While describing the business of the poet Samuel Johnson in his Rasselas Ch-X mentions "... The business of the poet ... is to examine, not the individual, but the species, to remark general properties and large appearances, he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind, and must neglect the minuter discriminations which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness ... He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country, he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state, he must disregard present laws and opinions and rise to general and transcendental truths which will always be the same".

Do we not sense here the echo of Neo-classicism heard through Samuel Johnson's above statements? Instead of imitation - a natural representation of a given object - we must ask what it is natural for the imagination to be delighted with. The facts and events may bind the historian, but they have no dominion over the poet or the painter, in short the artist whose business is to embody the universal in his art production through art medium.
Art is the embodiment of Universal

The art in its highest province, is not addressed to the gross senses, but to the desires of the mind, to that a park of divinity which we have within, impatient of being circumscribed and pent up by the world which is around us.

Johnson's surrender to the sublime is limited by his shrewd and orthodox realisation that it was in effect a new form of religion worshipful of outdoor nature. In his age, it was impossible for poetry and religion to come together without the dilution of one or the other. His response was an attitude of contempt for the services of poetry in the cause of religion. Yet Johnson was at one with his age in recognizing the sublime as a category distinct from the beautiful. Sublime plays a pronounced, if somewhat disguised, role in Johnson's thought as an adjunct or ambiguous equivalent of the Universal.

Johnson was a resolutely reasonable classicist as in literary circles his constant appeals from literary convention to a general knowledge of life and literature shows. His theory of literary criticism was something analogous to deism in contemporary theology. Johnson had a view of "genius" itself which, in a way related to the Lockean tabula rasa, was quite consistent with his respect for the abstract Universal. Genius was a general sort of mental superiority, a power of invention capable of being turned in any direction.
In Johnson, the literary theorist, we confront a system of ideas which constitute a massive summary of the neo-Platonic drive in literary theory and of its difficulties. Johnson's occasional downright contradictions do not make him an exceptionally revealing one. It would be difficult to say exactly what neo-classic theory as a whole, or what any particular neo-classic theorist, meant by the standard of Universality.

William Wimsatt JR. takes note of nine meanings and ultimately concludes that none of these senses of the general or the universal will completely explain or justify the neo-classic theory 3.

William Blake in the preface to Jerusalem (1804) wrote "Poetry Fettered, Fetters the Human Race; Nations are Destroyed or Flourish in proportion as their Poetry, Painting and Music are Destroyed or Flourish". This is something wonderful no doubt as it so appears prima facie but it is a fact. The Romantic movement in theory as well as in practice began with the smashing of fetters.

Inspiration. not Universal, the source of Poetry

Blake poured his contempt upon all that he associated with classicism in art and in criticism. His outbursts like "we do not want either Greek or Roman models", "if we are but just and true to our own imaginations", "Israel delivered from Egypt
is Art delivered from Nature and Imitation", "Unity is the cloak of folly", "Goodness or Badness has nothing to do with character" - reveal the fierceness of his reaction against conventional thought, customary morality and against blind laws which extinguish individuality, energy and spiritual delight.

Art, for him, could not be a game of play, could not be a side-issue, a means of mere pleasure or a vehicle of formal instruction, but must be something that should "move" in the fullest sense of the term. It was a vision of fundamental living realities discerned not by the Reason, but through the eye of the mind or "inspiration".

No formal rules or external literary laws have any authority. The artist's only warrant must be looked for within himself. Many of his poems, he declared, were "dictated" from within, by spirits. He held that "inspiration" could come to the aid of a poet. The parting of Reason and Imagination for him was a great tragedy which rendered "Reasoning Power" an abstract objectifying power which negated the very existence of the object and replaced it by its replica - a dead stuff which haunted like the spectre in the imagination of man and closed his creative reasoning making it desolate. Some of his pronouncements echo the mystic in him. They are "Man's perceptions are not bound by organs of perception", "He who sees the Infinite in all things, sees God", "Goodness or Badness has nothing to do with character" - reveal the fierceness of his reaction against conventional thought, customary morality and against blind laws which extinguish individuality, energy and spiritual delight.

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"Human Imagination ... is the Divine Vision and Fruition", "I come in self-annihilation and the grandeur of Inspiration ... To cast aside from Poetry all that is not Inspiration".\(^4\)

**Inspiration aided by Imagination Reveals Art**

According to Blake, when the poet is inspired thus from within, Imagination or the Divine Vision was the faculty which he used, accompanied by energy and delight. The evocation of this vision in those who contemplate the works of art accounts for their delight in it and give rise to the expression of the impression of beauty. The aim of the poet or art is not to please, nor to give instruction but to reveal what is given to him as true. This means that he presents through the sensible form of art that which his "mind's eye" sees - a world of reality, not as it can be judged by the reason, but as apprehended in imaginative experience.

