Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

English Language and Literature Department

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THE SUPERNATURAL AND PUNISHMENT IN COLERIDGE'S SELECTED WORKS

Ruken UZUN

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2021

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ABSTRACT

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The supernatural, apart from being an element widening the range of imagination in literature from past to present, is an agent in the daily lives, folk and religious beliefs of people for explaining the unknown. As one of the prominent poets of the Romantic era, Samuel Taylor Coleridge is known for his frequent use of the supernatural in his works in various ways such as an unusual landscape, a character, an event, or a power. In his works he interprets the supernatural both as benevolent and malignant, depending on the one who controls it. In this context, in the first chapter of this thesis, Coleridge's "The Wanderings of Cain" (written in 1798, published in 1828), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (written and published in 1798), and "Kubla Khan" (written in 1800, published in 1816) are studied in terms of their treatment of the divine supernatural possessed by a divinity or the spiritual forces, used as a means of punishment for the sins committed against nature, a human being or the religious orders. In the second chapter, *Osorio* (written and published in 1797), "Christabel" (written in 1797-1800, published in 1816) and "The Three Graves" (written in 1797-1798, published in 1809) are studied focusing on the earthly supernatural as a means of punishment possessed and controlled by humans, and human-formed beings for evil purposes. In the mentioned works it is observed that the divine supernatural is presented as a power to preserve justice, and accordingly the works have a didactic purpose. On the other hand, when the supernatural is possessed by human beings with evil nature, it is made use of in order to punish and harm the innocent human beings. Consequently, this thesis puts forward that in the mentioned works, Coleridge presents the supernatural as a means of punishment and also points out that the natural order which is subverted by the evil and the sinful people can be remedied if only the supernatural power is controlled by a divinity; otherwise, it functions to create chaos.

Keywords

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the supernatural, punishment, divine power, evil, sin

ÖZET

UZUN, Ruken. *Coleridge'ın Seçili Eserlerinde Doğaüstü Unsurlar ve Ceza*¸ Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2021.

Doğaüstü, geçmişten bugüne edebiyatta hayal gücünün sınırlarını genişleten bir öge olmasının yanı sıra, insanların günlük hayatlarında, folklorik ve dini inançlarında bilinmeyeni açıklamak için bir vasıta olmuştur. Romantik dönemin önde gelen şairlerinden biri olan Samuel Taylor Coleridge, eserlerinde doğaüstünü olağandışı bir manzara, bir karakter, bir olay veya bir güç gibi birçok farklı şekilde kullanmasıyla tanınır. Şair eserlerinde doğaüstünü, onu yönlendiren kişiye bağlı olarak, hem iyi hem de kötü olarak yorumlar. Bu bağlamda, bu tezin ilk bölümünde Coleridge'ın "The Wanderings of Cain" (Kabil'in Gezintisi) (yazım 1798, basım 1828), *Yaşlı Gemici* (yazım ve basım 1798), "Kubla Khan" (Kubilay Han) (yazım 1800, basım 1816) eserlerindeki tanrı veya ruhani güçler tarafından sahip olunan tanrısal doğaüstünün, doğaya, bir insana veya tanrısal emirlere karşı işlenen günahların cezalandırılması olarak gönderilmesi işlenir. İkinci bölümde, *Osorio* (yazım ve basım 1797), "Christabel" (yazım 1797-1800, basım 1816) ve "The Three Graves" (Üç Mezar) (yazım 1797-8, basım 1809) eserleri insanlar ve insan şeklindeki varlıklar tarafından sahip olunan ve kontrol edilen dünyevi doğaüstünün, kötü niyetle cezalandırma yöntemi olarak kullanmasına odaklanılarak incelenir. Bahsi geçen eserlerde tanrısal doğaüstü, adaleti koruyan bir güç olarak sunulur ve dolayısıyla didaktik amaç taşır. Öte yandan, doğaüstüne kötü tabiatlı insanlar tarafından hükmedildiğinde, masum insanları cezalandırma ve onlara zarar verme amacıyla kullanılır. Sonuç olarak bu tez, adı geçen eserlerde Coleridge'ın doğaüstünü bir cezalandırma aracı olarak sunduğunu ve aynı zamanda kötüler ve günahkarlar tarafından altüst edilmiş doğanın dengesinin, doğaüstünün tanrısal bir gücün hakimiyetinde olması durumunda tekrar düzene kavuşacak, aksi takdirde karmaşaya neden olacak bir etken gibi sunduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, doğaüstü, cezalandırma, tanrısal güç, kötülük, günah

