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978-1-107-06844-5 - Coleridge and the Philosophy of Poetic Form

Ewan James Jones

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COLERIDGE AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF POETIC FORM

Ewan James Jones argues that Coleridge engaged most significantly with philosophy not through systematic argument, but in verse. Jones carries this argument through a series of sustained close readings, both of canonical texts, such as *Christabel* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, and also of less familiar verse, such as *Limbo*. Such work shows that the essential elements of poetic expression – a poem's metre, rhythm, rhyme and other such formal features – enabled Coleridge to think in an original and distinctive manner, which his systematic philosophy impeded. Attentiveness to such formal features, which have for some time been overlooked in Coleridge scholarship, permits a rethinking of the relationship between eighteenth-century verse and philosophy more broadly, as it engages with issues including affect, materiality and self-identity. Coleridge's poetic thinking, Jones argues, both consolidates and radicalises the current literary critical rediscovery of form.

EWAN JAMES JONES is Thole Research Fellow at Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge.

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For Aline

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With love and gratitude, I dedicate this work to my wife, Aline.

Abbreviations

(i) Works by Coleridge

The *Collected Works* (CW) is published in individual volumes, as listed below.

<i>Aids</i>	<i>Aids to Reflection</i> (CW ix), ed. by John Beer, (Princeton University Press, 1993).
<i>BL</i>	<i>Biographia Literaria: or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions</i> (CW vii), ed. by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, 2 vols. (Princeton University Press, 1984).
<i>C&S</i>	<i>On the Constitution of the Church and State</i> (CW x), ed. by John Colmer (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976).
<i>CL</i>	<i>The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> , ed. by Earl Leslie Griggs, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956–71).
<i>CN</i>	<i>The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> , 5 vols.: (a), i–ii, ed. by Kathleen Coburn (each in two parts) (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957); (b) iii, ed. by Kathleen Coburn (in two parts) (Princeton University Press, 1973); (c) iv–v, ed. by Kathleen Coburn and Merton Christensen (each in two parts) (Princeton University Press, 1990–2002).
<i>Essays</i>	<i>Essays on his Times</i> (CW iii), ed. by David V. Erdman, 3 vols. (Princeton University Press, 1978).
<i>Friend</i>	<i>The Friend</i> (CW iv), ed. by Barbara E. Rooke, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 1969).
<i>LS</i>	<i>Lay Sermons</i> (CW vi), ed. by R. J. White (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).

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<i>Lectures 1808–1819</i>	<i>Lectures 1808–1819 on Literature</i> (CW v), ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987).
<i>Logic</i>	<i>Logic</i> (CW xiii), ed. by J. R. de J. Jackson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981).
<i>Marginalia</i>	<i>Marginalia</i> (CW xii), 6 vols: (a) i–ii, ed. by George Whalley (1980–4); (b) iii–vi, ed. by H. J. Jackson and George Whalley (1992–2001) (Princeton University Press, 1980–2001).
<i>Opus</i>	<i>Opus Maximum</i> (CW xv), ed. by Thomas McFarland and Nicholas Halmi (Princeton University Press, 2002).
<i>Phil Lectures</i>	<i>Lectures 1818–1819: On the History of Philosophy</i> (CW viii), ed. by J. R. de J. Jackson (2001).
<i>PW</i>	<i>Poetical Works</i> (CW xvi), 3 vols.: (a) i–ii (each in 2 parts), ed. by J. C. C. Mays; (b) iii (in 2 parts), ed. by J. C. C. Mays and J. Crick (Princeton University Press, 2001).
<i>SW&F</i>	<i>Shorter Works and Fragments</i> (CW xi), ed. by H. J. Jackson and J. R. de J. Jackson, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 1995).
<i>TT</i>	<i>Table Talk Recorded by Henry Nelson Coleridge (and John Taylor Coleridge)</i> (CW xiv), ed. by Carl Woodring, 2 vols. (Princeton University Press, 1990).

(ii) Works by Wordsworth

Wordsworth, <i>PW</i>	<i>The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth</i> , ed. by Ernest de Selincourt, revised by Helen Darbishire, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952–9).
Wordsworth, <i>Prose</i>	<i>The Prose Works of William Wordsworth</i> , ed. by W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).