This is quite different from attempting to express in art the Universal - as was the case with Samuel Johnson - or an explicit account of a system of Universe for if the poet attempts the latter, he is confusing the task of the artist with the task of the philosopher or theologian. The work of the artist or a poet is not to expound a theory of knowledge or a system of universe but to express the individual and not to represent an eternal truth.
Blake reveals essentially, an artist when he is content to show us his world, to present, to reveal that in experience which is significant to him, but there is a deep feeling which accompanies all great poetry and this must be ascribed to him as it is to most of the romantics - the feeling for the transcendent order of reality due to which poetry becomes appealing immediately not logically or mediately. A work of art may stimulate logical judgements or be specifically consistent with logical judgements but its own method can never be logical.

Blake asserts blattently that that art depends upon vision, perceptions and feeling of energy accompanying it and is immediate, not depending upon ratiocination or is not discursive.

The artist should not be confounded with a prophet or preacher and prophecy has nothing to do with the true poetry.

"All good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings", said Wordsworth in his preface to Lyrical Ballads in which he expressed his contempt against "the gaudiness and inane phrasiology of many modern writers". He is proud of having uttered "little of what is usually called poetic diction" with a view to "imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men". According to him "there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition".
and "the poetic diction is not true to nature - either to external nature or to human nature in its responses to the external". According to him the language of the "low and rustic" in the society is "less under the influence of social vanity" and hence it "conveys their feelings and notions in simple unelaborated expressions". Such language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent and a far more philosophical language than that which is frequently substituted by Poets" and yet he lauds "a selection of the real language of men in a state of livid sensation, a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way". He wishes to make ordinary situations "interesting" by tracing in them the laws of human nature as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement.

This view of Wordsworth invoked a sharp reaction from Coleridge who said that if Wordsworth in arguing that the language of "metrical composition" is essentially the same as that of prose, he is patently false, and concluded that education, and not the lack of it, tends to make a poet. Uneducated men are disorderly in their writing, they lack "surview".

The theoretical issue of poetic diction seemed to Wordsworth an issue between artifice and nature while to Coleridge it seemed more like an issue between propriety and impropriety, con-
gruity and incongruity. In effect he applied the classic norm of decorum. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge assigned a relatively slight role to the chronological concept of the "hackneyed". Yet the notion of the hackneyed, the stereotype, the cliche to day enjoys a strongly established place in habits of critical thinking. It is likely to be among the first appeals of a theorist called upon to explain why poetic diction is undesirable.

The poetry of Wordsworth, coming as an artistic climax and renewal, rather than rejection of this tradition, is in a sense a poetry that turns very simply to nature and the human soul - yet inescapably, it does this through words, and not entirely through the simple range of words represented in these lines: "Rise, fair day, before the eyes and soul of man".

Wordsworth's poetry is a sound realisation and a deepening of certain nature symbols available to his age in more or less cliche simplifications. It is a dramatization of those symbols by bringing them into contact with select terms from both higher and lower ranges, from the metaphysical range and from the range of low country words.

What is Imagination?

During 17th Century, the terms "Imagination" and "Fancy" had often enough been used in a vaguely synonymous way to refer
to the realm of fairy-tale and make-believe. Yet here and there, as is the case with Hobbes's 
Leviathan, the term "Imagination" had tended to distinguish itself from "Fancy" and settle toward a meaning centered in the sober literalism of sense impressions and the survival of these in memory. In 17th Century reasonableness, fantasy suffered decline in reputation, but imagination held its own and even slid into a new place of respect in sensationalist aesthetics. A certain softness and warmth and depth of good feeling grew around the term "imagination" while a certain corresponding coldness and brittleness and a suggestion of unreliable frolic invested the related but opposed term "Fancy". As the term "imagination" moved through the stages of association theory to which the honours were accorded, the two terms were now and then reversed - "Fancy" assuming the higher role of reference to a more creative mental power; imagination, the humbler reference to the mind's more reportorial kinds of drudgework. The relative dignity of the two terms was so well established in English usage by the end of the 18th Century that no matter what revised meanings Wordsworth and Coleridge and others might assign to them, it was almost inevitable that the superior term should be "imagination".

