

The book cover features a repeating green damask pattern on a darker green background. The pattern consists of stylized floral motifs enclosed in circular frames, connected by swirling vine-like lines. The title is centered in a white band.

JONATHAN EDWARDS, SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, AND THE SUPERNATURAL WILL IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Brad Bannon



Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Supernatural Will in American Literature

In a work that will be of interest to students and scholars of American literature, Romanticism, Transcendentalism, intellectual history, and cultural studies, Brad Bannon examines Samuel Taylor Coleridge's engagement with the philosophical theology of Jonathan Edwards. A closer look at Coleridge's response to Edwards clarifies the important influence that both thinkers had on seminal works of the nineteenth century, ranging from the antebellum period to the aftermath of the American Civil War—from Poe's fiction and Emerson's essays to Melville's *Billy Budd* and Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. Similarly, Coleridge's early espousal of an abolitionist theology that had evolved from Edwards and been shaped by John Woolman and Olaudah Equiano sheds light on the way that American Romantics later worked to affirm a philosophy of supernatural self-determination.

Ultimately, what Coleridge offered the American Romantics was a supernatural modification of Edwards' theological determinism, a compromise that provided Emerson and other nineteenth-century thinkers with an acceptable extension of an essentially Calvinist theology. Indeed, a thoroughgoing skepticism with respect to salvation, as well as a faith in the absolute inscrutability of Providence, led both the Transcendentalists and the Dark Romantics to speculate freely on the possibility of supernatural self-determination while doubting that anything other than God, or nature, could harness the power of causation.

Brad Bannon is a lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. His work has appeared in *The Cormac McCarthy Journal*, *Critical Insights: The Scarlet Letter*, *James Joyce Quarterly*, the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, and *Visionary of the Word: Melville and Religion*. He is also the co-editor of *Cormac McCarthy's Violent Destinies: The Poetics of Determinism and Fatalism*.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Supernatural Will in American Literature

Brad Bannon

First published 2019
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an
informa business*

© 2019 Taylor & Francis

The right of Brad Bannon to be identified as author of this work
has been asserted by him in accordance with sections 77 and 78
of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted
or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic,
mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented,
including photocopying and recording, or in any information
storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from
the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be
trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for
identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
CIP data has been applied for.

ISBN: 978-1-4724-7629-6 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-57259-8 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by codeMantra

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	vii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	ix
 Prologue: The American Mind of Samuel Taylor Coleridge	 1
1 President Edwards and the Sage of Highgate: Determinism, Depravity, and the Supernatural Will	10
2 Equiano and Woolman: “Both to Will and to Do”	37
3 Fate, Providence, and “Human Ken”: Emerson and Hawthorne	75
4 Pantheism and the “Gigantic Volition”: Poe and Melville	109
 Epilogue: Cormac McCarthy and the Red Badge of Coleridge	 145
 <i>Index</i>	 169



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Acknowledgments

This project came into view sometime around 2010, and since that time, I have received invaluable encouragement, feedback, support, and criticism from a number of individuals and entities to whom I owe a debt of gratitude.

At the University of Western Ontario, Joel Faflak and Bryce Traister served as supervisors, mentors, and indispensable guides throughout the process of composition and revision. As the book began to take its current shape, I received additional suggestions from Stephen Adams, Jeffrey W. Barbeau, Dawn Coleman, Jonathan Cook, Martin Griffin, James Hewitson, Eric Lindstrom, Stacey Peebles, Elizabeth Yvonne Pelletier, Laura Dassow Walls, and Brian Yothers.

Conferences held over the years by the American Literature Association, the Cormac McCarthy Society, the International Conference on Romanticism, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society, and the Northeast Modern Language Association provided me with the opportunity to share my work with other scholars and further develop sections of individual chapters.

