

Arab Soecity of English Language Studies

From the Selected Works of AWEJ for Translation & Literary Studies

Summer August 15, 2018

The Impact of John Locke's Tabula Rasa and Kant's faculty of intuition on the Poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats: Implications and Applications

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The Impact of John Locke's *Tabula Rasa* and Kant's faculty of intuition on the Poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats: Implications and Applications**Walid Ali Zaiter**Department of Languages and Translation
Taibah University, Saudi Arabia**Abstract:**

Both Immanuel Kant (1724- 1804) and John Locke (1632-1704) have transformed the thought and ideology of almost all walks of life (culture, literature, science, politics, and philosophy) in the eighteenth, nineteenth centuries and beyond. This paper explores the impact of their philosophy on the Romantics' poetry. Thus, the paper argues that the Romantics Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats had refuted John Locke's *Tabula Rasa* and adapted Kant's faculty of intuition to create their poetry. Adapting Kant's faculty of intuition in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), a new theory of knowledge, the Romantics denounced Locke's *tabula rasa* in Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). Unlike Locke, Kant treats the mind as active organ. For this reason the Romantics took up Kant's theory and left behind Locke's *tabula rasa*. This paper (a study) aims to find where Locke's *tabula rasa* and Kant's intuition converge and diverge. The study provides a historical and theoretical background of these philosophies and their impact on the Romantics under study. Thus, it paves the way for further investigation for those who are concerned to tackle any angle of the study.

Key words: Imagination, Locke's *An Essay concerning Human Understanding and Tabula Rasa*, Kant's faculty of Intuition, Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" Keats's " Ode to Psyche"

Cite as: Zaiter, W. A. (2018). The Impact of John Locke's *Tabula Rasa* and Kant's faculty of intuition on the Poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats: Implications and Applications.

Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies, 2 (3).

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol2no3.3>

Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white Paper, void of all Characters, without any *Ideas*; how comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy and boundless Fancy of Man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? (Woozley, 1964, p. 89)

Introduction

Although Locke's *tabula rasa* has received enough focus and analysis by the critics of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this paper highlights the interaction between Locke's *tabula rasa* and Kant's faculty of intuition. This paper has shown that Locke's *tabula rasa* has been rejected by the major Romantic poets starting from Wordsworth, Coleridge to Keats; this rejection was influenced by a new discovery of knowledge introduced by Kant's book *Critique of Pure Reason* which emphasizes the faculty of intuition; this new epistemology had great impact on the Romantics; with this scientific breakthrough of Kant's theory, Romanticism saw itself as a reaction against the cold reason of the Enlightenment. Besides the Romantics saw in the French revolution, which created so many injustices to the people who believed in its doctrines, a great source of inspiration. Delving into research I have found that the Romantics rejected Locke's *tabula rasa* and Hartley's association theory of the mind; these theories treat mind as a thing; the Romantics did not find in the empirical philosophy a means to express their ideals and inspirations. Instead, they adapted Kant's faculty of intuition which goes beyond reason. This helped them produce their individual theories of poetry. Another aspect of the paper is to trace the historical context of the periods of time when these philosophies evolved and impacted literature, particularly the poetry of the Romantics above mentioned.

The Eighteenth century brought many changes to the thought in philosophy, religion, science, economy, politics, individualism and literature. The Age has been called many names on the grounds of the major contributions in it; it is the Age of Reason when the intellectuals in all fields of knowledge had enriched the age with their influential works on the mind. The most dominant figure was Locke, especially his theories of the mind and of individualism. His basic tenets which have influenced and permeated the whole age are those mentioned in his monumental work, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). It is seen by many critics of Locke as the foundation of modern empirical philosophy which influenced the philosophers of the Enlightenment, like Rousseau, Kant, Berkeley and Hume. The main arguments in the *Essay* include: a new theory of knowledge -- epistemology which is imprinted on the mind as "tabula rasa." Locke's impact was carried on from the 17th, and 18th and beyond.