According to Wordsworth, out of the two terms "imagination" and "fancy", imagination and not fancy should be used to refer to the creative or Poetic Principle.
Two modes of imaging

Wordsworth raised the level of the whole distinction, simple reproduction, howsoever vivid it may be interested him not at all. He distinguished two modes of imaging, both inventive. The difference was that one was frolicsome and inferior, the other was totally serious and superior. It was this concession to fancy, though it was only incidental to Wordsworth's aim of elevating imagination, but it became a point of grievance to Coleridge who came down upon him with a heavy hand. After giving the grand credit of having originally inspired his own whole theory of imagination, Coleridge had already drawn a patronizing distinction between Wordsworth's purpose of considering only the "influences" or "effects" of fancy and imagination "as they are manifested in Poetry, and his own more psychologic purpose of investigating "the Seminal principle" - that is the process of imaginative creation, rather than poems themselves, let us say that Coleridge did not differ critically from Wordsworth about "imagination" and we shall have an occasion, when we will go to Coleridge to consider them together.

Detestation of Artifice

For Wordsworth as opposed to Aristotle, the plot, or situation is not the first thing. Just as Blake turned from literary artifice to "Enthusiasm and Life", to Inspiration, to the inner light
of the Imagination, so Wordsworth turns to the inner evidence of vivid sensation and spontaneous feeling. It is feeling that matters most to Wordsworth. In his own words "the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling". And just as Blake's Imagination was justified because it was inspired, so for Wordsworth strong feeling carried its own passport because it revealed "primary laws of nature". He proposed to make "incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them ... primary laws of our nature chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement".

In eschewing artifice, his aim was to find the best soil for the "essential passions". He looked for simplicity and this he sought to solve by the deliberate choice of subjects from "humble and rustic life". Instead of portraying nymphs and Goddesses, he preferred to portray village girls and peasants.

Doctrine of Artlessness

In his romantic detestation of artifice, Wordsworth committed himself to the doctrine of artlessness saying "Poetry is spontaneous utterance". Wordsworth advocated a language that was to be the "language of men" and especially of men in "humble and rustic life". There was realism in the demand that the poet should
use the language of men so that the reader can keep himself in
the "company of flesh and blood" but the emotions of a rustic are
not more profound because his experience is narrow or are flesh
and blood of a countryman or rustic more human than that of a
townsman? He was right when he condemned the specialized language
of poetry and advocated the use of "vernacular" but then, we should
say, let it be an "illustrious vernacular"! It was emotion which
he sought to display but his principle lessened the range without
depthening the quality of emotion.

We should, while evaluating him, keep in mind that
Wordsworth, like other romantics, demanded spontaneity which was
not that of a careless or thoughtless person. In this connection
he says "Poems to which any value can be attached, were never
produced on many variety of subjects but by a man who, being
possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought
long and deeply". The poet according to him was a man of great
sensibility whose mentality was also shaped before the moment
of inspiration, by deep and habituated reflection. The pondering
had already been done, the situation which was to affect him po­
gnantly, awakening vivid emotion, would pass through the "intellectual
lens" of his imagination to his fully prepared consciousness.

It was in that crisis of the mind when sensation was
vivid, when the faculties were taut and keen, when the whole of
poet's being trembled at the perception of beauty in the world about him, that he had the moment of his highest experience. The state of awareness of spiritual significance in common things was for Wordsworth the consummation of poetic experience, the *summum bonum* of the poet's life. This is the characteristic romantic view.

**Contempt for subjective element in Poetry**

Romantic poets, very often, in their less happy moods tend to dwell upon luxuriously on their own emotions describing them from within rather than from the facts of life which evoked them. In this introspective moods we find them writing subjectively rather than objectively and laying themselves open to the charges brought against them in the Crocean argument of Miss Powell when she said that it is the business of the poet not to be passive to impressions, but to express them; not to wallow in emotion, but to purge it away in the spiritual energy of intuition.

Coleridge was equally emphatic, as was Goethe, in condemning the subjective exhibition of emotions. In the professed theory of Wordsworth, and shortly we shall see in Shelley also, while there is much which explains under the doctrine of "spontaneity", there is certainly nothing which demands the subjective attitude to experience.
This does not mean that they did not properly rated personal experience, it can be said that Wordsworth valued art for the sake of experience, rather than experience for the sake of art. There was nothing, he rated higher than the state of mind experienced in the happiest moments of the contemplation of Nature.

