Collins, ecstasy and the vision of truth are the same, and constitute the true sublime.

Beer showed little concern for the processes of composition, because in his view "Kubla Khan" possesses "the

130 Beer, p. 259.
131 Ibid.
intricacies of Coleridge's visionary world."\(^{132}\) In the pattern modelled after this visionary world, more than anything else, Beer says, "the poem is what Coleridge himself was the first to call it: 'a vision in a dream'."\(^{133}\) Thus Beer concludes his psychological interpretation, which has proved to be very influential.

The psychological approach within this classification which perhaps differs most from that of Beer and the others of the classification will be considered next. In this approach the knowledge and skills of psychoanalysis are utilized. Eli Marcovitz, using a clinical approach, interpreted "Kubla Khan" as a true opium dream. The stress on the unconscious in Marcovitz' interpretation is obvious. Noting the work of his predecessor Robert Graves,\(^{134}\) Marcovitz says that "despite his errors, Graves was making an effort to explore with new instruments."\(^{135}\) But Marcovitz does not seem to have been materially influenced by Graves's interpretation, nor by that of Hilde Scheuer and Donald Thayer Bliss, who suggest that the poem illustrates the effects of nineteenth-century

\(^{132}\)Ibid., p. 276.

\(^{133}\)Ibid.

\(^{134}\)Graves, pp. 145-158.

morality on Coleridge. Marcovitz' interpretation requires consideration because of his emphasis on the origins and processes of composition. There can be no doubt as to his position on the question of conscious or unconscious composition, for he states as the purpose of his interpretation of the poem: "I intend to treat it as we would a dream in our clinical practice." 

Marcovitz asserts that "the poem must be viewed as the product of a personality on the road towards addiction; but also and more specifically, as a poetic expression of the mental state, the affects and the fantasies induced or released by the drug on this specific occasion in this person." Marcovitz was referring here to the unconscious psychological processes which he thought has produced "Kubla Khan." He says further of the poem that it "illustrates much of what we know about the psychology of addiction." Marcovitz enumerates the elements of addiction and their effects on the poem as follows:

First there is the element of orality, the fixation related to the feeling of insufficiency in the early relationship with the mother. . . . In the poem this is represented by the 'sunny pleasure-dome', the 'honey-dew', and the 'milk of paradise'. Second

136Bliss and Bliss, p. 267.
137Marcovitz, p. 412.
138Ibid., p. 423.
139Ibid.
is the bisexuality. I think this is represented in the second section of the poem where the nature elements have bisexual meanings. Third is the narcissism, in the identification with 'Kubla Khan' and in the final figure of the God-poet. Fourth, the aggression, visible in these same images. Fifth, the oedipal nuclear conflict, in the ancestral voices prophesying war and the Abyssinian maid singing to her son-lover. Sixth, the relationship to mania or depression, in this instance the depressive element in the 'sunless sea', the 'lifeless ocean', the 'caves of ice', and the lost vision; the manic element in the 'sunny pleasure-dome', the 'deep delight' and the final image of omnipotence.\textsuperscript{140}

Marcovitz says that Rosenfeld "lists all these elements as characteristics of the addict."\textsuperscript{141} Thus, for Marcovitz, both the meaning of the poem and the creative process are bound up in these elements of drug addiction. But Marcovitz states that he is not looking for "all the possible meanings" of the poem.\textsuperscript{142} Using his clinical method, he explores the meaning of the poem in relation to the sources--many of them from Lowes--but with emphasis on Coleridge's life. His method illustrates some of the more extreme potentialities and implications of psychological criticism. This is especially true of "Kubla Khan," where the unconscious is of great importance. An example of the potential of Marcovitz' method is that it shows one way in which psychoanalysis can be

\textsuperscript{140}Ibid.


\textsuperscript{142}Marcovitz, p. 412.
utilized in criticism. An implication might be that the explanation of the creative process, at least for "Kubla Khan," is as much a part of the domain of the psychoanalyst as it is of the critic.

Psychological Criticism Stressing Conscious Composition

Elisabeth Schneider attempted, in Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, to refute Lowes's claim of unconscious composition. In Schneider's opinion conscious composition is indicated by three points. These three points consist of her studies on the effects of opium, the literary tradition of verse and prose set in oriental surroundings, and the metrics and sound patterns of the poem. She first reported the results of her study of the effects of opium in an article some years before the publication of Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan. In the light of this early study, she says, as though making an appeal to the reader's common sense:

We should require that new facts be discovered about the poem, and--more important--that new and conclusive medical experiments be found to lead unmistakably in the opposite direction, before we should again entertain the belief that Kubla Khan is an "opium dream," or that Coleridge's process of composition in this poem was radically different from that in other poems. ¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Elisabeth Schneider, "The 'Dream' of Kubla Khan," PMLA, LX (September, 1945), 796.
Schneider's study on the effects of opium, used in her effort to disprove unconscious composition, was not the first study of its kind. Meyer Abrams, including "Kubla Khan" in his examination of the effects of opium on the work of Coleridge and others, sees, as did Lowes before him, "an effect which we know is the mark of opium: the extraordinary mutations of space." But Abrams' work did not convince Schneider. She says in this connection:

"Kubla Khan" has always sounded to Schneider as though it were consciously composed in the manner of other poems. She states her conviction of conscious composition as follows:

I have never shared the view that Kubla Khan is one of the supreme English poems, though I think it is a good one. I have also never shared the belief that it is a product of the unconscious mind. The poem has always sounded to me as if it were composed as other poems are--however that may be--though it could easily have originated in

144 Meyer Howard Abrams, The Milk of Paradise (Cambridge, 1934), p. 47; and also Lowes, pp. 407-408. See Kenneth Burke, The Philosophy of Literary Form (Baton Rouge, 1941), pp. 97, 283, n., for another discussion of "Kubla Khan" as a poem written under the influence of opium.

a daydream and might very well also have been begun in an idle half-dreaming moment without much plan or forethought--which would produce something of the effect of improvisation despite its technical elaboration. I have never had any sense of a more than usually magical origin for the poem or of the likelihood that, produced unconsciously, it could therefore throw light upon the depths of human experience that more conscious poetry fails to illumine.146

The studies confirmed Schneider's belief in conscious composition as stated here, and in the three areas referred to earlier--opium, the tradition of pseudo-oriental literature, and metrics and sound patterns--they illustrate valuable techniques of criticism.

The general opinion as to how "Kubla Khan" was composed, Schneider concluded, depended in part on certain prevalent misconceptions as to the effects of opium. Her conclusion was based on a series of studies by Lawrence Kolb. She says Kolb's findings on addicts show that

... those who deteriorated under addiction had been abnormal, usually extremely so, before their recourse to opiates. They had been drunkards, for example, or had had such acute symptoms of instability as nervous delirium or hallucinations in earlier life. They used the drug to facilitate a regression toward infancy... Of itself, however, it not only does not ruin a man's character; apparently it does not alter it in any other way either. The most careful and full studies of the subject tend to show that in lives which we might have supposed were ruined by opium the actual primary cause of ruin has been the original psychological makeup of the individual.147

146 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 18.
147 Ibid., p. 37.
Thus opium seemed to lack the powers it had always been supposed to possess. With such scientific evidence as Kolb's findings, Schneider hoped to discredit the prefatory note of 1816.

Schneider could not accept the contention of other critics that Coleridge's use of opium caused the "strangeness" of the poem. It thus became necessary for her to demonstrate that the "strangeness" of "Kubla Khan" could be the result of causes other than opium in order to refute Lowes and convince the critics that Coleridge's statement in the prefatory note was false. In this behalf Schneider says:

With sleeping as with waking dreams, modern medical and psychological studies do not warrant the supposition that opium of itself either causes nondreamers to dream or transforms ordinary dreams into extraordinary ones. For this latter, the chief testimony has always been that of De Quincey, whose own statements are somewhat inconsistent. He sometimes described opium as producing dreams; yet he opened his Confessions with the remark that "if a man 'whose talk is of oxen,' should become an opium-eater, the probability is, that (if he is not too dull to dream at all)--he will dream about oxen."149

148 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
From her studies of medical literature Schneider drew her conclusions on the powers of opium to produce dreams. The unusual nature of her investigations cannot be emphasized strongly enough. The poem itself was far removed from her attention at this point in her interpretation.

Study of biographical evidence on the opium habits of Coleridge and De Quincey also indicated to Schneider that "Kubla Khan" was consciously composed. In this investigation she was much closer to the usual fields of criticism. She states that "the 'dream' writing of Coleridge and De Quincey derives far more from the coalescing of individual temperament with literary tradition than from consumption of opiates."150 She says of the literary fascination with dreams current in Coleridge's time:

Dreams, both the rational or psychological analysis of them and their special character as dreams—kaleidoscopic movement, preternatural brilliance, an air of being freighted with unknown meaning, the haunting through them of a mood melancholy, fearful, persecutory, or occasionally blissful—these things were already becoming a notable feature of romantic literature in England and Germany.151

She also found, in addition to the medical and literary evidence, certain circumstances in Coleridge's life indicating conscious composition which

... discourage belief that Kubla Khan was a literal opium dream or any other extremely

150 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 78.
151 Ibid., pp. 77-78.
remarkable kind of automatic composition, such as a complete semi-waking vision on which words and images created themselves for several hundred lines and were afterwards merely transcribed from memory. The chief circumstance is simply this, that Coleridge would never have kept the miracle dark for more than fifteen years.  

Schneider notes further that Coleridge "did, in fact, experience one dream of verse--small verse--which may have contributed to his note about *Kubla Khan*." The occasion was communicated in a letter to Thomas Wedgwood in September, 1803. The verse and a comment follow the signature in the letter and read as follows:

Here sleeps at length poor Col. and without Screaming,
Who died, as he had always liv'd, a dreaming:
Shot dead, while sleeping, by the Gout within,
Alone, and all unknown, at E'nbro' in an Inn.

(It was on Tuesday Night last at the Black Bull, Edinburgh.)

Schneider says of this dream: "It would be surprising that Coleridge should have reported this dream without referring at all to the infinitely more remarkable one of *Kubla Khan* several years earlier, if that had actually occurred." The implication that there was no dream in the case of "Kubla Khan" is obvious.

152Ibid., p. 81.
153Ibid.
154Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Unpublished Letters, edited by E. L. Griggs (New Haven, 1953), I, 281, as cited by Ibid., p. 82. See also by the same author Letters, II, 992.
155Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and *Kubla Khan*, p. 82.
In her search for biographical evidence which might point to conscious composition, Coleridge's notebooks came under Schneider's scrutiny. One entry on dreams, from an unpublished notebook, caught her eye. "'I have a continued Dream,'" she quotes Coleridge as saying, "'representing visually and audibly all Milton's Paradise Lost.'"\textsuperscript{156} Schneider remarks that the dream of \textit{Paradise Lost}, or the memory of it, "may have found its way into the preface to \textit{Kubla Khan}.'\textsuperscript{157} Finally, Schneider noted a coincidence involving "Perdita" Robinson, the actress and authoress who wrote a tribute to "Kubla Khan" fifteen years before it was published.\textsuperscript{158} An account of how Mrs. Robinson composed \textit{The Maniac} in 1791, included in a memoir published by Mrs. Robinson's daughter after her death, resembles in its general outline Coleridge's statement of how "Kubla Khan" was written.\textsuperscript{159} Schneider's implication is that Coleridge's idea might have come from the account by Mrs. Robinson's daughter. Coleridge would probably have learned of this case through

\textsuperscript{156}Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Unpublished Notebook No. 10, p. 102, as cited by \textit{Ibid.}, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{157}Schneider, \textit{Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan}, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{158}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 85-86.
\textsuperscript{159}Memoirs of the Late Mrs. Robinson, Written by Herself (London, 1801), II, 129-132, as cited by \textit{Ibid.}, p. 86.
his friendship with Mrs. Robinson, perhaps during the winter of 1799-1800. Schneider speculates further that Plato may have had a share in the preface, "as he probably had, through the Phaedo and perhaps the Ion, in the poem itself." 