In summing up Locke's influence on the 17th and 18th-century thought, Spellman argues that "without Locke the supremacy of reason and the malleability of the human mind, so much a part of enlightened thought the eighteenth century, would have been practically inconceivable." His influence on the evolution of democracy, on enlightened theories of education, and on philosophy is immeasurable (Spellman, 2005, p.45). Locke's impact is also noticeable in literature.

The Impact of John Locke's *Tabula Rasa* on the Romantics and Kant's faculty of intuition

Bishop (2007) argues that Locke's theories of human nature, social justice and his epistemological *tabula rasa* were written "to criticize the politico-economic foundations of the dominant class of his time" (p.8). Most critics have focused their research and commentaries on Locke's *Essay* comprising his theories of the mind, language and knowledge, which have influenced the works of poets, novelists, dramatists and philosophers in the Eighteenth Century, nineteenth century and probably well into the twentieth and twenty first Centuries. Locke's *tabula rasa* is one of the most important theories which left its mark on the literary works of his age and beyond. Interestingly enough, the arguments and counter arguments took more than a century to settle the controversy of Locke's implications of *tabula rasa* comprising fancy and imagination, which he adapted from Aristotle, and his rejection of innate ideas of Descartes and Plato. Likewise, the Romantics rejected Locke's epistemology. This process is continual in all ages as revolutionary men in all aspects of life can transcend their age and its axioms.

Inspired by Locke's passiveness of the mind as receptive of external reality, the Romantics made use of Kant's philosophy which combines Descartes' rationalism and Locke's empiricism. Therefore, they devised their theories concerning fancy, imagination, the sublime, beauty, poetic diction and the poet in accordance with Kant's intuition theory. The English Romanticism refuted the empirical philosophy of Locke based on sensation, reflection and experience, as the only means of knowledge and Descartes' rationalism. Instead, they adapted Kant's philosophy of the active mind, which made Romanticism a movement against the cold reason of the Augustine Age (the eighteenth century); I believe that Romanticism would never have evolved in the nineteenth century without Locke's *tabula rasa* and its counter arguments refuted by philosophers and poets. "The Romantics emphasize the workings of the mind in imagination, whereas, the Lockean theory of imagination is concerned more with the object of imagination"(Diffey,1981,p.176). Interestingly enough, the Romantics looked upon at the Elizabethans for the freedom of thought in their age, another inspiration to create poetry. One may wonder: "What is the essence of *tabula rasa*?" According to Encyclopaedia Britannica

Tabula rasa, (Latin: "scraped tablet"—i.e., "clean slate") in epistemology (theory of knowledge) and psychology, a supposed condition that empiricists attribute to the human mind before ideas have been imprinted on it by the reaction of the senses to the external world of objects." The term goes back to "Aristotle's *De anima* (4th century BCE; *On the Soul*), and the Stoics [Greek philosophers dividing philosophy into logic, physics and ethics] as well as the Peripatetics (students at the Lyceum, the school founded by Aristotle) subsequently argued for an original state of mental blankness (Bhuitia & Duignan, 2016).

This source does not refer to the contribution of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, who transformed Locke's passive *tabula rasa* into a new faculty of the mind whose impact on the poetry of the Romantics, particularly Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats, is noticeable; neither does the source mention major critics of the Locke's *tabula rasa* in his age and of those that followed him. However, Maclean (1936) who is an influential critic on Locke's *Essay*, traces the phrase and its implications and applications since the Classical age to the modern era, concentrating on the most part on the Augustine literature and to a lesser extent on the Romantics. Maclean however,

discusses sparsely Locke's *tabula rasa* and its implications and applications in the eighteenth century, only in chapter one of Book I "Neither Principles nor Ideas are Innate." McCormick (1996) speaks highly of Maclean as an influential critic of John Locke:

Without supplying any overall theory of influence, there is an excellent description of the range and variety of Locke's impact on the eighteenth century; and MacLean clearly shows the revolutionary ramifications of Locke's denial of innate ideas of God and morality and the limitations of human knowledge (p,442).