We may say in clear cut terms that Wordsworth assigned supreme value to the experience of the poet in contact with nature which he considered as divine intimation which inspired poetry and also evoked the similar experience in reader.

The romantic poets started from an interest in life rather than art. To them the worth-whileness of their impressions of life mattered more than anything else and it was this which gave value to poetry. A supremely interesting and primarily emotional state of mind, arising from the contemplation of life, was postulated as a condition of art. They laid all emphasis on the quality of "the impressions" rather than expression. To the, the "impression" was the first important thing that happened to the poet and which finally repeated itself in the mind of the reader. The quality of impressions, its worth-whileness - the only desirables which poetry could communicate.

Shelley in his Defence of Poetry says "Poetry in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the imagination" and poetry is connate with the man. Man is an instrument
over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven which move it by their motion like a wind to ever-changing melody. It is the divine mind which thus stirs the poet to effortless song, and impels him, he knows not how, to create "the very image of life expressed in its external truth". A poem "is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the creator, which is itself the image of all other minds".

More than any other romantic critic Shelley presents the poet moving in a world of other worldliness, creating things in the image of his own spirit, and man in the image of an abstract God.

Feeling of ecstasy the source of Poetry

Like Wordsworth, it is the feeling of ecstasy which Shelley values supreme and the presence of that feeling is for him the sign of inspiration and truth. Blake said that his poems were "dictated" to him, in the similar vein Shelley said that they were breathed into him by "some invisible influence". A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry" ... when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet."
Shelley is giving us an evidence of what he felt to have happened in his own case. What does this evidence mean? It means that the feeling of illumination or rapture with which his creative mood started was more intense than his feeling when he was distracted by the labour of communication, or composition. It also means that what he wanted to communicate to others in the poem was precisely that feeling of illumination or rapture which began to fade as he wrote. We wish, as most other lovers of poetry, that the sense of that brightest moment of his dawning intuition might be the impression which his poem will impart, but Shelley affirms that in his own case, this is not possible and that he could only give his second best., that the spirit of his finest mood could never be fixed for ever in the created work.

Echoing Wordsworth that poetry is a "spontaneous utterance", Shelley says "I appeal to the greatest poets of the present, whether it is not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by labour and study". Poetry should be, according to Shelley, a sort of sublime bird's song given forth with "unpremeditated art". According to R.A. Scott-James the view of Shelley and Wordsworth, based upon a doctrine of happy inspiration, makes poetry too easy for the poet. Theirs was a theory which dangerously panders to laziness, commending the poet when he yields to sensuous temptation and soars with the two easy and "ineffectual" flight of the angel.
Art must be true to life

In their rather too much belief in Divine assistance, they neglected the fact that the poet is a man, has to fit down and face fairly and squarely the hardness of the beautiful and address himself to the technical job of expressing his feeling in recognizable terms of life, giving objective form to his ideas. Art has to be true to life - the life around us - as well as true to feeling - the feeling peculiarly that of artist. He has also to describe with perfect clearness just what is in Nature or in action which has or might have evoked the feeling that he thought worth while so that he may set it forth again in imaginative language for all those who have an eye to see or feel. To experience the pulse of life and to communicate what he has felt in adequate, recognizable language is a job which he, as poet, or artist, cannot afford to neglect or ignore.

Romantic artists are true to theory, theory which successfully and positively maintains that poetry or art is the proper vehicle for the expression of feelings, that poetry can never be a mere cleverness, can never be mere prosody or can never be just correctness or the observation of rules, though the importance of cleverness or technique of expression cannot be underrated. It can never be judged by a foot-rule or a book of Grammar, can never be compassed by learning alone, can never consist of fancies
or artifice of any kind and will never deserve its name if it does not express perceptions of life received with conviction and must be able to "move".

The Theory of Esemplastic Imagination

When we deal with Coleridge, we discover two Coleridges: one, the poet, the friend of Wordsworth, the transcendental philosopher critic who seeks philosophic grounds for the romantic conviction; the other, a many-sided humanist and connoisseur of letters, with unbiased and unflattering taste delivering pure judgements about the poetic art. In Biographia, he traces the growth of his mind from Hartleyan associationalism to neo-Platonic and then to German transcendental idealism. He undertook to delineate Fichtean and Schellingian phase of ideal realism with a view to expounding "the nature and genesis of the imagination". He says:-

"The Imagination then, I consider either as 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, and differing only in degree and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses,
dissipates in order to recreate, or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unite. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead".