The earliest draft of this project was completed with the support of the Western Graduate Research Scholarship at the University of Western Ontario, and the final stages of composition, editing, and revision were undertaken with the support of the John C. Hodges Research Award at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Thank you to my students at East Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville for their interest and their insights, and special thanks to my family and friends, as well as to my editors at Routledge and my colleagues at the University of Western Ontario, East Tennessee State University, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

A shortened version of Chapter 1 appeared in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 77.1 (2016): 27–47. An earlier version of the Melville section of Chapter 3 appeared as “Coleridge, Edwards, and the Peculiar Progress of Melville’s Free Will Problem,” in *Visionary of the Word: Melville and Religion* (Northwestern University Press, 2017). An earlier version of the McCarthy section of the Epilogue appeared as “Divinations of Agency in *Blood Meridian* and *No Country for Old Men*” in *The Cormac McCarthy Journal*, 14.1 (2016): 78–95.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Abbreviations

BM	Cormac McCarthy, <i>Blood Meridian</i> (New York: Vintage International, 1992).
CE	Nathaniel Hawthorne, <i>The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne</i> , ed. William Charvat, et al., 23 vols. (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1962–97).
CL	Samuel Taylor Coleridge, <i>The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> , ed. Earl Leslie Griggs, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956–71).
CN	Samuel Taylor Coleridge, <i>The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> , ed. Kathleen Coburn, Merton Christensen, and Anthony John Harding, 5 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957–2002).
CW	Samuel Taylor Coleridge, <i>The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> , ed. Kathleen Coburn, et al., 16 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971–2001).
CWE	Ralph Waldo Emerson, <i>The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson</i> , ed. Joseph Slater, et al., 10 vols. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971–2013).
EL	Ralph Waldo Emerson, <i>The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson</i> , ed. Ralph R. Rusk and Eleanor M. Tilton, 10 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939–94).
IN	Olaudah Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings</i> , ed. Vincent Carretta (New York: Penguin, 2003).
J	John Woolman, <i>The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman</i> , ed. Phillips P. Moulton (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).
JMN	Ralph Waldo Emerson, <i>The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson</i> , ed. William H. Gilman, et al., 16 vols. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960–82).
NC	Cormac McCarthy, <i>No Country for Old Men</i> (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).

x *Abbreviations*

- PH* Edgar Allan Poe, *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. James A. Harrison, 17 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1965).
- PM* Edgar Allan Poe, *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. Thomas Ollive Mabbott, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969).
- WHM* Herman Melville, *The Writings of Herman Melville*, ed. Harrison Hayford, et al., 13 vols. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968–2017).
- WJE* Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Harry S. Stout, et al., 26 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957–2008).

Prologue

The American Mind of Samuel Taylor Coleridge

As soon as the ship cleared the port, Mr. Coleridge hastened down to the cabin, and cried, “my dear captain, tell me how you obtained my passport?” Said the captain, very gravely, “Why, I went to the authorities and *swore* that you were an *American*, and my steward! I *swore* also, that I knew your father and mother; that they lived in a red-brick house, about half a mile out of New York, on the road to Boston!”

—Joseph Cottle, *Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey*

Among other things, Samuel Taylor Coleridge is understood as a characteristically *British* writer and thinker. Though as a young man he had planned to establish what he and Robert Southey called a Pantisocratic community on the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania,¹ the plan ultimately foundered, and after extended stays in both Germany and Italy, he ultimately settled in (and perhaps for) his native England. It would be false to claim that Coleridge had nothing critical to say about the United States, but it is certain, and significant, that he never rejected the new republic in the same manner as he came to renounce all things French, as he did in a letter to his brother in 1798: “If I know my own opinions, they are utterly untainted with French Metaphysics, French Politics, French Ethics, & French Theology” (CL 1: 395). His position on France and the French Revolution was consistent from this point forward, but he wavered on America, even going so far as to claim to Thomas Poole in a letter of 1801 that he still wished to emigrate: “I say, I would go to America, if Wordsworth would go with me” (CL 2: 710). The very next day, confiding in Poole again, Coleridge retracts this statement as he reveals what it was that had so attracted him to the Pantisocratic scheme in the first place:

The truth is, I was horribly hypochondriacal... In that mood of mind nothing appeared to me so delightful as to live in a Land where Corn & Meat were in abundance—& my imagination pointed to no other place, than those inland parts of America where there is little

2 Prologue: Samuel Taylor Coleridge

communication with their foul cities, & all the articles of *Life*, of course, to be had for a trifle.