Walker (1994) who is one of the significant scholars of Locke's philosophy, Locke's *tabula rasa* touches only briefly on the term; Walker traces the critics' concern with "Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Walker comments on MacLean's book, above mentioned, "the main ideas of each of the four books of the *Essay* and cites a range of eighteenth-century texts"(p.3). He also comments on Basil Willey's *The Eighteenth Century Background* (1940); it is one of the resourceful sources on the period and its frame of mind. Walker reviews the book slightly: "Willey, like Coleridge makes a place for Locke in the post- Renaissance disassociation of sensibility: "the cold philosophy" which destroyed "the union of heart and head, the synthesis of thought and feeling, out of which major poetry seems to be bor.". He argues: "For Willey, the attempt by eighteenth-century poets to animate the dead universe of Descartes and Locke by means of the symbols from obsolete mythology "ended in fiasco"(p.4). For this reason, Willey's "last chapter was about Wordsworth and Coleridge." Walker then makes a significant assertion about eighteenth-century poetry that it "is essentially a failed response to the Lockean account of the dead world, while Romantic poetry is a successful response grounded in the fabrication of new mythologies (Shelley and Keats) or poetry of common (Lockean) language describing how mind and heart interact with the world (Wordsworth) (p.5). His other assertion, which sets the difference between the poetry of two epochs, and paves the way for my investigation, being poetry-based on selected Romantics, is that "the Romantic accomplishment, is both a reaction against Locke's empiricism and some kind of extension or fulfillment of it"(p.5). For this reason the Romantics were anti-Lockean.

What is missing, though, in Walker's argument is that it does not explain the phrase "disassociation of sensibility." According to the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, "the phrase was used by T.S. Eliot in his essay "The Metaphysical Poets" (1921) to signify the separation of thought and feeling which he identified as an endemic weakness in English poetry from Milton onwards"(p.209). The Romantics did otherwise. They made nature speak for their feelings and thoughts, as if a spokesman of their voice and attitude. Thus any critic of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as Willey (1961) focuses on "Nature" as a key word in the literature of the eighteenth-century. Willey also explains the significance of Locke's *tabula rasa*: "Nature was the grand alternative to all that man had made of man; upon her solid ground therefore—upon the *tabula rasa* prepared by the true philosophy—must all the religion, the ethics, the politics, the law, and the art of the future be constructed"(2). By arguing against *tabula rasa* as , the Romantics constructed their theory of poetry on based on Kant's faculty of intuition expounded in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). The quote below sets the difference between Locke's epistemology of the

mind as a *tabula rasa* (a recipient) and Kant's epistemology of the sensibility (an active faculty of the mind producing feelings and emotions) and understanding

Knowledge may arise from two main sources: the sensibility and the understanding. The sensibility is the faculty of receiving impressions, while the understanding is the faculty of producing representations. Sensibility produces intuitions, and understanding produces concepts. (Scott, 2002, p. 1)

***Tabula Rasa* and Intuition Philosophies in Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Coleridge's "Ode to Dejection" and Keats's "Ode to Psyche"**

Only Now the implication and application of these philosophies can be traced and analyzed in Wordsworth's *Prelude*," Coleridge's "Ode to Dejection," Keats's "Ode to Psyche"; these works are representations of the poets' philosophies, poetic creation and imagination. In this part of the paper I am moving from theory to practice. In this context, the significance of this study arises as it historicizes *tabula rasa* as a philosophical term and its counterpart, intuition, whose applications rose in the nineteenth century-Romanticism. One can find a solid example of the philosophies mentioned above in Wordsworth's *Prelude*. It is a nutshell of Locke's *tabula rasa* and Kant's intuition theories in practice. The following lines are cited in Pearce and Asch (2014):

Content and not unwilling now to give
A respite to this passion, I paced on
With brisk and eager steps; and came, at length,
To a green shady place, where down I sate.
Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by choice,
And settling into gentler happiness. (Book First, lines 59- 64)