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to study Samuel Taylor Coleridge's (1772-1834) use of the supernatural within the context of punishment in his selected works *Osorio* (written and published in 1797), "Christabel" (written in 1797-1800, published in 1816), "The Wanderings of Cain" (written in 1798, published in 1828), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (written and published in 1798)[1], "Kubla Khan" (written in 1800, published in 1816), and "The Three Graves" (written in 1797-1798, published in 1809). Before the detailed analysis of these works in the chapters, in the "Introduction," the meaning of the supernatural, its place in literature and in the daily lives of people and the supernatural's relation to punishment in the folk beliefs and the fictions of the supernatural are explained. Next, the Romantic tradition, the medieval and gothic influences are briefly mentioned as it is necessary to understand the mindset of the period and the literary styles of the poets, mainly Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Coleridge's contemporaries and the place of the supernatural in their works have also been dealt with in order to understand how the Romantic writers interpret the supernatural, which is important to observe Coleridge's similarities and differences in employing the supernatural as a theme. As the study of Coleridge's mentioned works within the light of the supernatural in relation to punishment constitutes the aim of this thesis, his life and literary personality are also introduced. Considering his personal life's effects on his literary career, introduction of his childhood, adulthood and relations with people have been stated. In the following two chapters, The Supernatural as Divine Punishment and The Supernatural as Earthly Punishment, as a central theme, Coleridge's use of the supernatural as a means of punishment in the works mentioned above is discussed in detail.

The supernatural is a term which is used in order to explain the unexplainable, because the supernatural means above nature, and it refers to anything such as a superhuman power, an unnatural scenery, or an extraordinary being which cannot be experienced or witnessed in the natural order of things and in the everyday lives. In The Oxford English

[1] The poem is referred to as *The Ancient Mariner* throughout this thesis.

Dictionary, the supernatural is defined as "belonging to a higher realm or system than that of nature; transcending the powers or the ordinary course of nature" ("Supernatural"), which makes this term a phenomenon which cannot be investigated in a skeptical way and cannot lead the way to a legitimate solution. As exists in "contrary to regular course of nature" (Henry Nelson Coleridge, *Literary Remains* n.p.), it identifies everything which is out of nature's cause and effect circle (Taylor, "Magic" 78), which means the supernatural is beyond human power and control. Although it is beyond scientific explanations, and does not possess first hand reality, the supernatural has an important place in the daily lives of people. As observed in the mythologies of various nations, since the ancient times, various unexplainable experiences of people, including natural phenomenon, are interpreted as supernatural activities of a superhuman or a divine being, and as stated by Collins, it is believed that such supernatural occurences suggest that "nature has been overcome by some force outside or beyond it" (29). Mythology and the folklore have helped the supernatural to remain alive throughout the generations especially as a part of the oral tradition, and hence they convey the superstitions of the nations to the next generations. With scientific developments, natural phenomena are explained with their reasons; however, the supernatural remains as a mystery in the daily lives of people as a response to anything that science cannot explain, and within the superstitious, folkloric and religious beliefs of people.

Since the ancient times, people have presented the supernatural as an answer to the unknown, and as a result, it inevitably became a favoured tendency to use it in literary works. As Scarborough states, "[t]he supernatural is an ever-present force in literature. It colors our poetry, shapes our epics and dramas, and fashions our prose…" (1). As the literary works are coloured and enriched with the imagination of the writers, it is not surprising that the supernatural is an extant theme of literature. The supernatural feeds the imagination by presenting different realities than the one seen, heard, felt, examined or experienced by human beings. Employing the supernatural in a literary work offers endless opportunities to a writer for being prolific. As a result, the supernatural elements in a work can emerge in various representations such as an extraordinary landscape which cannot exist in the natural order of the earth, or an unusual creature which does not

resemble any living being or does not possess the characteristic of an ordinary person. They can be presented as pleasant or horrifying, good or evil, beautiful or ugly. In short, the supernatural is not limited to the truth only, instead it provides the writers an opportunity to push the boundaries of their imagination. Furthermore, the folk beliefs are retold or reinterpreted in literary works through the inclusion of the supernatural elements, which unites the creative minds of the writer and the elements of the folk culture.