(CL 2: 710–11)

Here, just as in the supernatural “Sonnet on Pantisocracy” (1794), America becomes a fanciful portrait of Coleridge’s vibrant imagination, a pastoral oasis: “O’er the Ocean Swell / Sublime of Hope I seek the cottag’d Dell, / Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray / And dancing to the moonlight Roundelay / The wizard Passions weave an holy spell” (CW 16.1.1: 4–7).²

In this sense, Coleridge’s “America” comes to play a role similar to that of the lost vision in *Kubla Khan* (1798), the “shapings of the unregenerate mind” (CW 16.1.1: 55) in “The Eolian Harp” (1795–96), and the clerisy in *On the Constitution of the Church and State* (1830). These ideal forms all stand in for that faery realm of the imagination that Coleridge variously celebrated, renounced, and bemoaned the loss of throughout his career—a realm that also shares affinities with the Kantian thing-in-itself to which Coleridge, following Schelling, always wanted to claim a kind of conditional access. Indeed, as both a safe haven for religious separatists (which Coleridge certainly was) and a land of plenty in which resources were to be had, as Coleridge thought, with a minimum of labor, America became an ideal that was more than theoretical.

More than a vague alignment between America and “the spirit of the age,” the connection that Coleridge came to make between the United States and the imagination reveals a continuity between the characteristically American impulse that brought Coleridge to pursue the idea of founding a Pantisocratic community in Pennsylvania and the creative force at work in his collaboration with Wordsworth in the late 1790s. Could there be something American about British Romanticism? What might this mean? Perhaps no more than it means to say that the idea of America has never been exclusively American. “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” Kenneth R. Johnston writes in his assessment of Coleridge’s Pantisocratic scheme, “a Romantic ideology if there ever was one.”³

Of course for Coleridge, the allure of settling America also had much to do with the prospect of leaving England and all the failures of his youth far behind. In a letter written to Southey in 1794, Coleridge shares his excitement at the thought of beginning life anew: “My God! how tumultuous are the movements of my Heart... America! Southey! Miss Fricker!” (CL 1: 103). But of the three proper nouns with which this passage concludes, only the first would retain its appeal. Coleridge’s relationship with Southey deteriorated after the collapse of the Pantisocratic scheme, and his ill-advised marriage to Sara Fricker was notoriously unhappy. The potential of the United States, however, was a subject of interest for Coleridge until his death in 1834. What did Coleridge

actually continue to see in America after the failure of Pantisocracy? And how did the incomplete systems of literary criticism, philosophy, and theology expounded by Coleridge in his later prose works (works largely dismissed by his countrymen as hopelessly obscure) come to hold such an important place in the minds of Americans like Poe, Emerson, Hawthorne, and Melville? If, as Harold Bloom has claimed, "Emerson's mind is the mind of America... and the central concern of that mind was the American religion,"⁴ then how is it that Coleridge came to play such a crucial role in cultivating the concerns of that mind?

The most obvious reason is that Coleridge was concerned with the same problems of religious experience that occupied Jonathan Edwards—a central, but largely underestimated, figure in American literature and philosophy. Among other similarities, Stuart Piggin and Dianne Cook note that both Edwards and Coleridge

were spokesmen for 'Revealed Religion', believing that, despite the separation of creature from creator occasioned by the Fall, God in an 'eternal language' communicates his presence and makes known a scheme whereby fallen humanity can regain tenancy of God's reality.⁵

This seeking of the "eternal language" of God, what Coleridge in "The Destiny of Nations" (1796) calls "one mighty alphabet / For infant minds" (CW 16.1.1: 19–20), also shares much with the typological endeavors of the Puritans as well as those of the Transcendentalists and the Dark Romantics, all of whom set out to spiritualize the common impressions of immediate experience. As Mason I. Lowance notes in *The Language of Canaan*,