Coleridge's statement in the preface had never been subjected to such close scrutiny before Schneider's investigations of the effect of opium. Yet the method is wholly psychological, for the origin of the poem was the focus of concentration. Schneider states that conscious composition is also indicated by the "likenesses" which "Kubla Khan" exhibits "to Walter Savage Landor's Gebir and Wieland's Oberon and many far closer links with Southey's Thalaba." Although Schneider did not intend for these sources to thrust aside those of Lowes, she says: "Nevertheless, the suspicion arises that whatever spirit dictated Kubla Khan may have descended from the literary tradition more than from the travelers." The fact is noted by Schneider that Coleridge refers to one of the themes of the contemporary oriental material in this note published in Anima Poetae: "If a man could pass through Paradise in a dream, and have a

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160 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 85.
161 Ibid., p. 88.
162 Ibid., p. 116.
163 Ibid.
flower presented to him as a pledge that his soul had really been there, and if he found that flower in his hand when he awoke--Ay! and what then?" The analogy to "Kubla Khan" is obvious, and there is an implication on Schneider's part of conscious composition. She says of the sources:

This group of three interrelated poems, together with Milton's Paradise Lost, which hovered over them all, contains almost every image and many verbal reminders of Kubla Khan. Coleridge was reading and discussing them all within the space, approximately, of a year or two.165

Establishing these three poems as sources would be a big step toward the refutation of Lowes's travel books as the direct sources with their implications of unconscious composition. Although Coleridge did not read Gebir, the first of the poems, until the summer of 1799, this date would still conform to Schneider's estimate.166 Finding a "likeness in theme" between Gebir and "Kubla Khan," Schneider says:

Both contrast Paradise gardens with the world of caverns below. Both are concerned with the process of building: magnificent gardens and "pleasure-dome" on the one hand; on the other, a magnificent city and palace. . . . In both poems the effect of movement is secured partly through the fact that these scenes are shown first as decreed and in progress rather than already built.167

164 Ibid., citing a statement by Coleridge from Anima Poetae.
165 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 152.
166 Ibid., pp. 172 ff.
167 Ibid., p. 119.
Schneider's departure from earlier writers on the sources of "Kubla Khan" is a distinguishing mark of her psychological criticism. She placed Coleridge in a more natural environment than did her predecessors; in her view, Coleridge was a poet competing with his contemporaries for the rewards which they all sought.

A closer analysis of Gebir revealed other parallels to "Kubla Khan" in addition to those already noted. The implication of these parallels is that the images which occurred to Landor consciously would also occur in the same way to Coleridge. Schneider enumerates the additional parallels as follows:

There are "sunless" caverns and subterranean rivers so important that they occupy a whole book of the poem. From the cavern's opening issues a "mingled sound" of the river and the voices of ancestors... This is the world of the dead, and here amid the "confused roar" of Acheron in its subterranean channel, "ancestral" voices warn the hero against war... Landor even used the phrase "heard afar" and describes Acheron as flowing not steadily but with "lapses," like Kubla's "half-intermitted" river-fount. Landor's river hurls no rocks, but later on Mount Aetna hurls them in similar language... There is, besides, hair that floats; music of dulcimer; a waning moon beheld by an enchantress in league with evil powers; a "high gilded dome"; a royal bath like a pleasure-house, with "crystal roof" in an "aerial sunny arch" inclosed in Arabian gold that suggests the images of "sunny dome" and "dome in air." And the image of a palace is used for the sun setting with its orb reflected "midway in the wave."168

168 Ibid., p. 120.
But Schneider observes cautiously that "one cannot take the romantic commonplaces too seriously; they are significant only when from a special association, phrase, atmosphere, or trick of style they seem to offer more than a generic resemblance."\textsuperscript{169} Schneider's caution does not affect the psychological nature of her interpretation, nor does it detract from the value of her source.

One passage from Gebir concerning the first meeting of Gebir's brother and a sea nymph should suffice to illustrate the parallel images and phrases of the source. The passage evokes in "Kubla Khan," according to Schneider's gloss, "sinuous rill," "sunny dome," and "shadow of the dome of pleasure floated midway on the waves":

\begin{quote}
I have sinuous rills [the nymph tells him],
   of pearly hue
Within, and they that lustre have imbibed
In the sun's palace porch; where, when unyoked,
His chariot wheel stands midway in the wave.
Shake one, and it awakens; then apply
Its polished lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.\textsuperscript{170}
\end{quote}

In addition to the parallels Schneider finds

\begin{quote}
... a certain kind of richness that suggests Kubla Khan. ... The movement of Kubla Khan is liquid, that of Gebir only partly so. ... Yet Kubla Khan seems rather like a light distillation from the longer work, with story and
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{169}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 122.

persons sunk out of sight and only atmosphere and the distilled spirit of scenery retained. Yet Schneider does not proclaim Gebir a definite source perhaps because it may have followed, rather than preceded, "Kubla Khan."

After her study of Gebir, Elisabeth Schneider turned to Southey's Thalaba for parallels from contemporary sources which she hoped might further demonstrate the likelihood of conscious composition in the case of "Kubla Khan." It is significant that Schneider's second source is also a poem with an oriental setting in contrast to the travel books designated as sources by Lowes. The implication of conscious composition is especially strong with Thalaba, because Southey was staying with the Coleridges when he began the actual writing of the poem. Relating Thalaba to Gebir and both poems to Coleridge, Schneider observes that "Southey was at the height of his admiration for Landor's poem when he composed his own oriental tale, and Coleridge was making the acquaintance of both works at the same time."

It would seem that Thalaba has the same ring of authenticity as Lowe's travel books, though it is indeed uncertain

171 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 131.
172 Ibid., pp. 178 ff.
173 Ibid., p. 133.
as to whether Southey's poem came before or after "Kubla Khan." The implication is present that Coleridge's own poem was forming in his mind, when Schneider observes of Thalaba that Southey

... described its theme in a letter to William Taylor of Norwich in September, 1798: "I have also another plan for an Arabian poem of the wildest nature; . . . which, if you have read the continuation of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, you will recollect to be a seminary for evil magicians under the roots of the sea. It will have all the pomp of Mohammedan fable, relieved by scenes of Arabian life, and these contrasted again by the voluptuousness of Persian scenery and manners." Lowes's sources were also available to Coleridge in Thalaba. Schneider makes this point in attempting to show that "Kubla Khan" was consciously composed:

... Thalaba is full of domes and the word dome (or Dom); it has subterranean and suboceanic caverns, Paradise gardens, and of course damsels, mostly Arabian. In the copious illustrative notes following each book, Southey quotes at length from his numerous sources. These include most of the works Lowes described as the primary sources of Kubla Khan--Burnet, Purchas, Bruce, and the rest--but at times Kubla Khan is much closer to Thalaba than to those earlier works. The importance of this disclosure of an avenue to Lowes's sources can scarcely be doubted.

174 Ibid., pp. 178-179.
175 J. W. Robberds, editor, A Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Late William Taylor of Norwich (London, 1843), I, 223-224, as cited by Ibid., p. 134.
176 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 136.
Continuing her analysis of Thalaba, with the twofold purpose of establishing it as a source and thereby showing that "Kubla Khan" was consciously written, Schneider observes that the poem "contains two elaborately described and spectacular Paradise gardens, both false ones." A possible source for Kubla Khan's pleasure-paradise is indicated. The second Paradise, Schneider says, "is avowedly patterned upon that false one of Alloadin to which Lowes traced some of Coleridge's garden imagery and his lines about the damsel and what he called the "Tartar youth." Schneider observes further that "Southey again quotes from his sources at length. . . ." One source in particular seems to have interested Southey: Sir John Mandeville. Of this source Schneider says that Southey

... had apparently not at first copied it out fully, for in a letter of October, 1799, he asked his friend Bedford to transcribe it for him. It is an account, he said, of "a sort of Apollo-Gardens or Oriental Dog and Duck" to which Alloadin conveyed young men "after an opium dose." Referring again later to Mandeville's account, he says he should like to trace its historical origins; Purchas

177 Ibid., p. 137.
178 Ibid., p. 139.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid., p. 140.
relates it from Marco Polo, he notes. The "opium" was Southey's addition to Mandeville, but it returns us once more to Coleridge's preface of 1816. . . . 181

Thus, the idea of an opium dream was also present in Southey. It will be recalled in this connection that it was necessary for Schneider to discredit Coleridge's preface. The suggestion that the idea for the preface might have come from Southey is a step in that direction.

The implication of conscious composition is strong once again in Schneider's discussion of the feature in Southey's Paradise which she believed shows a closer connection to "Kubla Khan" than Lowes's comparable source of Maurice. She says that "all the 'rills' of the garden run together into a single wide stream spanned by the arches of a 'straight and stately bridge' that is in some respects very similar to Kubla's pleasure-dome with its shadow reflected 'midway' on the water. . . ." 182 There follows a description of the "banquet room," which Southey related to the pleasure-bridge with a note in which he tells of banquets held by the Khan in the "Chambers of the bridge." 183 Schneider says by way

181 Unpublished letters to G. C. Bedford, October 24, 1799, and to C. W. W. Wynn, November 28 (Curry's transcript), as cited by Ibid., pp. 139-140.


183 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 143, citing a note to Thalaba by Southey, italics Southey's. See Southey, Poetical Works (1860), IV, 192, n.
of conclusion on the relevance of this parallel to "Kubla Khan":

This "stately" bridge-arch-pleasure building, reflected in the river, with cool, dim lower chambers and iced foods--associated as it is with all the other appurtenances of a Paradise garden, damsels, music, and an Arabian maid--appears, certainly on the surface, much more nearly related to Coleridge's pleasure-dome with "caves of ice" than the brief phrase in Maurice noted by E. H. Coleridge and Lowes.184

With Southey drawing heavily upon the travel books as sources for Thalaba, the parallels pointed out by Schneider are indeed numerous: Thalaba's visions of an Arabian maid and the "damsel" herself; the landscape of Southey's Paradise so reminiscent of "Kubla's 'deep romantic chasm,' 'measureless' caverns, and 'lifeless' ocean"; and the threat of war to the Paradise.185 These constitute only a few of the many striking parallels noted by Schneider, but there is little need to consider the source further. Her psychological method of selecting a contemporary source and examining it, with Lowes's sources always in mind, and her stress upon conscious composition--all are evident. As for the third source, Oberon, Schneider did not examine it as completely as she did Gebir and Thalaba. She says of this final poem: "There is little . . . in Oberon that Coleridge would not see elsewhere--in Thalaba, Gebir, Rasselas, Paradise Lost--

184 Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, p. 143.
185 Ibid., pp. 143-144.
and its influence was probably rather to reinforce these than to contribute much else."\textsuperscript{186}

In contrast to Lowes's confidence in revealing his sources, Elisabeth Schneider's manner is one of caution when she words her conclusion on the sources.

The sources to which Lowes called attention with so much ingenuity and eloquence were indeed, many of them, material upon which this whole poetic tradition drew, and Coleridge himself certainly read some of them. But it may well be that his imagination when he wrote Kubla Khan was working for the most part directly upon the tradition itself. If that is so, his synthesis is something else than we have supposed.\textsuperscript{187}

Although these somewhat cautious speculations on conscious composition have not won Schneider much open support among writers, her influence upon the criticism of "Kubla Khan" has been great. The caution displayed by recent advocates of unconscious composition is probably a result of her criticism.

Finally, Schneider turned to the metrics and sound patterns of "Kubla Khan." It will be observed that whereas in the two earlier phases her attack was directed toward the existing criticism, in this final phase she concentrated on relatively unexplored areas in the poem. Schneider finds of the sound patterns "an elaboration so intricate that one

\textsuperscript{186}Ibid., p. 150.
\textsuperscript{187}Ibid., p. 152.
could scarcely point to its mate in English poetry if we except the more subtle harmonies of Milton and Bridges. 188

Unfortunately, it is impossible to summarize adequately this investigation in a brief paragraph or two. Perhaps it will suffice to note that Schneider was impressed with Coleridge's elaborate device for creating a floating effect in the poem. Of this device she asserts:

To my mind, none of this bears the marks of dream-composition, though it has co-operated with Coleridge's story of a dream by contributing to the floating effect. It does not sound, either, like any other sort of fully automatic composition. The intense concentration of the act of composing does indeed bear some likeness to reverie. . . . But it is creative will that is at work and not the wish-fulfillment reverie of certain psychologico-aesthetic theories. That will is felt in Kubla Khan, I think, even though its aim may be only vaguely determined. 189

The conclusions drawn by Elisabeth Schneider from her study of the metrics and sound patterns deserve consideration, for in a sense these are her final conclusions on the poem. The dreamlike quality which struck Lowes so forcibly is called "oscillation" by Schneider. She says in connection with this characteristic of the poem:

I sometimes think we overwork Coleridge's idea of "the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities." I have to come back to it here, however, for the particular flavor of Kubla Khan, with its air of mystery, is describable in part through that convenient phrase. Yet the

188 Ibid., p. 275.
189 Ibid., pp. 276-277.
"reconciliation" does not quite occur either. It is in fact avoided. What we have instead is the very spirit of "oscillation" itself. . . . The poem is the soul of ambivalence, oscillation's very self; and that is probably its deepest meaning. In creating this effect, form and matter are intricately woven. 190

But in conclusion Schneider says of this oscillation in the poem: "I question whether this effect was all deliberately thought out by Coleridge, though it might have been. It is possibly half-inherent in his subject." 191 Thus the question in Schneider's mind was not whether the composition was conscious or unconscious, but rather a question of the extent to which the general effect of the poem was planned by Coleridge.