Wordsworth here projecting his mind on reality, the place he chose with the aid of his mind not as a receiver of the impression of place on his mind but with free choice. Now his mind is active in response to what he sees in nature and feels about it. Instead of imitating what he sees in nature. Wordsworth's *Prelude* is a perfect example of such philosophy of mind and intuition. The title of the poem explicitly shows it, *The Prelude or Growth of A Poet's Mind; An Autobiographical Poem*. It records the poet's individual experience, philosophy and poetic creation. His thoughts of the place and his feelings towards it made him happy.

Like Wordsworth in *The Prelude*, Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" represents a rejection of Lockean philosophy and adaptation to Kantian philosophy of the mind.

O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!

And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars; (The Oxford Anthology of English Literature Vol II, stanza II, lines 25-32)

It is not the external reality what the poet's eye sees; it is blank when it sees "clouds above him" . It is his imagination, his thoughts when triggered, Coleridge confirms: "I see them all so excellently fair / I see, not feel, how beautiful they are! (stanza lines, II 37-38). Like Keats's idea of beauty "What imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth" (Keats's letter to Benjamin Bail). The gaze in the poet's eye is essential for poetic process. Salavati (2015) argues that Coleridge "uses his "imagination" rather than his "fancy" in writing this poem, to actually create rather than imitate. He also believes that emotional experiences can assist the imagination in the creation of poetry" (P.115). This is Kantian imagination which impacted Coleridge while he was in Germany in company with Wordsworth. It is the sublime of the moment of poetic creation.

By the same Token, " Keats's "Ode to Psyche represents a withdrawal from Lockean philosophy at the moment of poetic creation, triggered by imagination or intuition, which is Kantian. It not the dove he sees, it is his psyche, his imagination at flight. "But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove? /His Psyche true!" (lines 21-23). The dove then in this poem is the imagination which is true, not the dove or what the poet's eye sees at the moment. At the end of the poem Keats describes the poetic creation employing his intuitive poetic creation rather than the Lockean *tabula rasa*. His brain is active rather than just a recipient of the external reality and with the sublime of emotion his heart and soul pour out his feeling when totally involved in "the warm love."

And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress
With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain,
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
Who breeding glowers, will never breed the same:
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in! (The Oxford Anthology of English Literature Vol II:
Ode to Psyche, lines 58-67)

The early Romantics and the second generation, especially, Keats viewed imagination as Erubetine explains it in "John Keats's Notion of the Poetic Imagination" – it applies to the Romantics intended in the study- as follows

Generally, it is inconsonance with John Locke's empiricism which postulates that man can build the most complex ideas from sensations and the mind's reflections on the sensations. John Locke sees the interaction between sensations and the intellect as inevitable but he does not clearly postulate an intermediary faculty like the imagination –

as Keats, many Romantic poets and transcendentially oriented philosophers like Kant do – in order to actuate the interaction between the heart and the mind (p. 171).

The Critics of Locke's *Tabula Rasa* and Kant's Intuition and the Romantics

So far we have seen in some selected poetry of Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" and Keats's "Ode to Psyche" how the intended romantics' doctrines are contrary to Locke's *tabula rasa*. Instead, they adapted Kant's theory of knowledge. Then here we must trace the impact of the above mentioned philosophies on the poets under discussion with a wider scope from the perspective of different critics. Diffey (1981) asserts: "Unlike Locke, Kant distinguished between understanding and reason" (p.186). However, Sarker (2001) expounds Kant's theory which influenced Coleridge's theory of imagination: primary and secondary, Coleridge in particular and Wordsworth and Keats on the whole. Sarker writes

He [Kant] demonstrated that we receive impressions from the external world—impressions which produce sensibilities in our sense organs—and then the sensibilities, moving through space and time, get modified structurally. The modified sensibilities are then finally restructured the a priori Categories of understanding of our minds. (Sarker, pp.12-3)