This theory of imagination by Coleridge has certain presiding metaphysical notions as its background, especially the notions of Kant and Schelling for which he is charged of Plagiarism but that issue is not relevant for us. His coinage of the term *esEMPLASTIC* betrays of his way with sources which means "unifying or coadunative" as shown in chapters X and XIII of *Biographia* which closely imitates its German word used by Schelling. This "imagination" is a primary creative act, a willed activity of spirit, a self-consciousness, a "self-realizing intuition" joining and coalescing the otherwise separated parts of our self, the outer unconscious, and the inner conscious, the object and the subject. Primary Imagination is a human creative act which we may take as a type of and participation in the Divine act.

Every human being, then, is, so far as he perceives anything at all, a creator and an idealizing agent. The imagination enjoyed by the poet or a creative artist is "... in common language, and especially on the subject of poetry, we appropriate the name to a superior degree of the faculty, joined to a superior voluntary control over it".13.
Coleridge has borrowed much from Kant, it seems, for his division of "Primary" and "secondary" imagination closely follows Locke's division of Primary and Secondary qualities and when he says that we conceive the "secondary Imagination", a higher plastic power that reworks the perceptual products of primary imagination into concrete expressions of the "ideas" of the self, the absolute, the world and God which are otherwise, conceptually given by that superior part of the transcendental mind the Reason, he closely follows Kant's critique. The ideas of such a higher life were as Kant conceived them, framed by the Reason as regulative principles or hypotheses. Coleridge treats them, following post-Kantians, as realities.

The meaning of art and the meaning of nature refer, according to Coleridge, to a kind of union between the two. They could all be developed under the aspect of Union; coalescence or on reconciliation. It is precisely this emphasis that is the most distinctive feature of Coleridge's theory. And this was also the tenet of absolute idealism. Coleridge did work out this tenet of absolute idealism into a dualistic and variously applicable theory of poems.

Art as a middle quality between thought and thing

In the wake of his idealistic approximation he says, in his Lecture on Poesy or Art (1818), "Art itself might be defined
as a middle quality between a thought and thing, or, as I have said before, the union and reconciliation of that which is nature with that which is exclusively human. It is the figured language of thought, and id distinguished from nature by the unity of all parts in one thought or idea.\textsuperscript{14}

With regard to what he means by "union and reconciliation" he says in Biographia "Imagination ... reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities of sameness, with difference, of the general, with the concrete, the idea, with the image, the individual, with the representative, the sense of novelty and of freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order ... while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry."\textsuperscript{15}

At another place, narrating the relation of the Formative Arts to Nature, he says, "to make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought, and thought nature - this is the mystery of genius in the Fine Arts."\textsuperscript{16}

Do we not hear an echo of Longinus's "Sublime"? In fact, while discussing "imagination", both Wordsworth and Coleridge actually place either "Sublime" or its components he emotive and the vaguely grand, very near the center of the complex of qualities
by which the imagination and hence poetry are defined. Wordsworth and Coleridge agree wholeheartedly in their association of the "imagination" with the vast, the infinite, the "shadowy ideal character". "Imagination recoils from everything but the Plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite".

So far we have dealt with one Coleridge, one the poet; the transcendental philosopher-critic who seeks philosophic grounds for the romantic conviction. We shall now deal with the other, a many sided humanist and connoisseur of letters with unbiassed and unaltering taste delivering pure judgements about the poetic art, and see also the meeting points of his two sides whenever we shall have occasion to find any.

They do meet, and meet again and again we are told. The humour of Coleridge in his second capacity is sufficiently present to his romantic other self to save it from extravagance. Not only this, his practical judgements about art, governed by his sense as a poet, are generally in harmony with his more "abstruse researches" governed by his intellect.

Union and Reconciliation of the heart with the head

He was inclined to those poems in which "natural thoughts were combined with natural diction, in which the heart was reconciled with head, the union of heart and head" and nothing without
that, was to him ever to be essential poetry. Coleridge finds that it was "a continuous under-current of feeling" which evoked his genuine admiration in a great poet, and a lack of it which disguised him with those who "sacrificed the heart to the head", or "both head and heart to point and drapery". His theory of Imagination, later on, became the cardinal element in his principles of criticism but the source of it was not metaphysical principles. It was, rather, a practical conviction drawn from experience, from his working knowledge of and feeling for poetry and nature. This practical conviction deeply entered into his mind before the attempted a metaphysical account of it.