Lack of support of Schneider's position may be somewhat offset by the fact that Paul Deschamps, the only important French critic of the poem, is in agreement on composition. In other respects Deschamps' interpretation is closer to Beer's. Like Schneider, Deschamps did not believe that opium alone could provide the explanation for "Kubla Khan." But, on the other hand, he thought that the sharpness of the images and the brutal contrast between light and darkness in the poem owed something to opium. He states this belief as follows:

190 Ibid., p. 286. The statement by Coleridge is from Biographia Literaria, Chapter XIV.

191 Ibid., p. 288.
Sans doute on ne saurait expliquer Kubla Khan par l'opiomanie, mais il est permis de penser que l'acuité de certaines sensations: "sunny spots of greenery" (V. 11), "gardens bright with sinuous rills" (V. 8) et surtout le contraste brutal entre l'obscurité . . . et la lumière environnante doivent quelque chose à l'influence de l'opium, quelles que soient les sources livresques ou autres ayant fourni les matériaux de la vision. 192

Deschamps views the preface of 1816 as an attempt by Coleridge "pour justifier son impuissance à terminer le poème. . . ." 193 His support of Schneider's declaration of conscious composition is evident when, in connection with Coleridge's statement in the prefatory note, he remarks that "les choses devaient être ramenées à de plus justes proportions par E. Schneider." 194

Deschamps did not follow Schneider, however, in regard to the sources of the poem, although he did not completely rule out her sources. 195 He tended to follow Lowes and Beer in this aspect of his psychological criticism. In one instance Deschamps declares his disbelief in unconscious composition, thus emphasizing his disagreement with Lowes, at the same time that he accepts Lowes's sources 196:

192 Paul Deschamps, La Formation de la Penseé de Coleridge (Grenoble, 1964), p. 101, italics Deschamps'.
193 Ibid., p. 124, n. 230.
194 Ibid., p. 125.
195 Ibid., p. 385, n. 37.
Sans doute, ces images, ces termes mêmes ont-ils bien leur source dans les lectures que cite Lowes; mais il est difficile de le suivre lorsqu'il déclare que le processus de la composition du poème fut complètement inconscient (p. 343); il y eut certes association d'idées et d'images au niveau du subconscient; mais il y eut aussi davantage; les images se rattachaient à un certain nombre de thèmes: la puissance, la propriété, le plaisir, la guerre qui eux aussi tantôt affleuraient à la conscience, tantôt travaillaient au ralenti dans le subconscient.197

Deschamps followed Humphry House in seeing unity in the poem as distinguished from the incoherence which indicated unconscious composition to Lowes.198 It may or may not be significant that the French critic found himself more in agreement with Beer on the relation between the two parts of the poem,199 but it should be recalled in this connection that Beer thought of the poem as having four parts or stanzas rather than two. Referring to House's interpretation, Deschamps says: "Nous croyons au contraire—et c'est là l'interprétation de John Beer—qu'il y a opposition entre la première partie du poème et la second. . . ."200

The psychological nature of Deschamps' criticism is revealed by his strong interest in the sources. Deschamps'

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197 Deschamps, p. 304, n. 85.
199 Deschamps, pp. 305-306. See House, p. 119; and also Beer, pp. 266-267.
200 Deschamps, p. 305.
acceptance of Schneider's thesis that Coleridge drew upon contemporary sources indicates that he endorses her contention that the composition of the poem was conscious. Citing Lowes, Schneider (Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan), and Lane Cooper, Deschamps says that there is unmistakably in the poem

"... un "paradis abyssinien perdu", quelle qu'ait pu être par ailleurs l'origine du "Mont Abora"; et c'est sans doute du mythe de Psyché qu'il faut rapprocher, bien que nous n'ayons trouvé cette interprétation nulle part, la "jeune femme qui appelle en gemissant l'esprit qui est son amant". . . . 201

But Deschamps states that "ceci n'exclurait pas d'ailleurs les autres rapprochements avec le Gebir de Landor et le Thalaba de Southey, où la jeune princesse égyptienne éprouve un amour ... pour un esprit vu en rêve. . . . "202 The inclusion here of Schneider's sources suggesting conscious composition probably indicates that Deschamps too believed that for the most part Coleridge's other sources came through the tradition of pseudo-oriental poetry.

The psychological aspect of Deschamps' criticism is equally pronounced in his interpretation of the concluding

201Deschamps, pp. 384-385, and note. See Lowes, pp. 374-376, 396, 589; Schneider, pp. 113-114; Cooper, pp. 327-332.

202Deschamps, p. 385, n. 37. See Schneider, pp. 117-137; and also Beer, pp. 125-126.
lines of the poem. Deschamps, like Cooper, found the source of these lines in Milton; he says that the conclusion

... représenterait donc "le paradis abyssinien" retrouvé; la demoiselle serait Psyché, heureuse, jouant du tympanon et chantant sa réconciliation avec son divin amant; et l'on s'expliquerait parfaitement alors l'apparition du "Mount Abora" qui dans le manuscrit primitif était le "Mount Amara", l'un des paradis de Milton, présente dans Paradise Lost comme un faux paradis, mais que "certains pensaient être le vrai Paradis". 203

The lines of Milton to which Deschamps alludes, first cited by Cooper in relation to "Kubla Khan," have been quoted earlier in connection with Lowes's criticism. 204

Deschamps' debt to Beer indicates that his criticism is psychological. The similarity of his interpretation to Beer's is evident when he says,

Le premier thème ... est celui de la chute de l'homme, avec sa triple source, le péché originel d'Adam, le mythe platonicien de Psyché, la Schechinah perdue des mystiques. C'est en particulier là qu'est vraiment tout le sens de Kubla Khan. ... 205

That, unlike Beer, Deschamps stresses conscious composition is suggested by the fact that he sees Wordsworth's "esprit

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203 Paradise Lost, IV, 11. 280-282, as cited by Deschamps, pp. 385-386.
204 See above, p. 27.
205 Deschamps, p. 446.
immortel" of The Prelude as fundamental to the interpretation of "Kubla Khan."\(^{206}\) Wordsworth, in the role of a contemporary source, would indicate conscious composition. Deschamps says of Wordsworth's "esprit immortel": "C'est lui qui est au fond de Kubla Khan, où la vierge au tympanon, représente à la fois la révélation poétique et l'unité morale retrouvée, condition nécessaire de cette révélation."\(^{207}\)

Conscious composition is supported not only by Deschamps and Schneider; S.C. Harrex says in an article written in the past decade that "it is possible to suggest, on Schneider's terms, a credible source for the dome."\(^{208}\) Harrex must refer to Schneider's stand for conscious composition.

Harrex believed that Kubla's pleasure-dome might have come from Oliver Goldsmith's well-known poem "The Deserted Village." The implication of conscious composition is obvious, for Coleridge could be expected to be familiar with the poem.\(^{209}\) Harrex says in defense of Goldsmith's dome as a source:

\(^{206}\) The Prelude, I, 1. 240, as cited by Deschamps, p. 538.

\(^{207}\) Deschamps, pp. 538-539.

\(^{208}\) S. C. Harrex, "Coleridge's Pleasure-Dome in 'Kubla Khan,'" Notes and Queries, CCXI (May, 1966), 172. Edward E. Bostetter (The Romantic Ventriloquists [Seattle, 1963]) is another writer who could be cited in support of Schneider. He says (p. 84) that "Elisabeth Schneider has conclusively demonstrated that the preface is not to be trusted; that it bears all the signs of being a late concoction designed to accompany and justify the publication of the fragment."

\(^{209}\) See Coleridge, Notebooks, I, 1, No. 829 4.98.
It was a logical enough word for Coleridge to choose in view of its traditional meaning, "a stately building, a mansion" (O.E.D.). Moreover the dome of pleasure does exist in the Milton-Gray-Collins tradition. Oliver Goldsmith uses the image in "The Deserted Village" in connexion with his vilification of Luxury as a corrupting indulgence.210

The lines from "The Deserted Village," in which Pleasure is personified as the hostess of the dome in the city, read as follows:

The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the georgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!211

Harrex's manner is somewhat reminiscent of Schneider's when he says: "I do not claim that the source of Coleridge's dome is the Goldsmith passage, but I do suggest that it is no more unlikely than many of the sources which have been attributed to him."212

This brief consideration of Harrex's source completes the survey of psychological criticism stressing both conscious and unconscious composition of "Kubla Khan." But there remains to be considered the psychological criticism which for one reason or another falls into neither of these classifications and is therefore general in its approach.

210 Harrex, p. 172.
211 "The Deserted Village," ll. 319-324, as cited by Harrex, p. 172.
212 Harrex, p. 172.
Psychological Criticism of the General Approach

The general psychological approach includes that criticism of the category which stresses neither conscious nor unconscious composition. Wylie Sypher, dating back to the late nineteen-thirties, provides the first example of the general psychological approach. Sypher's position on the composition of the poem might seem at first glance to be the same as Lowes's, for he states his position thus:

In his Road to Xanadu John Livingston Lowes has shown that almost every line of "Kubla Khan" springs from recollection, phrase and image, of what the poet omnivorously read. Yet so intricate is the pattern of the poetic vision that byways will always remain to be followed along this road to Xanadu. If, while he read, images rose up before Coleridge "as things," could not recollection of things seen also rise up as images? 213

This is all Sypher ever says, however, on this aspect of the composition. His use of the word "read" for Coleridge's statement in the preface of "a profound sleep" should be noted. If Sypher acknowledged as valid the claim of unconscious composition, he did not stress it in his interpretation.

Sypher weakened Lowes's position, perhaps unintentionally, by showing that other sources in addition to Lowes's were possible for the poem. Although it is true that Sypher was responsible for bringing to light the note of November 3, 213

1810, in which the "retirement" is mentioned, he seems to have used the note merely as an aid in determining the date of composition. Finally, it should be remembered that at the time Sypher wrote on "Kubla Khan" apparently the idea had not seriously occurred to anyone that the poem might be anything other than a dream. The implications of consciousness in the Crewe MS., discovered in 1934, had not been fully recognized. These implications include the use of the word "reverie" in place of the expression "profound sleep" of the earlier note, and the various changes which are evident from a comparison of the Crewe MS. with the final version of the poem. For these reasons Sypher's criticism is being considered as an example of the general psychological approach.

Sypher's sources or origins are consistent with his statement that "the imagery of the poem was doubtless moulded by what Coleridge saw as well as by what Coleridge read." This emphasis on what Coleridge saw, however, does not indicate unconscious composition. Sypher says of the origins of the poem:

214 Ibid., p. 7.
215 See Schneider, Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan, pp. 24-27, 90, 103-104, for a discussion of the differences in the terms used in the two notes; and also Richard Gerber, "Keys to 'Kubla Khan,'" English Studies, XLIV (October, 1963), 322 ff.
216 Sypher, p. 366.
An exploration of certain obscure byways near Nether Stowey suggests that "Kubla Khan" may be, in part, a recollection of Cheddar Gorge and of a strange legend at Cheddar; of the ghoulish cavern at Wookey Hole; and of the combe at Culbone, . . . where the poet "retired."217

The procedure is basically the same as with other psychological critics. Yet it is also different in that Sypher's sources are restricted to the countryside near Nether Stowey. For example, Cheddar Gorge impressed Sypher with its physical resemblance to Kubla's paradise-garden. Interest in a possible source is of course characteristic of the psychological category. Sypher describes the Gorge as it might have appeared to Coleridge, who, according to Dorothy Wordsworth's journal, visited Cheddar with the Wordsworths in May, 1798218:

As one approaches the swell of the Mendips from Cheddar, little more than a score of miles from Nether Stowey, he suddenly glances up to see the great green surge of the hill directly ahead rent by the opening of the gorge, by tradition dug out by the devil. Most impressive is the slanting effect of the chasm, splitting open sharply athwart the Mendips. The cliffs on each side are cut, deep and jagged, into strata tipped violently from the horizontal. The hills edging the defile itself . . . are sprinkled with yew and cedar. . . . 219

Thus Sypher believed that the more usual sources of inspiration--at least as they are envisaged nowadays--might.

217 Ibid., p. 353.
218 See Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth, edited by William Knight (London, 1924), p. 18; and also Sypher, p. 354, for a correction of Knight's date for the entry in the journal.
219 Sypher, p. 354.
also account for "Kubla Khan," though perhaps only in a supplementary way.

Sypher found a source for one passage in the poem which puzzled Lowes. In this case, he uncovered a possible origin for the "woman wailing for her demon-lover" in a local legend told to him by a woman in Cheddar, and, according to Sypher, the literary proof of the legend's existence is to be found in "The Mysteries of Mendip," a poem by James Jennings in which an old witch tells of an incantation used against a ghost:

"If then it return, you must pray and command,
By midnight,
By moonlight,
By Death's ebon wand,
That to Cheddar Cliffs now, it departeth in peace.
"If it return still,
As, I warn you, it will,
To the Red Sea for ever
Command it, and never,
Or noise more or sound
In the House shall be found."220

Sypher observes of the legend: "That Coleridge could have heard this tale, or other tales, of exorcism at Cheddar seems not unlikely."221 Thus Sypher established the legend as a possible source, making his criticism psychological. But he did not indicate whether Coleridge would have used the legend consciously or unconsciously.