Some habits of mind were continuous from the sermons of John Cotton to the lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the Puritan's use of the typology of nature as a source of revelation had much to do with the kind of symbolism evolved during the American Renaissance.⁶

Along with natural typology, there also emerged a view of the natural world as the privileged site of revelation and renewal, and of the American expanse in particular as an opportunity for millennial (i.e., supernatural) purification.⁷ As we have long known, Coleridge's fascination with the forests, plants, and wildlife of the uncultivated American wilderness was informed by his interest in William Bartram's *Travels* (1791), which inspired the enchanting imagery of his supernatural poems.⁸ Yet traces of this enchantment are also apparent in Coleridge's later remarks on the United States, where he reinvents Edwards' vision of a future in which "the world shall be supplied with spiritual treasures from America" (WJE 11: 101) in terms of the social and political

4 Prologue: Samuel Taylor Coleridge

prospects of the new republic. In 1833, for example, Coleridge speaks of a “possible destiny of the United States of America—as a nation 100-million of freemen—stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, living under the laws of Alfred, and speaking the language of Shakspeare [*sic*] and Milton.” Such a vision, Coleridge observes, “is an august conception. Why should we not wish to see it realized? America would then be England viewed through a solar microscope—Great Britain in a state of glorious magnification” (CW 14.1: 360).

This notion of America as the most ideal setting for the culmination of humankind’s spiritual destiny is also deployed, however, from within what is the larger typological undertaking for both Coleridge and Edwards as well as the religious and philosophical legacy bestowed upon nineteenth-century American thinkers: a revelation of the infinite in the finite, and to that end, the construction of a methodology, a philosophical position, that could discern accurately the internal, or divine, meaning of the external world. The supposition that such meaning would be hidden to the unregenerate observer—a postulate that stretches from Edwards to Emerson and beyond—also informs the American endeavor to merge Enlightenment rationalism and philosophy with what Coleridge in “The Eolian Harp” calls “Faith that inly feels” (CW 16.1.1: 60), investing it with the anxious awareness, or suspicion, that humans cannot achieve the regenerate state (i.e., an accurate view of the world) without supernatural assistance, if at all.

In other words, the idea that Coleridge was somehow characteristically British while Romanticism itself was first and foremost a European phenomenon fails to take into account the fact that Coleridge was not merely an influence on American Romanticism but also a participant in the continuum of American philosophy and religion that commences with the Puritans and reaches a peak of intellectual and cultural influence in the work of Jonathan Edwards. As a result, scholars of Coleridge and British Romanticism have tended to preserve national boundaries when it comes to the United States, often by suggesting that his influence on Emerson was more circumstantial, or opportunistic on Emerson’s behalf, than it was substantive.⁹ To Christopher Flynn, Coleridge did not even conceive of America as an independent nation but rather as a territory “attached to England, possessing English history, culture and language, and therefore as English as if no Revolution had occurred.”¹⁰

Yet it is clear from his comments in *Conciones ad Populum* (1795) that Coleridge actually did conceive of significant differences between the United States and England. “The principles industriously propagated by the friends of our Government are opposite to the American Constitution,” he writes,

and indeed to Liberty every where... Unconditional Submission was the only Terms offered to the Americans—and Death the immediate

Menace. Our Brethren, (if indeed we may presume to call so exalted a race *our* Brethren,) indignantly rejected the terms, and resolved to hazard the execution of the menace.

(CW 1: 56–57)

Likewise, it is apparent that, for Emerson, there was something rather unique, perhaps even adventurously American, about Coleridge. As he wrote in a letter to his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, in 1829 while reading *The Friend* (1818),

I like to encounter these citizens of the Universe that be[le]ive the mind was made to be spectator of all, inquisitor of all, & whose philosophy compares with others much as astronomy with other sciences—taking post at the centre & as from a specular mount sending sovereign glances to the circumference of things.