Sarker asserts "Coleridge laid much emphasis on the function of the secondary imagination, in theory as well as in his poetic creations. Coleridge divided imagination into two categories: the former is common among all human beings; the latter belongs only to the poet"(p.13) However, Sarker excluded Blake from the Romantics simply because "he did not distinguish between the primary and secondary imaginations"(p.14). Another reason is that "to Blake, imagination was spiritual, may, divine" Lastly, Byron did not like to be classified with the Romantics; he rather saw himself an heir of the Augustan tradition"(p. 21). However, Diffey finds that "the Romantics rejected Locke's empirical philosophy as William Blake was because he was particularly hostile to the rejection of innate ideas. To Blake, "Man brings all what he has or can have into the world with him. Man is born like a garden ready planted and sown"(p.166).

Since Blake does not meet the criterion of my study for the reasons just mentioned, this leaves us with the most representatives of the Romantics, namely Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats who opposed Locke's *tabula rasa* and adapted Kant's theory of knowledge, a new faculty of intuition which differentiates between reason and understanding. On this issue, Diffey expounds Locke's empirical philosophy as well as other philosophies related to the Romantics. Besides, he traces imagination in the writings of philosophers, writers and poets in the Enlightenment and Romanticism movements. Diffey expounds some of the most important key phrases in Locke's empirical philosophy, Hartley's, Berkeley's, Hume's and Kant's, such as innate ideas, perception, experience, understanding, imagination, intuition and impressions; he as well explicates those terms of aesthetics like beauty, sublime and truth in the writings of Burke, Addison, Reid and Gerard. These philosophers and writers had a great impact on the Romantics, namely, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats. It seems that the more we dig deep into Locke's philosophy and the doctrines held by Romantics, the wider the gap. The conflict between the Romantic Imagination and Locke's

empiricism make the Romantics in their thinking about imagination break out of the limits imposed by empiricism" (p. 165). Diffey finds the differences are due to: "the nature of perception, and the nature of language and meaning." These issues or questions, Diffey confirms, "philosophers, particularly writers on aesthetics, were to narrow the divisions between Lockean empiricism and Romantic thought" (p166). Like Coleridge in "Dejection: An Ode" and Keats's "Ode to Psyche, Wordsworth in "Expostulation and Reply" (1798) refutes Locke's assertion that "men that have senses cannot choose but receive some ideas about them"(p.167).

The eye – it can choose but see;
 We cannot bid the ear be still;
 Our bodies feel, where'vr they be,
 Against or with our will. (stanza V, lines 17-20)

Then it follows that when the Romantics adapted the faculty of intuition and criticized Locke's tabula rasa as counterpart to intuition, this attitude has become the foundation upon which Romanticism diverges from the cold reason of the eighteenth century Enlightenment. Being adapted—tabula rasa and intuition— by the romantics the terms became literary. Thus Romanticism can now be defined as a "literary and philosophical" movement "characterized by a profound faith in the powers of human reason and a devotion to clarity of thought, to harmony, proportion and balance"(*Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p.234). Whereas Sarker (2001) historicizes Romanticism in the in the context of history and distinctive features in the following manner: it "began with Blake's Songs of Innocence [1789] and ended with the death of Keats[1821][and Shelley[1822] (1).Sarker adds: "But this is debatable." He estimates "the year 1850, in which Wordsworth died, is taken to be the year in which English Romanticism Fizzled out." Sarker elaborates on tone, message and adds an important term imagination. "The tone of romanticism is emotional, the message of it is the existence of the beyond, and imagination is shaping force"(pp.1, 20).