A poem recited by Wordsworth brought home to him in a flash what he had been seeking to realize. It was, according to him, by some faculty of the soul that things could be so represented as to be thus both felt and understood. No mere heaping together of lifeless images, no mere juxtaposition of ideas, no mere arbitrary bringing together of things that lie remote - could account for the indissoluble one-ness of this perception of beauty and conviction of truth. When a poet like Wordsworth handled the material which nature presents - that very material mechanically received through senses became totally transformed, it became beautiful. Its unique quality lay in the fact that it gave satisfaction also to reason. It became union of opposites, bridged the gulf - unbridgeable by intellect - between perception and understanding.
The power which the poet had exercised in thus revealing the "beautiful and permanent forms of nature" was the "shaping spirit of imagination" a unifying, creative faculty - "this beautiful and beauty-making Power".\(^\text{18}\).

He sought to make room for the fact that a sublime object derives its sublimity from the spectator's awareness of significance in it. This significance arose from an impression that is given but by some power in the soul that a character was discovered in it.

Coleridge set himself to investigate philosophically the "Seminal Principle" of the Imagination and to discover the nature of that faculty of the soul by which the poet expresses himself through the forms of Art. According to him, metaphysics has no place for it examined principles of Literature from a lower plane of truth. The part in consciousness which Coleridge assigned to the "Esemplastic Imagination" we have already taken note of. In fact, this Imagination, he has borrowed from Kant in whose philosophy, Imagination played a subordinate role, of merely synthesising the data of sense, giving it forms which could be taken up in the higher synthesis of the understanding. The imagination was a link between the world of sense and the conceptual world of the understanding. But though this faculty could reproduce and combine the particulars of sense, it could only hand on forms drawn from the raw material presented to it, how or whence we know not, in sensation.
Coleridge could see the difficulties involved in Kantian as well as idealist approaches which fail to reconcile the subject-object duality. He also refused to accept the view that ideas of sense are imposed upon the consciousness from without. The root difficulty here is that of reconciling mind with matter. He assigned altogether a different role to the faculty of Imagination. He concludes with Schelling, that the principle of consciousness can be neither simply the thing perceived, nor the self perceiving it but must be both - the subject and the object, the perceiver and the perceived; the knower and the known, the infinite and the finite, the mind and matter. It must be a unifying faculty of the Imagination that these opposites are reconciled.

Nature is the Art of God

He goes further and instead postulating idea of God as hypothesis, as did Kant, he posits infinite spirit that presents to itself finite objects. The reason has, according to him, an intuition, an immediate knowledge of God. And the Imagination does not merely take up the objects given in sense, it embraces them, penetrates them and reads them as symbols, not standing for something behind them, but as partaking of the nature of Infinite Mind. According to him "to make external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought, and thought nature - this is the mystery of genius in the Fine Arts". It is by reason of something
in common between Nature and his own soul that the artist is able to create the forms of nature according to his ideal. That nature is the art of God because the divine Imagination is active in it, and that it is material for the art of man just so far as man's creative imagination is recreating and ever recreating it.

So the Imagination cannot be content to "copy". Its function is to diffuse, dissolve and recreate; to make the external internal, fashioning new images in its own semblance, in its own effort to become divine. So in all artistic creation, there will be "imitation" but not "copying".

The objective of Artistic Creation

The object of artistic creation, according to him is "the excitement of emotion for the purpose of immediate pleasure, through the medium of beauty". The art, for Coleridge, does not exist to satisfy the creative impulse of the artist but to communicate his state of mind to others. The immediate pleasure or the pleasurable experience of which Coleridge speaks in his Principles of Criticism is its own intrinsic pleasure and none other. It may happen to be useful, moral, instructive, health-giving. But it is not for these results that it is pursued, or for any results other than the pleasure arising directly from itself. His definition of beauty is derived from Plotinus's idea of Unity, the wholeness. In unity, according to him, lies the essence of the beautiful. The Beautiful arises from the perceived harmony of an object, whether
sound or sight, with the inborn and constitutive rules of the judgement and imagination; and it is always intuitive.

Authentic Imagination, according to Coleridge, includes all the activities of the soul - the intellect, the will, the perceptive, faculties, the emotions - and this leads us to conclude that the imagination is a power which the artist can only use when he is at his best - when he is in the fullest possession of himself. It appears to be his ideal to project the whole of himself upon the whole of life.
References

10. Ibid p. 212.

12 Biographia: Ch. V-IX and XII.

13 Ibid Ch. VI (1, 86).


15 Ibid p. 258.


17 Ibid p. 220

18 Principles of Geneal Criticism.