It can be assumed that the supernatural has been a part of literature for a long time due to the fact that people in different periods enjoy reading it in various literary works. Doak's statement, when the creative genius transcends "the bounds of natural life and means, [it] is limited only by [its] own taste and judgement" (321) indicates that when the infinity created by the use of the supernatural is discovered, the creativity can cross the boundaries of reality; and only then the limits of imagination is pushed and the imagination can be widened parallel to the individual's capacity. This is highly applicable to the curious minds of the readers. With the supernatural agents taking part in a literary work, it offers an attraction for the readers. The plots, characters, or settings far from reality create mystery and curiosity. Accordingly, not only the imagination of the writer, but also the imagination of the reader contributes to the production of meaning in a literary work. The imagination of the readers is inspired by various supernatural elements. As Finnegan asserts, employing the supernatural in literary works does not just prepare a basis for the ongoing plot, but also heightens the tension, sensation and drama (40); in short, other than offering new alternatives to the plotlines, the supernatural creates the atmosphere of the work. The supernatural elements included in a plot can be scary, peaceful or awe-inspiring, and therefore the reaction of the readers are determined accordingly. Hence, a literary work arouses various feelings, attracts the reader along with its mysterious onset; and with the use of the supernatural, the imagination of the writer feeds the imagination of the reader.

It is observed that in literature, as in the daily lives, religious and folkloric beliefs of people, the supernatural is frequently related to punishment. The unexplainable and the

extraordinary events, dreadful and malignant incidents that people undergo are supposed to be supernatural, and assumed to be a punishment from a supernatural or a divine being. For example, in the Classical period, the diseases which have unknown etiology bring the supernatural forward as a possible cause. When the skills of the physicians are insufficient for diagnose, the reason for the disease is believed to be a divine curse or a punishment. Likewise, in the ancient Greek and Roman belief, as the natural causes of many illnesses or deformities of a body are unknown, people with deformed bodies are believed to be monstrous due to the fact that these disorders cause fear among people (Felton 355). Especially the frequently witnessed diseases of ancient Greece and Rome and their deforming effects on the individuals or the whole society are explained by means of the supernatural. Contagious diseases such as a plague and a pestilence are hard to control and easy to defeat the patient, and even the healers. As another example, epilepsy has an unpredictable and an irregular onset, and this irregularity strengthens the idea that these diseases stem from a divine or a supernatural force, although this belief is refuted after the development of modern medicine (Finnegan 25). Similar to the plague, psychological disturbances or even strongly displayed emotions such as anger, revenge and love are also considered as diseases which are believed to be the results of a punishment caused by offending the divine beings (Finnegan 28). Such bondings of the supernatural divine force with punishment hint that the relation between the supernatural and the religion is strong. Together, along with the fear of punishment, they strengthen the plausibility of one another.

The connection between the supernatural and punishment is exposed through the studies which reveal the facts about the spread of Christianity through the supernatural beliefs of people. As Scott points out, “[t]o the people of that age the universe presented itself as a sphere of limited compass, governed by personal beings and separated into the three abodes of gods and men and the shades of the departed. The spirits resident in the upper world were constantly appearing, under visible forms, in this realm of earth” (95). Scott’s remarks clarify that the people in early Christianity regard the supernatural agencies as important beings in the formation of the universe. The spirits of the dead are claimed to be visible from time to time, and people believe the world they live in is at the mercy of

these beings. Moreover, people assert that their experiences with these supernatural beings shape their lives. Hence, they rely on divine help, and in order to get this help they build sacred places to pray in, and set times or forms of worship through which they can display their deity (Scott 95-6). Accordingly, the connection between religion and the supernatural is highly obvious especially when considering the fear of punishment by supernatural means.

In addition to the warnings about divine punishment in Christianity itself, theological studies reveal that the sinful humans deserve punishment, and Christian God has the role of their punisher. In these studies, the reason for the existence of the punisher and the punished is the function of religion as "a system of cooperation enforced by punishment" (Martinez 321), as "the belief in a punishing god increases cooperation" (322). Clearly, the possibility of a punishment from the divinity beyond the human senses or capability is enough for making people obey the rules of God, and commit themselves to their faith. This is not different from the wrong practices of the non-Christian sacrifices which indicate that the worships were not performed properly, and consequently the ties between the gods and the men got weaker (Finnegan 38), leading to a warning by means of a divine punishment. This is significant because it shows that the faiths of people keep on shaping their lives and minds. This example ascertains the role of belief in the supernatural and its effects on faith. In Scott's words, "[i]n their conceptions of God and of Christ, in their understanding of the new life, in the analysis of their own religious experience, [people] were predisposed to the supernatural" (97). Accordingly, it can be concluded that the belief in the supernatural is important for the reliance on and commitment to religion, and the religious beliefs are highly functional for the belief of the supernatural to remain as a member of the unseen reality.