Sarker, in analyzing the poetry of the above mentioned poets, starts with Coleridge and Blake to attack Locke's tabula rasa as "an empty room to be furnished with items of experience, in course of time." In the same vein Locke holds that "consciousness or mind to be a passive thing, like a mirror" (p.10). The function of the mind in these cases is that it "receives the impressions of the external world as it actually is, itself having no power to alter the impressions." Sarker applies this to Coleridge and Blake who "contraposed their respective theories of mind against Locke's. For Coleridge, Sarker asserts that "the mind is certainly an active thing that can transform the impressions it receives from the external world" (p.12). Sarker focuses on Coleridge's and Blake's counter arguments which are against Locke's *tabula rasa*. Consequently, the two poets broke away from eighteenth century's philosophical and literary dogmas.

Thus, *tabula rasa* and intuition philosophies have impacted Romanticism, which led to a new trend of poetry different from the previous age of Enlightenment. Robinson (2015) in his enlightening chapter "Wordsworth's and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), traces the evolution of Coleridge's "The Rime of Ancient Mariner," Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, or the poem to

Coleridge. Robinson declares that Coleridge possesses "the two cardinal points of poetry: the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature and the power of giving interest of novelty by modifying colours of imagination" (170). Thus, it follows that these qualities stress the function of poetry, to excite the reader by the various images that the imagination creates. Robinson also traces the contribution of each poet: Wordsworth "handles subjects "chosen from ordinary life and Coleridge "incidents and agents in art at least supernatural"(p.171). He sees Coleridge's contribution as making "the unreal or supernatural seem real," that is, "to give ordinary experience a fresh expression in the minds of their readers by showing "the primacy laws of out nature in it" Robinson provides us with Wordsworth's "nature lyrics, most notably "Expostulation and Reply" and "Tables Turned" (p.172). These poems, to Robinson "might cohere thematically to the system of ecological-metaphysical thought, a kind of neo-pantheism but which, imbued with Wordsworth's active universe" (Robinson, 173). These poems add to the growth of the poet's mind when in his early left Lockean perception of the mind and its reflection of the external nature. However, later in his poetic life, he adopted Kantian perception of nature where the mind of the poet looks inside of itself and pours out his feelings and emotions spontaneously. These poems then and other show the greatness of Wordsworth as a poet of nature and a poet of mind.

In this regard, according to Robinson, the first poem was written in the spirit of Lockean empiricism of sense philosophy. Robinson cites two quartets, lines 17-24 from "Expostulation and Reply". The first line reads: The eye – it cannot choose but see; / and the last line "In a wise passiveness" will be sufficient to indicate Lockean concept; however, Wordsworth argues against this in the same poem: "We cannot bid the ear be still." "Men who have senses cannot choose but receive some ideas by them"(Diffey, p167). Robinson as well shows how important nature was to Wordsworth that "One impulse from a vernal wood that teaches more human morality than the philosophers can do"(Robinson, p.173). To most critics of Wordsworth, his most poetical works are *Lyrical Ballads* and *The Prelude* in which his growth of mind and poetic creation have come to maturity as he rejected Hartley's theory of "association as too mechanistic"(Robinson 174).

Pricket (1970) focuses on imagination whose context is science and beauty and how the Romantics handled it with great dexterity. In the introduction to his book *Coleridge and Wordsworth: The Poetry of Growth*, Pricket starts with Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Mercy" and his criticism of Newton's rainbow, and Wordsworth's admiration of it. Pricket cites Haydon's reporting Keats's response to Newton's description of rainbow: "Because he destroyed the poetry of the rainbow by reducing it to a prism"(p.10). The question to pose in this context: "What is the ideal object for each poet to consider when composing his own poetry and upon which he theorizes his poetic imagination? The answer lies in the involvement of each poet in the world around him and how does each visualize it in his imagination. Other factors are influences that sharpen the poets' minds to reflect their understanding of the world around and shape it in their imagination, intuitively beyond intellect or reason. On the bad influences of empirical philosophy of Locke and Hartley, Pricket cites J S. Mill who said that "the accepted Lockean- emperico- mechanical philosophy had failed to offer a comprehensive and satisfying way of looking at human experience, and that the poetry of Wordsworth filled the gap"(p.33). He expounds Mill's assertion

the sense of value that Mill found in Wordsworth's poetry was not in any sense a rival philosophy to that of Locke or Hartley; it was simply he responded to certain poems. Hartley treated man as a thing whose religious and intellectual growth could be measured on the same mechanistic plane as his nervous system. Wordsworth, like Coleridge, saw the mechanics of human development were meaningless unless persons were treated as persons (p.34).