221 Sypher, p. 356.
Although Wookey (or Ochey) Hole is equally important as a source, it is not necessary to consider it in detail, for the chief characteristics of Sypher's criticism have already been noted. Sypher's choice of Ash Farm as the scene of the "retirement," however, requires some further consideration because of the dispute still continuing over this question.222

If Coleridge did indeed retire to Ash Farm, the location would have a direct psychological bearing on "Kubla Khan" in the small stream comparable to the "sacred river" of the poem which, as David H. Karrfalt points out, "actually flows under one of the buildings attached to the living quarters of the farm house in which Coleridge would have taken his 'repose'."223 Sypher, ignoring this aspect of Ash Farm, gives the following reasons for selecting it as the site of Coleridge's "retirement":

Coleridge wrote that he "retired" only a "quarter of a mile" from Culbone Church. Only three farmhouses have ever been built within a mile of the church. One--Silcombe Farm--was latterly burned, but it lay too far up on the western crest of the

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222See Morchard Bishop, "The Farm House of 'Kubla Khan,'" Times Literary Supplement, May 10, 1957, p. 293, for an argument in favor of Broomstreet Farm; and also David H. Karrfalt, "Another Note on 'Kubla Khan' and Coleridge's Retirement to Ash Farm," Notes and Queries, CCXI (May, 1966), 171-172, for a defense of Sypher's choice.

223Karrfalt, p. 171.
cover to be within scope of the "quarter of a mile." The other two farm-houses (with the exception of two structures a few yards from the Church, the only ones within a mile) perch almost directly above the Church, on the shoulder of a heavily wooded steep to the southeast. The higher is a sturdy, rambling stone building, within memory of the living a "glebe" farm—tilled by the rector of Culbone Church. . . . It seems unlikely that Coleridge would have gone into retirement on property constantly in ecclesiastical use. 224

"Consequently," Sypher says, "the third farm-house, Ash Farm, a squat, tidy cottage of gray stone, is possibly the veritable scene of the 'retirement'." 225

Sypher's description of Ash Farm concludes his exploration of the byway to Xanadu. In view of his apparent success it is difficult to explain why critics have so completely neglected his vivid descriptions of Cheddar Gorge, Wookey Hole, and the combe of Culbone. Perhaps part of the explanation lies in Sypher's ambiguity as to the various psychological implications of his sources.

The next example of the general approach, Dorothy Mercer, is similar to Wylie Sypher in that little consideration is given to the composition of the poem. Mercer's criticism is psychological because it concerns the influence on the poem of the eighteenth century and of Jacob Boehme in

224 Sypher, p. 364.
225 Ibid., p. 365.
particular. \textsuperscript{226} Whatever beliefs Mercer may have had as to the level of consciousness during the act of composition are contained in her statement at the beginning of her article, when she says that the appreciation of the poem

\ldots is relatively constant whether the reader, for instance, thinks the poem a product of opium eating or, disregarding biographical facts, prosodically so perfect that few if any technical flaws can be found in it, notwithstanding Coleridge's statement that it is a fragment. But the aesthetic satisfaction derived from it, its effect, is hardly consistent with a fragmentary character or with abnormality, since its readers are not drawn from a fringe of aesthetes or from drug addicts or any other pathological type. \textsuperscript{227}

There is no clear statement, however, of Mercer's belief in conscious or unconscious composition, and as a result her criticism is classified as general. But Mercer, who worked on "Kubla Khan" at Humphry House's suggestion,\textsuperscript{228} indicates perhaps a belief in conscious composition when she views the poem as having a "high degree of meaningful integration. \ldots." \textsuperscript{229}

\textsuperscript{226}Dorothy Mercer, "The Symbolism of 'Kubla Khan,'" Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, XII (September, 1953), 44-66. Actually, Boehme (1575-1624) lived before the eighteenth century. Mercer's spelling of his name is retained with the exception of titles where the British form "Behmen" is used.

\textsuperscript{227}Mercer, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{228}Mercer, p. 44, n. 1A. Mercer says, p. 44, that "the historical method in literary criticism will be used. \ldots."

\textsuperscript{229}Mercer, p. 44.
As for Mercer's main source, Boehme, she acknowledged that she was not the first to call attention to Boehme's influence on Coleridge. J. Shawcross noted this influence, she says, "on poems written before Kubla Khan. . . ." 230 A suggestion of conscious composition may be inferred when Mercer says of the parallels from Boehme that "it is not assumed that Coleridge is transplanting into Kubla Khan what he has read; he is imitating the spirit of the imagery not the letter, even though the spirit and the letter are sometimes close." 231 This statement indicates of course an interest in the process which produced the poem.

Perhaps the fact that Mercer emphasizes, in Coleridge's words, the "interior meaning" rather than the "verbal parallelisms" makes it difficult to show the relationship between Boehme and "Kubla Khan." 232 Mercer's interest in the creative process is evident when she notes that she "will then show how that 'interior meaning' has undergone a shift in stress because Coleridge was a 'natural poetic genius' not one who had a 'desire of poetic reputation. . . ." 233  

230Mercer, citing a statement by J. Shawcross, p. 47.

231Mercer, p. 48.


233Mercer, p. 48.
Mercer reveals the core of her source when she enumerates Boehme's seven fountain spirits in this statement: "The seven fountain spirits (contraction--ice; expansion--water; blind struggle in the darkness--war; sudden release--the abyss, noise, light; love--creative force; speech--music; paradise--sport, light) do not act independently or temporally." And she quotes Boehme: "'All the Seven Spirits are generated in one another, the one continually generates the other, neither of them is the first, neither is any of them the last. . . .'" And again: "'... none of them has either Beginning or End.'"

It is evident from Mercer's enumerating of Boehme's seven spirits that she, like Beer, viewed the sources and the meaning as being interrelated. The Abyssinian maid is thus Boehme's heavenly Virgin, and "the poet's visionary seeing her is wisdom's drawing him to herself." But Mercer is silent on the manner in which the heavenly Virgin was transformed into Coleridge's damsel. Relating the heavenly Virgin to the poem, Mercer says that she "stands

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234 Ibid., p. 50.
236 Boehme, Book X, p. 5, as cited by Mercer, p. 50.
237 See Beer, p. 206, for his comments on Mercer's interpretation.
238 Mercer, p. 52.
apart from the seven forms, as does the damsel in the poem because 'the Virgin has no Will to conceive (or to be impregnated with) any Thing; her Will is (only) to open the Wonders of God. . . ."239

In addition to Sypher and Mercer who have been treated in some detail, five other writers will be considered briefly under the general approach. Attention will be focussed on the reasons for including these critics within this classification. It is perhaps unnecessary to note that in each case there is a source or the equivalent of a source. The first of these writers, Garland H. Cannon, presents a tightly woven argument for his source, Sir William Jones's "A Hymn to Ganga." Cannon states of Jones's poem:

It is not asserted here that "A Hymn to Ganga" was the only source for "Kubla Khan." It is asserted that the hymn was a probable source and that John Livingston Lowes, in The Road to Xanadu, overlooked Jones's poem in trying to explore Coleridge's immense reading list.240

That Cannon believed it possible that "Kubla Khan" was a conscious composition is evident when he says, "If the influence of the hymn can be proved, then Coleridge's 'vision in a dream' will be exploded. His 'explanation' must then be recognized as a hoax. . . ."241


241 Ibid.
One statement by Cannon makes it impossible to classify his criticism as anything other than general; it concerns the degree to which Coleridge was influenced by Jones's poem. Cannon reasons as follows:

The poem either did not impress him sufficiently for him to refer to it in his correspondence, a circumstance that would indicate his unconscious interweaving of certain ideas and details from it into his famous "dream"; or else it stimulated him directly, so that he associated aspects from it with points from Purchas and still other points from his reading and composed "Kubla Khan" soon thereafter.242

Cannon points out that "the latter explanation presupposes that there never was any dream..."243 Thus Cannon, in his general approach, was concerned with the processes of composition as well as the origins.

The general psychological approach of Francis W. Emerson differs from Cannon's in that he ignores completely the questions surrounding the composition of the poem. In this respect, he is closer to Sypher and Mercer. Emerson says of his source, Joseph Sterling's Cambuscan, or the Squire's Tale of Chaucer: "In a note, in the course of which he purports to quote from Purchas's Pilgrimage, Coleridge admits his indebtedness to Purchas in Kubla Khan. But he is almost as much indebted to Joseph Sterling."244 It is regretted that

242 Ibid., italics Cannon's.
243 Cannon, p. 142.
244 Francis Willard Emerson, "Joseph Sterling's 'Cambuscan' in Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan,'" Notes and Queries, CCV (March, 1960), 102-103.
certain practicable limitations on this paper make it inexpedient to consider Emerson's source in detail. But the reasons for the classification of Emerson's method within the general subdivision of the category are clear.

If Emerson and the other critics of the general psychological approach seem for the most part to have avoided making any direct statements as to the composition of the poem, the same cannot be said of Richard Gerber, whose suggestion, as noted earlier, is responsible for the categorical divisions of this paper. Gerber was quite clear as to his position in regard to the factors which determine the classification of criticism. His source, the earth-and mother-goddess Cybele, was part of the dream. He states this belief as follows: "Cublai-Cybele should be thought of as an ambiguous imaginative dream-core, a germinal centre, producing shifting images that are connected with, or radiate from, this dynamic centre." Gerber also believed, as will be seen later, that Coleridge worked on this "dream-core" in a state of consciousness.

As for the category, Gerber states that his approach is of the psychological kind:

On the whole we can say that there are two different kinds of interpretation applied to 'Kubla Khan'. One kind is the purely literary one. . . . This may be the only true kind of interpretation.

The other kind is the psychological approach which is concerned with the origins and the processes which produced the poem. My interpretation belongs mainly to the second kind and is therefore not an interpretation in the narrow sense of the word.\textsuperscript{246}

Gerber's criticism thus belongs in the psychological category by his own definition and statement.

Although the classifications within the psychological category are not derived directly from Gerber, he was equally clear on the question of conscious or unconscious composition. He says in answer to this question: "Since the discovery of the Crewe MS there cannot be any doubt that Coleridge worked on the surface of the poem in full daylight consciousness."\textsuperscript{247} Gerber refers here to the changes made in lines 6 and 7 and in line 41, as shown in the Crewe MS.\textsuperscript{248} But Gerber did not agree with Elisabeth Schneider either, for, referring to the alterations in the Crewe MS., he says that

\ldots in spite of such minor amendments the poem retains its dreamlike character in its abrupt shifts and changes, which makes it extremely

\textsuperscript{246}Ibid. See above, pp. 1-2.

\textsuperscript{247}Gerber, "Keys to 'Kubla Khan,'" p. 322.

\textsuperscript{248}See Alice D. Snyder, "The Manuscript of 'Kubla Khan,'" Times Literary Supplement, August 2, 1934, p. 541; and also E. H. W. Meyerstein, "A Manuscript of 'Kubla Khan,'" Times Literary Supplement, January 12, 1951, p. 21. "Six miles" and "compass'd round," were changed to "five miles" and "girdled round" respectively, and "Mount Amara" became "Mount Abora."
unlikely that the poem was consciously elaborated in its main features. . . . But in spite of this conviction I should like to regard the poem as a more consciously contrived work of art than John Beer in Coleridge the Visionary and some other critics do. 249

Gerber's position on the question of the composition of the poem should be evident. It is between that of Lowes, on the one hand, and Schneider, on the other. Gerber states his position in these words:

According to Coleridge 'Kubla Khan' is a dream-composition, based on a passage from Purchas which he read before starting to dream. Lowes accepted this statement in The Road to Xanadu and corroborated it. Elisabeth Schneider tried to refute this claim in Coleridge, Opium and 'Kubla Khan'. The truth lies somewhere between the extremes. 250

Gerber's criticism is general in its psychological approach. Gerber believes that, though Coleridge worked on "Kubla Khan" in a conscious state, the poem began as a dream.

Irene H. Chayes approached the problem from an angle different from Gerber's. She thought of these processes as being contained in the meaning of the poem. But the fact that her criticism does deal extensively, though not directly, with this problem is sufficient reason to classify her method as general psychological. The importance of her criticism is in her treatment of the 1816 preface, one of the keys to the classification of criticism. She observes in regard to the acceptance of the preface:

249 Gerber, "Keys to 'Kubla Khan,'" p. 323.

250 Ibid., p. 322.
In the evolution of "Kubla Khan" criticism over the past two generations, the most noteworthy change has been the quiet downgrading of the famous prefatory note in prose which since 1816 has accompanied the standard published text and has enormously influenced the way the poem has been understood. Since the discovery of the Crewe MS. and a much simpler, factual version of the note, the tendency has been to dismiss the later version and the elaborate story it tells. . . . This may be as great a critical error, however, as the earlier unquestioning acceptance of the 1816 note.251

Chayes viewed the prefatory note of 1816 as performing the important function of argument and gloss. This view of the preface would have a great effect on the perspective in which the poem as a whole is seen. The question of conscious or unconscious composition belongs to the poem itself in Chayes's interpretation, and her criticism is thus general psychological. Chayes explains the effect of viewing the poem in this new light as follows:

If, therefore, the 1816 headnote to "Kubla Khan" is understood as largely a prose imitation of the poem it introduces, also serving in part as argument and gloss, the long-standing problems of unity, completeness, overall structure, and ultimate "meaning" are set in a new perspective. What has been said for many years about the process by which the poem supposedly was produced becomes a misplaced paraphrase of its content— and of only a portion of its content, at that.252

The implication of conscious composition would seem to follow. But it will be observed that it is implicit rather than explicit.