With the supernatural in literature, religion and the folk beliefs, the readers may forget the materialism and realism of their world, and create their unnatural realm. This is due to the fact that the supernatural beliefs such as superstitions, myths, magical activities, and unearthly creatures or the interferences of divine or superhuman beings make people

believe in the existence of a supernatural realm. Hereby, when a literary work possesses more than mere reality, it does not alienate the readers and therefore they do not feel totally excluded from the text. This is necessary for the text to be persuasive, which is also required in order to transfer the feeling aroused by that particular literary text. For this reason, the supernatural beliefs and rituals influence literary texts and how people perceive it. Particularly, in the Romantic period of English literature the use of the supernatural and its proximity to the natural is observed frequently in poetry. As this thesis consists of a study of the supernatural in the Romantic period, it is therefore important to mention how the supernatural is made use of by the Romantic poets before focusing on Coleridge's representation of the supernatural in relation to punishment.

The tendency to value what is rational and intellectual in the Enlightenment, and its effects in literature as the Age of Reason is replaced by the writers' interest in feelings in the second half of the eighteenth century. One of the most important reasons for this change is the willingness to react towards the ongoing situation in the society and in the political field. The era is dominated with political chaos, the scientific and industrial improvements, and as Chandler and McLane state:

> …one could reasonably say that poets of the Romantic period were responding, well, to…: the loss of the American colonies, uprising in Ireland, the emergence of mass literacy, wholesale configurations of discourses of knowledge (e.g. history, moral philosophy, political economy, chemistry, physiology, electromagnetism), the new constitutional theories and reform movements in politics, and of course to the French Revolution, which many of them considered the most momentous event in post-biblical history. (2)

The Romantic period and the concerns of the writers were shaped by the reaction towards the political chaos in the world, the developments in various scientific fields, and their unescapable effects on society. While the political disturbances made some writers long for old times and arouse their interest in the nostalgia, scientific improvements became the first reason for writers to respect and celebrate nature more. For the literary voices of the period, such changes caused uneasiness in nature (Hagen 3), which is undeniably against the entity of the living beings. The fast growing industrialization, correspondingly increasing pollution and people leaving the rural areas and moving to the urban areas lead

writers to celebrate nature as an “antidote” for all these developments, and a force feeding their imagination and inspiration (Bennett 264). Because of the industrial pollution in the cities and the health problems it creates, nature is identified with physical and moral health; because compared to the “smoky” and highly polluted cities, the clean atmosphere of a countryside is believed to be improving health (J. R. Watson 61). The people who were suffering from respiratory problems and deteriorated lungs were advised to move to a seaside place by doctors (J. R. Watson 61). The countrysides and seasides away from urban areas are the places where nature was felt in its purest form. As a result, the industrial and scientific innovations of the period, the promotion of reason in literature and in daily life were challenged by the Romantics, and instead, feelings, personal experiences, and creativity were valued more.

The rejection of the mechanical materialism of the previous era, and the favouring of the organic concepts, in other words, dethroning reason and exalting emotions, explains the unbridled freedom of the Romantic writers and literature (Szenczi 180). As reason and intellect require realities and scientific proofs, producing literary works accordingly had certain rules and limits. However, the emotions come into being as a reflection of the inner nature of human beings and as the results of their experiences. As J. R. Watson comments, resistance of the Romantics against the Neoclassical ideals indicates to the primitive’s being preferred to the sophisticated (4). Reason is no longer the only focus in a literary work. With the decrease of the value of the intellect and reason, “an independent and positive power of the mind” is preferred for producing a literary work (Pask 4). Associating the supernatural with the products of an independent mind is not wrong, because the supernatural is used in literature ignoring the rules or the order of physical nature (Pask 4), therefore it is the product of a mind free from the restrictions of intellect and reason.