(EL 7: 188)

That this description of Coleridge also bears an unmistakable resemblance to Emerson's conception of the American scholar is hardly coincidental: "The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be a university of knowledge" (CWE 1: 69). But to suggest that there is something American about Coleridge is not exactly novel either. As Carl Woodring notes, upon the release of Coleridge's *Table Talk* in 1835, *The Morning Chronicle* described Coleridge as "sounding American" (CW 14.1: ci), and in 1838, Coleridge's former caretaker and friend, James Gillman, remarked upon Coleridge's particular appeal to the American mind: "The Western world seems to have better appreciated the works of Coleridge than most of his countrymen: in some parts of America his writings are understood and highly valued."¹¹ It was not only the ingenuity and ambition of Coleridge's wide-ranging interests that made him seem American, however, but also the consistent tone of isolationist idealism, reformism, and mediated separatism that typifies his prose. In *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, for example, he argues (in opposition to Jonathan Edwards, whom he mentions by name) that even in those who deny free agency,

the *idea* of man's moral freedom possesses and modifies their whole practical being, in all they say, in all they feel, in all they do and are done to: even as the spirit of life, which is contained in no vessel, because it permeates all.

(CW 10: 18)

For without the power of self-determination, Coleridge was inclined to think, intelligent life could only be a mechanism.

6 Prologue: Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Despite his conservatism, he also insists on the sovereignty and self-determination of the individual in the ethico-religious idiom that is commonly ascribed to Americans, and as this book set out to demonstrate, it is ultimately his disagreement with Edwards on this account that came to shape the American religious and philosophical consciousness as thinkers were drawn not only to a notion of the individual as an absolute free agent but also to a conception of individual action as somehow aligned with the will of God. “No power on earth can oblige me to act against my conscience,” Coleridge affirms in *The Friend*, “No magistrate, no monarch, no legislature, can without tyranny compel me to do any thing which the acknowledged laws of God have forbidden me to do” (CW 4.1: 194). Pronouncements of this sort also reflect Coleridge’s enduring regard for private revelation as well as his opposition to the corrupting influence of meddlesome governments. In his essay “On the Vulgar Errors Respecting Taxes and Taxation,” he sounds like a New England individualist. “Which is better?” he asks in a passage that surely delighted Emerson,

To give money to the idle, the houses to those who do not ask for them, and towns to counties which have already perhaps too many? Or to afford opportunity to the industrious to earn their bread, and to the enterprising to better their circumstances, and perhaps found new families of independent proprietors?

(CW 4.1: 243)

In 1831, Coleridge even observes that

the severest naval discipline is always found in the ships of the freest nations, and the most lax discipline in the ships of the most oppressed. Hence, the naval discipline of the Americans is the sharpest; then that of the English.

(CW 14.2: 141)

But to his nephew, son-in-law, and editor, Henry Nelson Coleridge, such an open avowal of American ascendancy was problematic—it needed explanation. “It *looks* as if Mr. Coleridge rated the degree of liberty enjoyed by the English, *after* that of the citizens of the United States,” Henry Nelson writes, “but he meant no such thing. His meaning was, that the form of government of the latter was more democratic, and formally assigned more power to each individual” (CW 14.2: 141). Following this, the younger Coleridge goes on to cite the passage in *On the Constitution of the Church and State* in which his uncle had claimed that “for little less than a century and a half, Englishmen have, collectively and individually, lived and acted with fewer restrictions on their free-agency, than the citizens of any known republic past or present”

(CW 10: 96). To this passage, however, Coleridge himself had appended a note that complicates this view:

It will be thought, perhaps, that the United States of North America should have been excepted. But the identity of Stock, Language, Customs, Manners and Laws scarcely allows us to consider this an exception: even tho' it were quite certain both that it is and that it will continue such. It was, at all events, a remark worth remembering, which I once heard from a Traveller (a prejudiced one I must admit) that where every man may take liberties, there is little Liberty for any man—or, that where every man takes liberties, no man can enjoy any.