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252 Ibid., p. 4.
General psychological criticism does not in fact rule out the possibility that part of the poem was composed in a "reverie," as stated in the note accompanying the poem in the Crewe MS. Writing of the first stanza, Chayes says: "If, too, any portion of "Kubla Khan" was actually composed during the "reverie" (not sleep) acknowledged in the note to the Crewe MS., or was in Coleridge's mind when he wrote his later prose myth of composition by vision, it might well have been this stanza."\(^{253}\) In this context the statement merely shows that Chayes does not stress conscious composition.

The last of the five writers mentioned earlier, Robert F. Fleissner, does not illustrate the general psychological approach as well as Chayes or Gerber. In his article "Shakespeare in Xanadu," Fleissner discusses the parallels between The Tempest and "Kubla' Khan." But he is unable to account for these parallels or even to say for certain that Coleridge was indeed influenced by them. In an Epilogue to his article Fleissner states: "After these carefully drawn parallels in character and theme, in philosophy and music, the reader would be distraught to learn that Coleridge was not really 'influenced' by The Tempest. So perhaps it is better, after all, to say that he was so inspired."\(^{254}\)

\(^{253}\)Ibid., p. 9.

\(^{254}\)Robert F. Fleissner, "Shakespeare in Xanadu," Shakespeare Studies (University of Tokyo), VI (1967-68), 100.
Fleissner's general psychological criticism thus borders on the literary approach in the critic's reluctance to relate Shakespeare's play to the writing of the poem. The article, however, would have little meaning if it were a literary exercise in drawing parallels between two such dissimilar works of art.

The consideration of Fleissner's approach brings to a conclusion this somewhat lengthy survey of the psychological criticism of "Kubla Khan." It is clear the psychological criticism has preserved to some extent the discernible trend that began with Lowes's theory of the hooked atoms in conjunction with the unconscious and came down to the present day with Gerber's compromise between conscious and unconscious composition in the general psychological classification.
CHAPTER III

LITERARY AND ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM

The early reviews of "Kubla Khan" were literary. That of Hazlitt, or attributed to him, in the Examiner, for June 2, 1816, and of the unknown writer in the Edinburgh Review, in September of the same year, also believed by Coleridge to be Hazlitt, have already been considered in the introductory chapter. Modern literary critics have been more generously disposed toward the poem than the reviewers who attacked it in Coleridge's day.

In contrast to criticism of the literary category, archetypal criticism of "Kubla Khan" goes back no further than 1934, when Maud Bodkin included a study of the poem in Archetypal Patterns in Poetry, and little criticism of this kind has followed her study. Actually, in comparison with criticism of the other categories, archetypal criticism bears a close resemblance to psychological criticism in that in each case the focus of attention is on certain aspects of the poem rather than the poem itself. Literary criticism will be considered first because of its greater importance.
The Literary Approach

Literary criticism of "Kubla Khan" is concerned with the poem as a work of art. The attempt to comprehend the meaning of the poem may involve analysis of structure, imagery, and Coleridge's other poetry or works. Literary interpretations are considered in chronological order through the nineteen-fifties. The literary interpretations of the next decade are arranged by importance to the category and by types of criticism, although some chronological order is retained in this arrangement. If the early reviews and Thomas Love Peacock's reply to these reviews are excluded,¹ the first literary analysis of the poem is that of Swinburne. But this analysis is perhaps too brief to term it an interpretation in the usual sense of the word. The judgments are literary in that the poem is being considered as a work of art, and Swinburne's criticism is therefore classified as literary. This analysis of the poem serves the important purpose of bridging the gap between the early reviews and that of G. Wilson Knight, which did not appear until 1941.

The highest praise included in this survey was accorded the poem by Swinburne. He says that the poem

... is perhaps the most wonderful of all poems.
In reading it we seem rapt into that paradise

¹See pp. 4-6, above, 124, below.
revealed to Swedenborg, where music and colour and perfume were one, where you could hear the hues and see the harmonies of heaven. For absolute melody and splendour it were hardly rash to call it the first poem in the language. An exquisite instinct married to a subtle science of verse has made it the supreme model of music in our language, a model unapproachable except by Shelley.\(^2\)

Generalizations on the poem such as these, however, have not been as influential with modern critics as the symbolic interpretation of Knight. This interpretation, which one critic calls "extraordinary,"\(^3\) is classified as literary because little if any consideration is given to the sources or the processes of composition. Symbolism is often important to the literary category because of its usefulness in determining the meaning of the poem. Knight's interpretation of the symbolism of the poem was thus his means of ascertaining the meaning.

This symbolic analysis shows that the poem suggests, through its names, "first and last things: Xanadu, Kubla Khan, Alph, Abyssinian, Abora."\(^4\) Beginning with the first lines, Knight observes of the pleasure-dome which Kubla


\(^3\)Elmer Edgar Stoll, "Symbolism in Coleridge," PMLA, LXIII (March, 1948), 214. Stoll was, however, no great admirer of Knight's interpretation. See Ibid., pp. 214 ff.

Khan decreed: "The pleasure-dome dominates. But its setting is carefully described and very important." He interprets the setting symbolically as follows:

There is a 'sacred' river that runs into 'caverns measureless to man' and a 'sunless sea'. That is, the river runs into an infinity of death. The marked-out area through which it flows is, however, one of teeming nature: gardens, rills, 'incense-bearing' trees, ancient forests. This is not unlike Dante's earthly paradise. The river is 'sacred'. Clearly a sacred river which runs through nature towards death will in some sense correspond to life. I take the river to be, as so often in Wordsworth (whose Immortality Ode is also throughout suggested), a symbol of life.

The meaning of the figure of Kubla Khan is important to a literary interpretation which is concerned with the meaning of the poem as a whole. And the literary interpretation in which there is an interest in what Kubla means or symbolizes often views the monarch somewhat as Knight does in this statement:

As for Kubla Khan himself, if we bring him within our scheme, he becomes God: or at least one of those 'huge and mighty forms', or other similar intuitions of gigantic mountainous power, in Wordsworth. Or we can, provisionally ..., leave him out, saying that the poet's genius, starting to describe an oriental monarch's architectural exploits, finds itself automatically creating a symbolic and universal panorama of existence.

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5 Ibid., p. 91.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p. 93.
Knight observes further that "this is a usual process, since
the poet continually starts with an ordinary tale but uni-
versalizes as he proceeds. . . ."8

In this literary analysis of the poem the form is com-
pared to "an expansion of the Petrarchan Sonnet,"9 though
later the critic expresses doubt about the judgment.10 He
observes of the part which he calls the "sestet"11 that the
shadow of the dome "falls half-way along the river, which
is . . . the birth-death time-stream. This shadow--a
Wordsworthian impression--is cast by a higher, more dimen-
sional reality such as I have deduced from other poets to be
the picture quality of immortality."12 Thus, the pleasure-
dome represents the "true immortality."13 "The 'mingled-
measure,'" Knight says of the next line, "suggests the blend
and marriage of fundamental oppositions: life and death, or
creation and destruction."14 Of the many antitheses of the

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., p. 95.
11 Ibid., p. 93.
12 Ibid., p. 94.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
setting this critic states: "We may imagine a sexual union between life, the masculine, and death, the feminine."\(^\text{15}\)

This interpretation has served as a guide for succeeding interpretations of the literary category. But the literary approach is not by any means restricted to symbolic interpretations. This fact is illustrated by Allen's literary approach, which consists more or less of a careful reading of the poem. Allen says of Coleridge's statement in the preface: "This acceptance of Coleridge's story is, however, strange, for the poem itself proves that it is inaccurate."\(^\text{16}\) Allen's emphasis is on the poem. He explains his assertion as follows:

Coleridge says that he had written down "the lines that are here preserved" before the "person" interrupted him, but this cannot be literally true; for the last part of the poem, that beginning "A damsel with a dulcimer," is a comment on Coleridge's loss of the vision. He says that he would build the dome in air if he could, a statement which implies that he is unable to, that he has already forgotten his dream. Coleridge must then have been interrupted before he wrote these final lines.\(^\text{17}\)

\(^\text{15}\)Ibid., p. 95. S. K. Heninger, Jr. ("A Jungian Reading of 'Kubla Khan,'" Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, XVIII [March, 1960], 358, n. 1), referring to the sexuality, terms Knight's interpretation a "Freudian analysis." See Gerald Enscoe, Eros and the Romantics, Studies in English Literature (The Hague, 1967), pp. 30-36, for a more recent literary discussion of the sexual them in "Kubla Khan."

\(^\text{16}\)N. B. Allen, "A Note on Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan,'" Modern Language Notes, LVII (February, 1942), 108.

\(^\text{17}\)Ibid., p. 109.
In one sense Allen did point to a source for the poem—Coleridge himself as the source of the "flashing eyes" and the "floating hair" of the speaker. Allen cites Dorothy Wordsworth\(^{18}\) and William Jerdan\(^{19}\) to substantiate his claim that the description fits Coleridge as he was described by his contemporaries. This source might be termed "biographical" to distinguish it from the sources of the psychological critics.

The importance of sources to the literary approach was discussed by Richard H. Fogle, who views the poem in terms of Romanticism and states the literary opinion on the value of sources as follows:

> The study of possible sources for Coleridge's imagery is valuable. Whatever we can get, in fact, in the way of information on the genesis and the circumstances of a poem is useful. Such information, however, can be dangerous if we exaggerate its function and substitute it for the poem itself. . . . To discover, for instance, a parallel between a passage in Plato and a poem of Coleridge is valuable when it adds to the poem's potential meaning; but the discovery is misused if Plato is permitted to determine what Coleridge is talking about.\(^{20}\)

This literary approach is defined clearly when the critic observes that his statement on sources "by implication" binds

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his essay to "a twofold effort: first, to give such an account of Kubla Khan's 'distilled sorceries' and 'romantic magic' as will reconcile them with the rational and discursive processes of criticism; and, second, to account for them within the bounds of the poem."\(^\text{21}\)

Using this literary method, the critic saw pleasure as the unifying theme of an essentially Romantic poem. Some observations on the poem are thus embodied in this statement on the theme:

> Fully to appreciate the theme's potentialities, we must be beguiled into believing momentarily in the permanency of the impermanent, the possibility of the impossible. The fullest meaning, a synthesis of antitheses, calls for feeling and imagination at full stretch, reconciled with intellectual scope and understanding. And pleasure... is the basis and beginning of the process.\(^\text{22}\)

One of these observations on the poem, for example, is that the setting illustrates "a typical Romantic conception of 'the reconciliation of opposites' by means of a concrete, visual scene."\(^\text{23}\) Another observation which can be discerned in the statement is that the poem "symbolizes and comprehends the crucial Romantic dilemma."\(^\text{24}\)

The two concepts, "the reconciliation of opposites" and the "Romantic dilemma," recur with persistency in this

\(^{21}\)M. R. Ridley in *Keats' Craftsmanship*, as cited by Fogle, p. 113.

\(^{22}\)Fogle, p. 116.

\(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 114.

\(^{24}\)Ibid., p. 116.
literary interpretation. The first of these has already been encountered in Schneider's criticism. But the other concept is new here. Fogle explains the "Romantic dilemma" thus:

The Romantic poet as idealist and monist strives to include within his cosmos both actual and ideal, as in Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, even Byron, and to some extent Keats. His attempt, however, coexists with his consciousness that he seeks the unattainable; the ideal can never be fully actualized. . . . The poet excels himself as it were by force. . . . Above all, he benefits by understanding and accepting his dilemma even while trying to rise above it nonetheless.26

The critic observes that "this is eminently the case with Kubla Khan."27 Within the bounds of his literary analysis there are characteristics of Romantic poetry which provide the unity for the poem.