In the same vein Pricket analyzes Coleridge's poem "Dejection: An Ode" in which "the clouds are to him a symbol of his mental turmoil" and most important of all the "wedding - garment of the mind's union with nature that occurs in every act of human perception"(p.36). Pricket elaborates, "it is this union of perceiver and perceived that Coleridge means by the imagination; perception and creativity are already inseparable in Coleridge's mind: the creative imagination is connected in Dejection, with joy in perception"(p.37). Thus perception is a creative act of the mind and not the passive product of "sensations in the Lockean sense" (p.40). In the same vein, Wordsworth's perception, is like Coleridge's. Wordsworth writes: "A meditation rose in me that night / Upon the lonely mountain. . . "(Book XIII of *The Prelude*, lines 66-68). It describes the act of creation in Wordsworth's mind. To Pricket, *The Prelude* is "a new model of the human mind as a thing whose characteristic activity was creation"(p.44).

The same applies to Keats's poetry as regards his growth of mind and distinctive features of his poetry. Many critics of Keats argue that his poetry is described as poetry of sensation. Sperry (1994) in his book *Keats the Poet* analyzes Keats's cry, "O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts"(p.1) Sperry justifies this inclination as one of "the most characteristic of his utterances in the letters" (p.2). He believes that Keats should have written instead, "O for a Poetry of Sensation, "For the word is basic not only to his poetic vocabulary but to his conception of the source and end of verse" (p.3).Sperry cites many critics of Keats so as to define sensation in his poetry. Clarence Thorpe defines sensation: "Feelings or intuitions are the pure activity of the imagination"(p.4). like Sperry, Bate (1963) has observed in "Hazlitt's constant use of the word "sensation" in the traditional empirical traditional sense—as virtually equivalent to concrete experience—added a new term to Keats's own habitual vocabulary"(p.25). In the same vein, Sperry gives two explanations: "The first asserts the primacy of the mind and its own intuitions; the second stresses the evidence of the senses and the contact they provide with material phenomena".

Finally, Sperry investigates "the problem confronting English philosophy in the Enlightenment" was "the task of rendering a satisfactory account of sensation; this was also the task of poets in the main movement of English Romanticism". (p.28). In Keats's poetry "imagination takes wing, and poetic creation is accomplished." To Sperry, "sleep and dreaming" are "the most frequent analogues for imaginative experience in Keats's work"(p.31). With aid of these characteristics, we can apply to Keats's "Ode to Psyche." In this poem creative imagination has reached its aesthetic growth and intensity of his poetry. Watkins (1995) essay "History, Self, and Gender in Ode to Psyche", asserts the poem " represents many interpretations of the political events of the period, the bourgeois culture, authorial intention, individual identity, play of

imagination and soul- making. However, he has not referred to the Lockean or Kantian impact on the poet.

Conclusion

If the Romantics had not employed Locke's tabula rasa as an argument against his philosophy of cold reason, Romanticism would never have evolved as a new literary movement, with the aid of Kant's theory of intuition, whose main doctrines are feeling, emotion, heart, imagination and beauty, the Romantics have made poetry flow out of the heart instead of the mind. This development occurred as a result of Kant's new theory of epistemology which developed the faculty of intuition employed by the Romantics in their poetical works. Combining in a single study of Locke's tabula rasa and Kant's faculty of intuition I have set the fundamental factors determining the evolution of Romanticism out of Enlightenment, and its distinctive features. Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Coleridge's "Ode to Dejection" and Keats's "Ode to Psyche" are then solid examples or representations of poetic creation based on Kant's faculty of intuition and a rejection of Lockean *tabula rasa*.

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