However, because of their ignorance of reason, celebration of nature, and their interest in the far away settings, and their use of the supernatural the Romantics are accused of using poetry in order to escape from the realities of the period. Indeed, as it is further argued in

the following paragraphs, the frequent use of the supernatural elements by the Romantics is due to the fact that they stood against to the materialist enthusiasm of the period (Barnaud 3). Although the interest in the supernatural in the Romantic period is true, the supernatural is not necessarily used to create a completely isolated world different from the existing one; rather, most of the famous writers of the period present it as a part of the observed nature. Moreover, the supernatural elements in a literary work offer mystery, curiosity, an active imagination; thus they offer pleasure. As one of the pioneers of Romantic literature, Coleridge points out in his *Biographia Literaria* (1817) that a poem is against science and any scientific work. Its immediate purpose is to give pleasure, not to present the truth (10). Likewise, as Kevin Pask quotes from Joseph Addison, "[this] is a kind of Writing, wherein the Poet quite loses sight of Nature, and entertains his Reader's Imagination with the Characters and Actions of such Persons as have many of them no Existence, but what he bestows on them. Such are Fairies, Witches, Magicians, Demons, and departed Spirits" (1). According to Addison, employment of the supernatural functions as a response to the reader's expectation from a literary text. With the use of the supernatural, the imagination of the reader is fed and pleasure is provided. In this sense, the valued imagination causes the writers to become attracted to the ancient times and to the exotic lands (Rowland 128), which ends up with the tendency to include the medieval subjects and the Gothic elements in the works produced in the Romantic period.

With the interest in nostalgia, and due to the inspiration and influence of medievalism, narrative poems such as romance, ballad, epic and folk tales containing the supernatural elements become popular among the Romantics (Rowland 119). The supernatural practices are highly significant in medieval society. In addition to magical practices and due to the fact that people believed in miracles and the supernatural in general, the society, especially the population in villages, consisted of magicians, potion-makers and sellers who practiced benevolent and malevolent charms (Jones 27). However, in the medieval period magic or supernatural practices were not welcomed all the time. The peasant woman healers were accused as they were claimed to be performing witchcraft (Ehrenreich and English 31), and of allying with the devil (41), therefore, they had to face with severe punishments (33-5). Although magic was believed to be either white or black

according to its good or bad results successively (Jones 27), performing witchcraft was prohibited by the canon and secular laws, as it was believed to be harmful. In these examples, it can be deduced that the medieval society was highly intimate with the supernatural, and accordingly the literature has the same interest in it. Similarly, in several medieval works the magic and the supernatural are interwoven with everyday life. Characters with supernatural appearances, superhuman strength, magical abilities, curses or prophesies draw an imaginative storyline which even inspires the later periods, including the Romantic period. The medieval romances and the medieval ballads include the supernatural realms and elements such as the "[o]therworld that… contains fairies, revenants, sirens, and other forms of fantastical beings" (Morgentaler 146). Shields assumes the reason for the medieval ballads and folksongs were popular works in the literary history either because of their lending credence to the supernatural, or the supernatural's function in expressing the emotions metaphorically (166). It is obvious that the Romantics are influenced by the supernatural elements in medieval literature and their reflexions in the literary productions. Apart from their interest in the use of the supernatural in medieval romances and folk tales, the Romantics prefer composing ballads because the subject matter of this particular form of writing is not exclusive to a single social and economic class, but it includes characters and stories from different classes (Christie 94). Then, it is possible to assume that, as the Romantics value personal experiences and reject the limits in creativity, by writing ballads they present various people from different social classes, and this offers them a wide range of human experiences and concerns.

As another influence of the medieval revival, gothic fiction is produced in the Romantic period. Due to the fact that the gothic is an outcome of the interest in nostalgia, many writers produce gothic works in form of medieval ballads with medieval settings, in addition to several works produced with contemporary subjects and settings. Particularly for this reason, Hogle states that the Romantic poets coalesce the modern with the ancient in their works (201). As a matter of fact, gothic is a part or an ingredient of the Romantic movement (Hogle 196). Although a gothic work does not completely consist of the supernatural, how the Gothic and the Romantic writers use the supernatural is similar to

each other, as both are created in the ordinary physical world called the "natural supernaturalism" (Kroeber, et al. 139). In natural supernaturalism, the landscape is familiar, but it sometimes conceals extraordinary beings such as ghosts, spectres or magical beings. The Romantics represent the supernatural neither as totally good nor totally bad, and this differs the Romantic supernatural from that of the Gothic, as the Gothic writers include the supernatural elements in their works in order to explore the fearful mind of men, and "as most likely [as] a projection of an unbalanced psyche" (Cox 131). The Romantic writers' treatment of any supernatural encounter as a valuable experience is mostly not valid for the Gothic writers, and this specific feature of the Gothic can be interpreted as an attempt to replace "the optimism of the Enlightenment" with the evil's reality (Kroeber et al. 144-5). For this reason, Romantic literature cannot be considered separately from Gothic literature.