The literary interpretation of Humphry House emphasizes this unity. House, who calls the poem "a triumphant positive statement of the potentialities of poetry,"28 blamed Lowes for the view that the poem lacks unity. The concentration on the poem itself, a characteristic of the literary approach, is evident when House says of Lowes,

Were it not for Livingston Loews, it would hardly still be necessary to point out the poem's

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25 See above, pp. 71-72.
26 Fogle, p. 116.
27 Ibid.
essential unity and the relation between its two parts. But Lowes's book has such deserved prestige for other reasons that his view may still have undeserved currency. He treats the relation between the parts as "inconsequential." He also talks of the "vivid incoherence" of the second part. This shows, more clearly than anything could, the prejudice under which readers labour from having been told beforehand that the poem was a dream. For it is exactly on the relationship between these two parts that the poem's character and the whole interpretation of it depend.29

The judgment is literary when House says elsewhere that "it is exactly the coherence, unity and strength of 'Kubla Khan' that are striking: and that they would never have been doubted but for Coleridge's unnecessary confession about the dream."30

In the literary search for the meaning of the poem, this critic tried to refute Lowes's interpretation in which the meaning is of less importance. House relied on logic rather than psychological evidence. He attributes to Lowes's "misreading" of the poem his whole approach to "the streamy nature of association which thinking curbs and rudders"; his treatment of the matter tended to approximate the "streaminess" always to the dream process, and to equate the "imagination" with the "thinking" which curbs and rudders. The imagination thus tended to become the ally of full normal consciousness and selective acts of will;

30House, p. 144.
and Lowes tended to depress the "Kubla Khan" situation to something below imaginative level.31

The attempt to show that "Kubla Khan" has unity, in spite of Lowes's assertions to the contrary, illustrates the fact that this interpretation is literary. House relies on logic when, referring to Lowes's interpretation, he says,

The "flashing eyes and floating hair" could only have been attributed to a "Tartar youth" by somebody who had momentarily forgotten the Phaedrus, say, and A Midsummer Night's Dream. For this is poetic frenzy, and the "symphony and song" are the emblemised conditions of poetic creation. The unity of the poem focuses on just that transition from the first part to the second. . . . For "Kubla Khan" is a poem about the act of poetic creation. . . . Interpretations have diverged to opposite poles of major meaning on the treatment of the emphasis and rhythm of that single line—"Could I revive within me."32

A study of the stress and rhythm of this line is of course literary. The critic observes that emphasis on "could" implies "failure and frustration of the creative power."33 But the literary reading is preferred in which the stress on "could" is slight and indicates possible success in creative endeavors. "The metre," House says, "is light and fast; the paragraph moves from delight and surprise, through enthusiasm to ecstasy; no sensitive reader can read it otherwise."34

31Ibid. See above, p. 31.
32House, p. 115.
33Ibid.
34Ibid., p. 116.
It should be evident that the unity of the poem as a work of art was this critic's primary concern in his literary interpretation. He clarifies what he means by the unity of the poem when he says that Kubla's Paradise

... is a vision of the ideal human life as the poetic imagination can create it. Part One only exists in the light of Part Two. There may be other Paradises, other false Paradises too: but this is the creation of the poet in his frenzy. And it is because he can create it that he deserves the ritual dread.35

Of interest also in connection with this interpretation are the comments on the sources for the poem, since the acceptance of these sources marks a departure from the literary examples considered earlier.

Although House accepted some of Lowes's sources, he devoted only minor attention to them in his interpretation. This fact is brought out in his remarks on Kubla's Paradise, when he says,

What is this Paradise? Those who are intent on making "Kubla Khan" either a poem about imaginative failure or a document for the study of opium dreams, remind us that many of the sources for Coleridge's details were descriptions of false paradises; there was Alloadine's trick Mohammedan Paradise... There were, still more notably, the pseudo-Paradises of Milton... Of course we have in "Kubla Khan" a fruit of Coleridge's Miltonising... but because the Abassin kings and Mount Amara belong

with one false paradise it does not follow that
the Abyssinian maid and Mount Abora belong with
another.\textsuperscript{36}

House is echoing the opinion expressed by Fogle that sources
are valuable if they are not allowed to determine what the
poet is saying.\textsuperscript{37}

Three other writers from the nineteen-fifties are in-
cluded under the literary approach. James V. Baker reviews
at length Knight's symbolism of "the surrealist dream-poem,
'Kubla Khan.'"\textsuperscript{38} It will be recalled that Knight's inter-
pretation was treated earlier as an example of the literary
approach. Thus, Baker's criticism is also classified as
literary, since he shows at the same time no concern for
the sources of the poem. It might be noted on this con-
nection that House's consideration of the sources was only
minor.

Baker departed from the exemplars of the literary
category considered thus far in that he evinced an interest
in the processes of composition. The interest in the cre-
ative process is, however, literary. This is indicated by

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., pp. 119-120. See Paradise Lost, IV, 11, 280-
282.

\textsuperscript{37}See above, p. 107. These separate statements on
sources by Fogle and House were expressed almost simulta-
neously.

\textsuperscript{38}James Volant Baker, The Sacred River: Coleridge's
observes, p. 181, n. 75: "Kenneth Burke has called 'Kubla
Khan' the first surrealist poem."
the fact that Baker analyzed the processes of composition without any regard for the sources. He says in this respect that

... the unconscious and association of ideas were of magical value in the composition of "The Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan," though they were not the whole story in the former and probably not in the latter. Coleridge was half percipient and half impercipient; he admitted the collaboration of conscious and unconscious powers in the act of composition, in the water-insect image, in the snake image, and in the passage on the reconciliation of opposites. 39

An attempt to render a modern analysis of the imagery of "Kubla Khan," which followed Baker's interpretation in two years, is also literary. Charles Moorman says that "the poem, outwardly at least, gropes at a few disconnected and unsatisfactory symbols, describes them in snatches of disassociated, though brilliant, imagery, and ends in a kind of visionary trance." 40 Taking a position between that of Lowes and Schneider, he relates the state of consciousness to the imagery as he concludes that

... even though we need no longer view the poem as an "aimless pageant" as did John

39 Baker, p. 253. The water-insect image is from Chapter VII of Biographia Literaria, and the snake image from Chapter XIV of the same work. Coleridge's statement on the reconciliation of opposites was noted in Fogle's criticism.

40 Charles Moorman, "The Imagery of 'Kubla Khan'," Notes and Queries, CCIV (September, 1959), 324.
Livingston Lowes, we may still say that here is a poem in which the normal superstructure of the conscious mind—the logical transitions from idea to idea, the relationships between cause and effect, the requirements of deductive proof—no longer limits and defines the raw materials of the mind and the images, at least to some degree, can pour forth unchecked.41

This writer viewed the images of the poem as opposites to be reconciled. Thus the opposites of pleasure and pain in the first section are reconciled in the second section (ll. 31-36), where, the critic says, "the ideal poem" is defined.42 Of this reconciliation the critic states: "The ideal poem thus involves a complete reconciliation of the opposites of pleasure and pain..."43 The final reconciliation, however, does not occur, according to Moorman, for it would involve, he says, transforming the speaker of the poem into a "whole man and poet, the man who, like the Ancient Mariner..., has himself unified pleasure and pain..."44

The study of character may also be literary as, for example, in the interpretation of Carl R. Woodring, who examined the poem in terms of the meaning of the emperor Kubla Khan. This critic displays a tone that might almost

41 Ibid., p. 322. See Lowes (1927), p. 412. Hereafter all references to The Road to Xanadu will be to this edition.
42 Moorman, p. 323.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., p. 324.
be called "literary" when he states:

Romantic individualism injected its theme of poetic imagination, perhaps inevitably, into poems about Titan, Childe, Don, Wanderer, and Ancient Mariner. But it is chiefly because the actions and passions of Romantic heroes tend to symbolise poetic imagining, with usually much else besides, that I suspect Kubla of being neither poet nor fourth cousin to poets.45

There is a touch of scholarly humor in this statement that is seldom found in the other methods. In the concluding judgment the emphasis is on the unity of the poem: "So long as the anticipative charm of 'Could I' is recognised, the fragment can afford a delight that is one and whole. What the khan never took into account, the poet has already included."46

A literary device is used in the first of Marshall Suther's two books on Coleridge and his poetry which this critic would later employ to a much greater extent: that is, the establishing of analogies between "Kubla Khan" and Coleridge's other poetry. Although the technique is not essentially new, the extent to which it is used and the purpose for using it in regard to the poem are both unusual. Suther observes, for example, the following relationship:

Coleridge quotes lines 91-100 of "The Picture" in the prefatory note to "Kubla Khan" as a poetic description of what supposedly happened when the


46Ibid., p. 368.
person from Porlock interrupted the transcription of the dreamed poem. There is an interesting relation between the maidens in the two poems. The Abyssinian maid, once seen in a vision, is another Naiad of the mirror, another Phantom.

This critic notes also that "there is a whole series of women wailing for their demon-lovers in Coleridge's poems. . . ." In *Visions of Xanadu* he establishes an analogy between the woman wailing for her demon-lover and "Christabel," of which he states that it

. . . can be read as a poem whose heroine is the woman wailing for her demon-lover (although to read it only in that way would obviously be to miss a great deal in it). . . . Like the Dark Lady, but in an aggravated form, what Christabel finds is a demon, an exceedingly beautiful demon.

Thus the basic literary approach is obvious.

It might also be noted that to some extent this critic seems interested in the sources. But even in this respect the approach is not psychological. Indeed, Suther shows a preference for the biographical source, which must be considered literary rather than psychological unless it is related to the composition of the poem. But in this case

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49 Ibid., p. 57.

the discussions of possible sources sometimes came to little anyway because of the critic's predilection for literary analysis. Remarking that the Abyssinian maid is probably derived from real maidens as well as literary ones, Suther then recalls instances where there is some confusion between the maid and the poet, as in "The Eolian Harp," and, finally, suggests that in the poems the poet

... is the maid; the maid is her instrument (in "The Eolian Harp"), just as all of animated nature may be thought of as organic harps played upon by an intellectual breeze; her music is like the mount she sings of ("The Stranger Minstrel" and "Hymn before Sunrise"); the poet both creates the mount and becomes it ("Effusion at Evening" and "Hymn before Sunrise").

The technique of noting analogies is evident here once again. It is hardly necessary to add that Suther does not refer to these other poems as sources.

The same technique also characterizes the literary approach of Geoffrey Yarlott. Comparing this method with other possible approaches to the poem, this writer lists the advantages as follows:

Or, again, we can consider Kubla Khan in relation to the rest of Coleridge's poetry, especially in the imagery it employs, which may be a less dangerous form of influence-tracing than pursuing him through the byways of his reading, since we start from the firmer basis.

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51 Ibid., p. 267.
52 Ibid., p. 269.
of the author's professed or, at any rate, customary standpoint. This approach moreover is validated by Coleridge's own Preface to the poem, in which he recorded the remarkable extent to which the composition arose from a free association of ideas. . . . Doubtless he wrote this Preface partly in self-defense, anticipating the charge of obscurity which the poem's acknowledged imperfection of organization would produce, but it provides nevertheless a useful clue to the elucidation of **Kubla Khan**.83

These comments on the preface seem to be derived from reading it together with the poem.

In this literary interpretation the critic also employs the biographical source, a device which is characteristic of literary criticism because the source is not used to explain the composition of the poem. Yarloct uses this device in identifying the Abyssinian maid as essentially Mary Evans, who, according to the critic, was Coleridge's "former mistress."54 He states of this identification: "There is ample evidence that 'Lewti' was a cover for Mary Evans. There is first, Lewti's close resemblance to The Sigh (1794), the poem in which, while yielding to the 'stern decree,' Coleridge had revealed his hopeless infatuation with Mary Evans. . . ."55 The lines from "The Sigh" to which Yarloct refers read:

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54 Ibid., App. II, p. 310.

55 Ibid. The "stern decree" refers to Coleridge's marriage.
Thy Image may not banish'd be—
Still, Mary! still I sigh for thee. 56

And the lines from "Lewti" which resemble these are as follows:

At midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind. 57

Among other reasons given in support of the view that Mary Evans inspired the portrait of the Abyssinian maid is this one: "Finally, there is the conclusive fact that in an unpublished variant of Lewti, Coleridge forgot himself and actually substituted Mary's name for 'Lewti.' . . ." 58 The lines from the unpublished variant read as follows:

High o'er the silver rocks I roved
To forget the form I loved
In hopes fond fancy would be kind
And steal my Mary from my mind. 59

All that remained to be done was for Yarlott to note how much Lewti resembles the Abyssinian maid. Thus the source suggested by Yarlott differs from those observed in the psychological category in that the critic does not relate Mary Evans to the processes of composition.

58Yarlott, App. II, p. 311.
59"Lewti," as cited by Ibid., italics and period
In contrast, the customary—-one might say, traditional—literary approach is exemplified by George Watson, who set as his goal the unraveling of the meaning of the poem. He states the problem with ironic humor: "We now know almost everything about Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan' except what the poem is about." Of this question the critic says: "If it is not at first obvious that the conclusion of the poem is about poetic creation, no one who re-read the poem in the light of this hypothesis could ever doubt again that it was." The goal of revealing what the poem is about and the reason given for accepting this interpretation indicate the literary approach.

This critic disagrees with Lowes in a typically literary manner. Attempting to show that the poem has unity and meaning, he asserts that "the dream-hypothesis does not help." "Lowes's defence of Coleridge's story," he says, referring to Lowes's statement about the "vivid incoherence" of the last eighteen lines, "is based on an assumption that few wide-awake readers will find convincing. . . ." In support of this assertion he cites Peacock's reply to the

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61 Ibid., p. 24.
62 Ibid., p. 22.
63 See Lowes, p. 363.
64 Watson, p. 22.
reviewers in 1818: "'There are very few specimens of lyrical poetry,' he argued, 'so plain, so consistent, so completely simplex et unum from first to last' as 'Kubla Khan.' . . ."65 Proceeding in the tradition of House's literary approach, Watson divides "Kubla Khan" into two parts or sections. Each part is a poem or, as in the second part, about a poem. The critic says of these two poems:

One of them is there in the first thirty-six lines of the poem; and though the other is nowhere to be found, we are told what it would do to the reader and what it would do to the poet. The reader would be able to visualize a palace and park he had never seen; and the poet would behave after the classic manner of poets, like a madman. This second poem . . . is so evidently the real thing that it is clear that the poem of the first thirty-six lines is not—not quite a poem at all, in Coleridge's terms.66

The reason that Coleridge did not consider lines 1-36 poetical, Watson says, can be found in Biographia Literaria where Coleridge lists "matter-of-factness" as "the second of Wordsworth's defects as a poet. . . ."67 The concentration on "Kubla Khan" as a work of art assures the classifying of this interpretation as literary.