(CW 10: 96)

Though Coleridge first observes that Americans may in fact live with fewer restrictions than their English counterparts, he notes that this fact is inconsequential when we consider that America shares its “Stock, Language, Customs, Manners and Laws” with England—but *then* he suggests that American freedom is perhaps *too* free with the caveat that his source for this information is suspect. But which is it? Is the liberty of Americans at this time greater than that of the English, and yet in some sense an achievement of British culture? Or is American liberty an excess unto itself?

The former is much closer to what Coleridge seems to have believed more often, and as a matter of public record; and he had stressed the similarity of American and British culture before, both in conversation and in “Lines Written in the Commonplace Book of Miss Barbour, Daughter of the United States Minister to England,” which appeared in the *New-York Mirror* in 1829. In this short poem, we find Coleridge’s sum estimation of the United States, which not only includes a trace of his former desire to settle there in his exaltation of America as “BRITAIN with elbow-room and doubly free!” but also an exposition of his view of the familial bond between British and American identity at this time. The poem reads as follows:

Child of my Muse! in Barbour’s gentle hand
Go, cross the Main: thou seek’st no foreign land.
‘Tis not the clod beneath our feet, we name
Our Country. Each heaven-sanctioned tie the same,
Laws, Manners, Language, Faith, Ancestral Blood,
Domestic Honor, Awe of Womanhood,
With kindling pride thou wilt rejoice to see
BRITAIN with elbow-room and doubly free!
Go seek thy Countrymen! And if one Scar
Still linger of that fratricidal War,

8 Prologue: Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Look to the Maid who brings thee from afar!
Be thou the Olive Leaf and She the Dove,
And say, I greet thee with a Brother's Love!

(CW 16.1.2: 1–13)

Ultimately, Coleridge seems to have conceived of the relationship between the United States and England as fraternal: America is perhaps independent, but its relation to England is clear. Conveniently, this conception also allowed Coleridge to imagine an America that was still available to him.

Indeed, the fact that he never made it across the Atlantic seems to have strengthened his fascination with doing so in the same manner that the impracticality of his literary and philosophical ambitions was also an aspect of their appeal. As Richard Monckton Milnes recalled, even in the last years of his life, Coleridge was encouraging Milnes and Arthur Henry Hallam to visit America in his stead. “Go to America if you have the opportunity,” Coleridge told the younger men, perhaps imagining that his popularity among the emerging Transcendentalists and Dark Romantics was indicative of a lost community of like-minded thinkers, and a degree of acceptance and respect that he never achieved in England. “I am known there,” he went on, “I am a poor poet in England, but I am a great philosopher in America.”¹² Here, just as in the short poem that appeared in the *New-York Mirror*, Coleridge’s national identity seems to reside somewhere between transition and stagnation as he reaches, finally through vicarious means, for the regenerative experience of becoming American.

Notes

- 1 Pantisocracy, as Coleridge later wrote in *The Friend*, was “a plan, as harmless as it was extravagant, of trying the experiment of human perfectability on the banks of the *Susquehannah*; where our little society, in its second generation was to have combined the innocence of the patriarchal age with the knowledge and genuine refinements of European culture” (CW 4.1: 224).
- 2 As J. C. C. Mays points out, the October 1794 version of “To a Young Ass” includes the lines “And fain I’d take thee with me to the Dell, / Where high-soul’d PANTISOCRACY shall dwell!” which, in later versions, are revised to “And fain would take thee with me, in the Dell / Of Peace and mild Equity to dwell” (CW 16.1.1: 147, 148).
- 3 Kenneth R. Johnston, “The Political Sciences of Life: From American Pantisocracy to British Romanticism,” in *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Sciences of Life*, ed. Nicholas Roe (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 51.
- 4 Harold Bloom, *Agon: Towards a Theory of Revisionism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 145.
- 5 Stuart Piggin and Dianne Cook, “‘Keeping Alive the Heart in the Head’: The Significance of ‘Eternal Language’ in the Aesthetics of Jonathan Edwards and S. T. Coleridge,” *Literature and Theology* 18, no. 4 (2004): 387.