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66 Watson, Coleridge the Poet, p. 124.

67 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, Chapter XXII, as cited by Ibid.
A similar literary approach to "Kubla Khan" is evident in Walter Jackson Bate's criticism. Bate says of the direct approach to the poem:

With none of Coleridge's major poems is less gained by avoiding the obvious. Even a surface interpretation of the "Ancient Mariner"—not to mention "Christabel"—faces difficulties. But in "Kubla Khan" the simplest and most direct interpretation is not only permitted but almost compelled by the poem. . . . If we overlook or forget it, we are left with a more static conception of the poem. And it is very easy to overlook if we are too eager to elucidate some special part or aspect of the poem, or to apply something extraneous about Coleridge's medical or psychological history.68

This statement leaves little doubt as to which approach the critic employed in his interpretation.

In this literary interpretation, as in the preceding one, the poem is viewed as consisting of two parts. Bate observes that this is the "simple, twofold division that was to prove congenial to the greater Romantic lyric, especially some of the odes of Shelley and Keats."69 The focus of attention is on "Kubla Khan" as a work of art in the Romantic period. Thus the interpretation is similar to Fogle's. But Bate sees in the poem an "odal hymn" and a "credo" which he explains as follows:

To begin with, there is the "odal hymn," which postulates a challenge, ideal, or prototype that the poet hopes to reach or transcend. The

69Ibid.
second part, proceeding from that challenge, consists of one of those concluding "credos," those personal expressions of hope or ambition, that were to become more common in the later Romantic period (particularly associated with such poems as Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" or Keats's "Ode to Psyche").

The literary approach to the poem is not always as precise as in this interpretation. In a more general interpretation Richard Haven says in reference to some of the earlier interpretations: "Few intelligent readers of poetry would now read "Kubla Khan" either as a meaningless dream or as an allegory whose meaning could be stated with equal accuracy in abstract terms." He asserts further that "the poem's space and time are dissociated from ours, and we cannot use them to connect it with any conceptualized world which we know."

In this approach the difficulties facing the reader are analyzed. The view of the poem as consisting of "psychic patterns" illustrates an absorption with the poem itself. Haven says of these psychic patterns: "We may translate the psychic patterns which we recognize or to which we respond into conceptual terms... But we are restating in another, and abstract, language... only something of what the poem

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70 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
symbolizes." Interest in the poem itself and in symbolism characterizes the literary approach.

Structure, like symbolism, is sometimes a major concern of literary criticism. House's emphasis on the division of the poem into two parts shows a basic concern with structure. But later the structure of the poem was studied in detail by Alan C. Purves and Duane B. Schneider. In the first of these two interpretations it is asserted that the "structure of the poem . . . does much to support the general interpretation of 'Kubla Khan' advanced by George Watson and Humphry House, who claim that the poem is not one of 'frustration and failure, but a triumphant statement of the potentialities of poetry.'" The fact that the criticism of both Watson and House falls within the literary category may point to the interest of the literary critic in structure. In the second analysis it is observed that the structure supports an application to the poem of Coleridge's doctrine of the reconciliation of opposites, and Fogle, House, Knight, and Dorothy Mercer are listed as critics supporting this doctrine.

74 Ibid.
75 House, p. 117; and also Watson, "The Meaning of 'Kubla Khan,'" pp. 23-27, both as cited by Alan C. Purves, "Formal Structure in 'Kubla Khan,'" Studies in Romanticism, I (Spring, 1962), 189. The quotation seems to be the essence of a statement by House. See also House, p. 116.
76 Duane B. Schneider, "The Structure of Kubla Khan," American Notes and Queries, I (January, 1963), 68, 70, n. 1, Charles Moorman could be added to the list.
The close relationship that sometimes exists between the literary approach and the general psychological method is illustrated by Hans H. Meier. In this interpretation of the poem a number of influences are suggested. But in spite of these influences this writer classified his own criticism in accordance with Gerber's system as literary. He makes this statement at the end of his second article on the poem:

After this article was written, a sequel by Richard Gerber to his Keys to 'Kubla Khan' appeared in English Studies. . . entitled Cybele, Kubla Khan, and Keats, which in turn had been ready before my first article . . . had appeared. For our general difference in outlook, I can now refer to his exposition on pp. 370-1, and confirm what I have outlined above, viz. that I mainly favour the 'purely literary' interpretation as against his chiefly 'psychological' approach.\footnote{Hans Heinrich Meier, "Xanaduvian Residues," English Studies, XLVIII (April, 1967), 155, n. 40. See by the same author "Ancient Lights on Kubia's Lines," English Studies, XLVI (February, 1965), 15-29.}

In the same article this writer explains the difference between his approach, on the one hand, and that of Gerber and Werner W. Beyer,\footnote{Werner W. Beyer, The Enchanted Forest (Oxford, 1963).} on the other, as follows:

They seize upon one (extraneous) myth, Cybele or Oberon, and find in it the one formative motif (or motive) which they perceive re-emerging in the most diverse elements of the poem, say, Cybele in the forests, the earth, the rocks, the river, etc. My own preference (and that of others) is for almost the opposite: to take one element (and so one by one), e.g.
the sacred river, and discover the diverse symbolism at various levels that may accrue around it, e.g. 'the River of Paradise, of Life, of Time, of Poetry, Styx, Adonis'. This seems to me a more faithful account of the growth of symbolic meanings round a cherished poetic image, and one that because it necessitates an open system leaves us at liberty...to find, and cherish, more.79

Yet the similarity between the two approaches is evident. The "diverse symbolism" of this literary critic shows some resemblance to the sources of psychological critics.

The difference in the literary and psychological methods was sought by Meier, and a discovery was made about the difference in the way he and Gerber look at the poem. This difference concerns the importance attached to the creative process in the two interpretations. Meier states:

Some private comparison of notes with Richard Gerber showed that our more significant difference was not so much in differing (chiefly mythological) detail, to which in good faith various weight as evidence may be allowed, as in different outlook: while he sees the creative process at the back of the poem, I have been looking at the finished product. And I would still incline to the view that the critic's first duty is with the finished product, the poem as we have it, and that the creative act, if it can ever be discerned, is best adumbrated by tracing the lines of the poem most attentively.80

Therefore, although there is a similarity between the two methods at times, a difference exists even then.

79Meier, pp. 154-155.
80Ibid., p. 147.
In contrast, the next interpretation is literary from beginning to end. John Shelton followed the discussions of the Crewe MS. by Alice Snyder and E. H. W. Meyerstein with an interpretation based, at least to some extent, on the holograph. Photographic reproductions of the Crewe MS. accompany this interpretation of the poem as a depiction "not only of the transitory nature of man's achievements but also of the fleeting nature of inspiration." The critic observes, besides some discrepancies between the two versions of the Crewe MS., that "neither commentator draws attention to the division of the poem into two stanzas instead of the three or four in the printed editions." This division occurs at the obvious break in the continuity of the poem after line 36, where the Abyssinian maid is first mentioned by the speaker.

The next interpretation illustrates the fact that a study of character or emotions may be literary. Rothman's interpretation is an analysis of the speaker's emotions and feelings, especially the joy, despair, and contentment of

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81 See Times Literary Supplement for August 2, 1934, p. 541; January 12, 1951, p. 21; February 9, 1951, p. 85.
83 Ibid., p. 34.
The emotions displayed by the speaker, or poet, are part of the poem, and this analysis is a study of one aspect of "Kubla Khan."

Another interpretation which bears a psychological connection is that of John Ower in his "analogue" to the poem. Although this critic's interest in parallels is similar to the psychological critic's interest, his lack of concern for the creative process is evident. Of this analogue, found in lines 1-12 of Gray's Ode "The Progress of Poesy," Ower says:

Here we have a stream, representing poetry, which begins in a fountain, winds through fertile fields with a "mazy progress," and ends in a cataract. The significance of this parallel for our understanding of the symbolic significance of Coleridge's "sacred river" should be evident.

Literary criticism of the poem has mellowed appreciably since the early reviews. In the past forty years its scope


86 T. S. Eliot (The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism [Cambridge, 1933]), who has little to say about the poem and no praise for it, came before the mellowing process began in earnest. He says (p. 139), quoting a line from The Tempest: "The faith in mystical inspiration is responsible for the exaggerated repute of Kubla Khan. The imagery of that fragment, certainly, whatever its origins in Coleridge's reading, sank to the depths of Coleridge's feeling, was saturated, transformed there--"those are pearls that were his eyes"--and brought up into daylight again. But it is not used: the poem has not been written."
has widened until it now includes almost every aspect of the finished poem, and it is perhaps significant that in recent years two writers using the literary approach have gone to Coleridge's other poems for aid in determining the meaning of passages.

The Archetypal Approach

Archetypal criticism deals with the archetypes and archetypal patterns which lie behind the images of the poem. Although the archetypal approach resembles the psychological method in that the attention is concentrated elsewhere than on the poem as a work of art, archetypal criticism is not primarily concerned with the sources and the processes of composition as is true in the case of psychological criticism.

The criticism of "Kubla Khan" by Maud Bodkin is archetypal by her own statement quoted in the introductory chapter. It might also be noted that Chapter III of Archetypal Patterns in Poetry, in which the poem is examined, is a study of the Paradise-Hades archetype. This critic thought of the search for archetypes as an individual experience, suggesting the presence of this individual quality in the archetypal approach when she says that she uses "the term 'archetypal pattern' to refer to that within us which, in

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Gilbert Murray's phrase, leaps in response to the effective presentation of poetry of an ancient theme."\(^{88}\) "Kubla Khan" is thus viewed in the perspective of interrelated imagery and emotion.

Relying on Lowes's sources, Bodkin found the archetype of Kubla's Paradise with its caverns in Milton's \textit{Paradise Lost}. She says of the parallels in Milton's poem: "Here the whole plan of river, mount, and garden is paralleled."\(^{89}\) The archetypal pattern of the poem as revealed in the last stanza in particular, Bodkin says, is

\textit{... a presentation of sunlit gardens above and dark caverns below--an image corresponding in some degree to the traditional ideas of Paradise and Hades--recognized as the vision of a poet inspired by the music of a mysterious maiden.} \(^{90}\)

With this archetypal pattern in mind, Bodkin finds in the setting of Milton's Paradise, "recurring at the poem's main divisions, the figure of the poet himself and of the muse that inspires him; and the passages that constitute this setting of the vision are perhaps of the whole communicated experience the part which we feel most poignantly to-day."\(^{91}\)


\(^{89}\)Bodkin, p. 91.

\(^{90}\)\textit{Ibid.}, p. 96.

\(^{91}\)\textit{Ibid.}, p. 98.
But *Paradise Lost* was only the beginning of Maud Bodkin's search for the archetype of what she calls "the mountain as a seat of blessedness with caverned depths below." She states that this "image came to Milton by two lines of descent, through Greek and through Hebrew literature." Olympus, Sinai, and "Mashu" from the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh are cited in connection with Coleridge's mountain, and the *Phaedo* of Plato is named as the probable origins of the caverns and "sacred river" with its subterranean sea. The archetypal critic is not concerned with establishing the fact that Coleridge read these works before composing "Kubla Khan." Bodkin examines the poem only to introduce the Paradise-Hades archetype.

A difference in the conclusions from those already considered may also be noted. In this archetypal approach the emphasis in the conclusion is on the interrelated patterns of imagery and emotion. The emotion itself is determined with the aid of the sources. This critic says of the patterns:

92 Ibid., p. 100.
93 Ibid.
Changeful and subtly interrelated as these patterns of emotion and imagery are found to be, yet the image of the watered garden and the mountain height show some persistent affinity with the desire and imaginative enjoyment of supreme well-being, or divine bliss, while the cavern depth appears as the objectification of an imaginative fear—an experience of fascination it may be, in which the pain of fear is lost . . .; in other instances the horror of loss and frustration . . . sounds its intrinsic note of pain even through the opposing gain and triumph that poetic expression achieves.95

In another archetypal interpretation the poem is viewed as describing Jung's process of individuation. Heninger compares his criticism to that of his predecessor in these words: "Although I accept Miss Bodkin's working hypothesis (p. 1), our readings of 'Kubla Khan' differ widely."96 Actually, the resemblance of this interpretation to Bodkin's is very slight, that of Heninger being more Jungian in its analysis and terminology. This writer observes in regard to Jung that "'Kubla Khan' has been often subjected to Freudian analysis, replete with sexuality; but Jung's postulate of the collective unconscious with its archetypal patterns provides a much more inclusive system within which to consider the poem."97

Relating Coleridge to Jung, Heninger asserts that "Coleridge shared Jung's view that poetry is the communication

95 Bodkin, p. 114.
96 Heninger, p. 358, n. 2.
97 Ibid., p. 358.
of archetypal wisdom." The following statement, from Chapter XV of *Biographia Literaria*, is cited in support of the assertion: "Poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language." Heninger continues:

In his fully developed poetics, Coleridge included a supplementary concept of symbol, asserting that a symbol is valid because it is "the transluence of the eternal through and in the temporal." The task of reading "Kubla Khan" then resolves into identifying the archetypal patterns, into exposing the abstract concepts beneath the objective correlatives. And the success of the poem has been due to each reader's intuitive response to its primordial symbols, though few readers have been able to recognize them in conscious terms.

At this point the interpretation makes a significant departure from the preceding one, for Heninger states further that the "poem itself is a description of a common psychological experience delineated by Jung as 'the individuation process,' an integration of disparate elements by which the personality achieves identity and wholeness." The

98 Ibid., p. 359.


100 samuel taylor coleridge, *the statesman's manual*, vol. i of the complete works of samuel taylor coleridge, edited by w. g. t. shedd, 7 vols. (new york, 1954), p. 437, as cited by heninger, p. 359.

101 heninger, p. 359.

102 Ibid.
reference is not to the psychological origin of the poem, since Coleridge antedates Jung. Heninger, relating the process of individuation to archetypes, says that Jung

\[ \ldots \text{concludes from his clinical experience that awareness of the strivings to achieve individuation is per se archetypal. It is revealed in dreams and visions by numerous and varied images, all of which may be called archetypes of the self.} \]  

"Kubla Khan," the critic proposes, "is an expression of Coleridge's attempt at individuation---an attempt recorded in symbols which commonly appear among the case-histories and alchemical treatises discussed by Jung."\(^{104}\) Heninger observes that the alchemists symbolized the self "by geometric figures based on the number 4---what Jung calls 'mandalas'---such as the cross with equal arms, the square, or the circle on whose circumference are four equi-distant foci of interest."\(^{105}\)

In this interpretation Jung's archetype for the Abyssinian maid is revealed as follows:

Jung has noted that in each man's unconscious there is an inherent feminine element which stands in a compensatory relationship to his

\(^{103}\text{Ibid.}; \text{p. 360.}\)

\(^{104}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{105}\text{Ibid.}; \text{p. 361. \ The term "mandala" is used by Jung in The Secret of the Golden Flower (London, 1938), pp. 96 ff.; and also in Psychology and Alchemy (New York, 1953), pp. 91 ff.}\)
consciously. . . . Jung calls this inherent femininity the "anima," "the unknown woman who personifies the unconscious." In classical times this psychological factor took the form of the Muse . . .; in alchemy, it was represented as the soror mystica, the female helper who assisted the alchemist in his opus. 106

Heninger observes that the "mysterious Abyssinian maid, then, is Coleridge's soror mystica. . ."107 As for the poet, he "would become an archetypal figure whom Jung labels 'the old wise man.'"108

One or two other archetypes are suggested for the imagery of the poem in still another archetypal interpretation. Kathleen Raine asserts, in her article "Traditional Symbolism in Kubla Khan," that attempts to interpret the poem using Freudian techniques . . . gave place in due course to Jung's imaginatively richer discoveries of an innate conformation of archetypes which tend to appear in similar forms in the myths of all religions, and also in dreams and visions. We may recognize them--whether in myths which move us or in dreams of unusual power--by a certain sense of something already known, of recollection of something we had forgotten, an assent, a coming into our own; anamnesis, Plato calls this awakening of innate knowledge we did not know ourselves to possess. 109

107 Heninger, p. 366.
108 Jung, Integration of the Personality, pp. 87-88, as cited by Ibid.
These archetypes are what the critic means by the term "traditional symbolism." She says of Coleridge in this connection: "In the literature of Tradition--the learning of the imagination--Coleridge was deeply versed. When he was a schoolboy he was already reading the neo-Platonists in Thomas Taylor's translations. . . ." 110

For "Alph, the sacred river," Raine suggests "a few of the associated strands which Coleridge has condensed into the phrase." 111 The thread of these strands, Raine says, "is the common symbolic language employed by poets and painters of the European tradition," 112 or the archetypes. The strands that she suggests for the river originated for the most part in Greek and Hebrew literature, as in the case of Bodkin. Of the river in Greek myths Raine says:

A river that flows from a hidden fountain is found in many Greek myths. Psyche, in Apuleius' legend of Cupid and Psyche, is sent to draw water from the unapproachable source of the Styx; and the Orphic Hymn to the Fates describes those weavers of destiny as dwelling in a dark cave from whose depths the sacred river flows. Porphyry's De Antro Nympharum (On the Cave of the Nymphs) is a symbolic description of the cave (Plato's symbol of this world) from whose darkness, "Through caverns measureless to man," issues the river of generation. 113

110 Ibid., p. 635.
111 Ibid., p. 636.
112 Ibid., pp. 635-636.
113 Ibid., p. 636.
The same archetypal approach yields different results for Neal L. Goldstien, who sees the poem as a "vision of the quest for innocence and bliss, the bliss that Adam knew before the fall."\(^\text{114}\) He observes of this quest that, according to Northrop Frye, it "is the central myth, the pattern which for him underlies all literature."\(^\text{115}\) This archetypal approach is required by "Kubla Khan" in Goldstien's opinion, which he states as follows:

This question of archetypes in literature is open to much critical debate. It goes without saying that there are countless poems and novels and plays that simply do not lend themselves to mythic investigation. The point is, however, that "Kubla Khan" is not such a poem. It not only admits such an analysis, it requires it. "Kubla Khan" is, in fact, subtitled "A Vision in a Dream."\(^\text{116}\)

The quest in the vision leads to a kingdom similar to Xanadu and to the legendary Prester John, whose realm the critic terms "an Eden."\(^\text{117}\) Goldstien speculates that Frye would probably say that

\[\ldots\text{ Prester John's kingdom is identical with Eden, and that Prester John himself is identical to Coleridge's Kubla Khan; the essence of}\]

\(^\text{114}\)Neal L. Goldstien, "Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan': Mythic Unity and an Analogue in Folklore and Legend," Queen's Quarterly, LXXV (1968), 645.


\(^\text{116}\)Goldstien, p. 645.

\(^\text{117}\)\textit{Ibid.}, p. 646.
archetypal criticism, after all, is that "the individual and universal forms of an image are identical." 118

The fact that Goldstien's criticism is archetypal is emphasized by his conclusions from a comparison of the kingdoms of Prester John and Kubla Khan. He concludes that Prester John

... is a broader figure than Coleridge's Kubla Khan because he is a step behind him in the artistic process. It would be a mistake to try to view him as a real person. ... Both he and Coleridge's Kubla Khan are images of an archetypal pattern with blood ties to the entire world visible and invisible, a pattern which Coleridge had before his unconscious when he wrote the poem. In isolating Prester John ... we have moved a step closer toward that pattern. 119

The reference is to Coleridge's unconscious here presumably because archetypes are considered to be "unconscious forces." 120

It is noteworthy that three of the four archetypal critics wrote during the nineteen-sixties, and thus a little over a quarter of a century elapsed between the interpretations of Maud Bodkin and Heninger.

118 Frye, p. 160, as cited by Ibid.
119 Goldstien, p. 649.
120 See above, pp. 2, 137.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Psychological criticism must be credited with the great critical achievements in connection with "Kubla Khan." The penetrating study of the origins of the poem in The Road to Xanadu stands out as the supreme achievement. Lowes's book has served as the foundation for much of the subsequent criticism of the poem. This dependence on the book is perhaps true to a lesser extent of archetypal criticism. If the view of unconscious composition which is stressed in this book lacks the general support it once had from critics, the value of the book to Coleridge scholars has not suffered any substantial decrease as a result. Indeed, the book remains one of the greatest tributes that has been paid the poem, or any other poem of a comparable size in the English language.

The contribution to knowledge of the poem in Elisabeth Schneider's Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan approaches that of Lowes's book. This psychological interpretation stressing conscious composition of the poem ranks with The Road to Xanadu in influence if not in prestige. Although this book makes more of an appeal to common sense than did Lowes's,
the difference between the two critics perhaps lies chiefly in the fact that the intellectual climate was less skeptical in Lowes's time.¹ The dispute over the composition of the poem, however, continues unabated.

The psychological criticism of Beer, with its somewhat cautious stress on the unconscious, has perhaps more followers at the present time than has either of the other two interpretations. But such a judgment is speculative at best. The point is, however, that this psychological interpretation seems sensible in view of what is now known about the poem and has a number of supporters. It was noted earlier, for instance, how closely the interpretation of the French critic, Deschamps, follows Beer's, even though the stress is on conscious composition in the case of Deschamps.²

But general psychological criticism, which began with Sypher's question on the creative process and ranged to Gerber's concentration on the composition of the poem, may offer the brightest promise for the future in the category. Attention was called by Gerber to the fact that the Crewe MS. shows that Coleridge worked consciously on the poem.³

¹See Lane Cooper, "Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Mr. Lowes," PMLA, XLIII (June, 1928), 582-592, for a critical analysis of The Road to Xanadu which reflects the intellectual climate of the time.

²See above, p. 77.

³See above, p. 94.
But it has not been demonstrated conclusively that the general psychological approach can adequately interpret the meaning of the poem. And in the example cited under the classification the exact relationship between the sources and the poem is not always clear. The creative process is so vaguely outlined in this approach, with the notable exceptions of Gerber and Chayes, that the interpretation qualifies as psychological only because of its concern for sources. These sources, however, almost invariably carry with them an implication in regard to the composition of the poem.

In contrast to psychological criticism, the interpretations of the literary approach have concentrated on the poem itself. The symbolic interpretation of Knight seems to have been especially influential with critics of this category, at least until the last ten or fifteen years. The most influential of the literary interpretations, however, seems to be that of Humphry House, whose interpretation Beer compared favorably with his own. A growing tendency was discerned in criticism of the literary approach to compare "Kubla Khan" with Coleridge's other poems, a technique observed in the criticism of Suther and Yarlott. But the

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5See above, pp. 118-121.
device cannot be said to be limited to the literary category. The concentration on influences in Meier's interpretation is perhaps also of some significance. A change in the traditional role of the literary critic in regard to the poem may be indicated by the use of these devices.

Finally, in connection with the literary approach, these critics might be asked in all seriousness whether their method is really an effective means of dealing with such a poem as "Kubla Khan." Psychological critics have shown that far more can be learned about the poem by using other techniques.

That the archetypal approach differs from the literary and psychological methods can scarcely be doubted. The archetypal critics themselves state this fact clearly enough. But on the other hand these critics sometimes seem to have very little to say about the poem itself. Thus, their combined contribution to knowledge of the poem would seem to be relatively slight. Archetypal critics might therefore be asked whether in their search for archetypes they perhaps stray too far from the poem to contribute anything of value to its criticism.

The fact that archetypal critics often devote much space to ancient myths may be the reason their influence,
with the possible exception of Bodkin, has been negligible. It has been observed, however, that the other examples of archetypal criticism all date from the nineteen-sixties, which is too recent to determine the full extent of their influence.

There remains the important question of how well the critics of all three categories have managed to explicate "Kubla Khan" over the years. It is difficult to believe that the meaning of the poem has eluded all these critics. Yet there is some truth in Haven's statement quoted earlier that a translation of the poem's symbolism cannot be rendered in its entirety.⁷ G. M. Harper states substantially the same opinion in different words: "He who could unweave the magic of Kubla Khan could make the sun and the moon stand still."⁸ Therefore, although it cannot be said for certain that the precise meaning of the poem has been determined, a number of critics now agree that "Kubla Khan" is about the writing of poetry. Beer, Watson, Purves, and Suther are listed by Irene H. Chayes as being among recent critics who "see a generalized poetic process at work in the poem."⁹

⁷See above, pp. 126-127.
Chayes clarifies this statement somewhat when she asserts that "Kubla Khan" is "one of the group of Romantic poems ... which are concerned quite specifically with the composition of poetry. . . ."\(^{10}\)

The tendency now seems to be to view the poem not as something unique and miraculous, but as a natural product of Coleridge the Romantic poet.

If the ultimate solution to the mystery of "Kubla Khan" is close at hand, or already lies unfolded in these pages, the credit must go to many scholars, for it is clear that critics of each category have utilized the results obtained by other methods. And, finally, attention might be called to the fact that there is more than one level of meaning in "Kubla Khan." One perspective may be true up to a certain point, but it cannot reveal the whole meaning of the poem.

Some final conclusions may be drawn from this survey of the criticism. Of the three approaches to the poem, the psychological kind has proved most adequate. Psychological criticism is responsible not only for the great achievements in the criticism of the poem, but also to some extent for the lesser achievements of the other categories. Perhaps a recent increase in the proportion of literary criticism to that of the psychological category is a direct result of the

\(^{10}\text{Ibid.}\)
great amount of research done on the poem in the past by psychological critics. Criticism of the literary approach, with perhaps one or two exceptions, has been effective only in dealing with certain aspects of the poem such as the imagery. Literary analysis of the poem, however, has improved greatly. It is more difficult to relate archetypal criticism to the poem, since this kind is concerned with Jungian archetypes rather than individual works of art. But the mere fact that archetypal critics have chosen to write about "Kubla Khan" is a tribute to the importance of the poem. The last tribute to the mystery and the magic of the poem has not been written.
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