In the Romantic period, making use of the gothic elements become popular and they are used by many Romantic writers. Depending on Scarborough's claim that the Gothic, especially the Gothic novel, is the "real precursor of supernaturalism in modern English literature" (6), then, it is not wrong to assume that Coleridge, alongside the other Romantics, is inspired by the Gothic tradition, and with his works he even contributes to this tradition (Punter and Byron 13). Some of his writings such as "Christabel," *Osorio, The Ancient Mariner* are categorised as the exemplary pieces of the Gothic tradition. For example, with its ghost-like and unearthly characters, the representation of the Mariner as a miserable human being, the scary atmosphere in the middle of the sea, curses, superstitious events, and as a consequence of its being referred to as a "tale of terror" (Miles 59), *The Ancient Mariner* is not much different from a Gothic work. Furthermore, melancholy and misery in Coleridge's life, which is reflected into his works either as a dark and gloomy atmosphere or as an unfinished and fragmented piece, enhance this "tale of terror" atmosphere. This reflection, apparently supports the idea that the Gothic tradition and Coleridge inspire each other.

In the Romantic period, although Coleridge produced works under the influence of the medieval and the Gothic traditions both of which make use of the supernatural, he is not the only poet who is interested in the supernatural. Alongside Coleridge, the Romantic period hosts many ideas derived from the supernatural, and the works produced by William Blake (1757-1827), William Wordsworth (1770-1850), Lord Byron (1788-1824), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), and John Keats (1795-1821) contributed to these ideas. In his works, Coleridge creates the supernatural with the appearance of extraordinary creatures or human beings with supernatural powers, also through these characters' provoking unusual incidents, or with the description of the supernatural landscapes. The influence of the medieval and the Gothic traditions is observed in the alternative worlds Coleridge creates. On the other hand, Wordsworth's characters have the supernatural aspects which are brought by particular circumstances and feelings, and caused by unbalanced psyche of the characters (Bruhn 31). In other words, there are no extraordinary creatures, events or places, but a supernatural state of mind caused by the experiences of the heroes. It is possible to suggest that while Coleridge presents the supernatural in a natural way, Wordsworth presents natural in a supernatural way (Stork 318). As Pfeffer and Heffernan state, "[o]nly in mundane experience can one find moral and spritiual truth... only experienced objects can become meaningful – if the mind and affections operate properly upon them...", and for Wordsworth "the imagination can be aroused by 'incidents within the compass of poetic probability' and requires no supernatural stimulation" (142). Hence, for Wordsworth, the feelings of the readers can be aroused only if what is narrated in the work is relative to their lives, and a mysterious interference is unnecessary for catching their attention. In short, in Wordsworth's understanding, the supernatural is necessary for the discovery of the "mystery behind the ordinary" (Coburn, "Coleridge and Wordsworth" 122). While in Coleridge's poems, the supernatural is taken as the reality, in Wordsworth's poems the supernatural is hidden behind the reality; and unlike Coleridge's, it is subjective.

Coleridge and Wordsworth differ in presenting the supernatural and they have their own styles of writing, but together they shape the structure of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) and initiate the Romantic movement after their fellowship begins in 1795. This friendship

helps Coleridge discover the ambitious writer in himself, and their friendship gets stronger in time; "… Coleridge and Wordsworth, both young and developing, found in each other a catalyst. The two men, it is held, inspired each other and liberated the tremendous creative power that was struggling for expression within both" (Fruman 265). Wordsworth and Coleridge's friendship grows stronger when they begin to inspire each other with their intellect (Everest 22). Due to the fact that both are interested in learning, Coleridge and Wordsworth traveled to many places of science and philosophy in Europe in order to explore, as long as Coleridge's health allowed them (Willey 102). Wordsworth collaborated with Coleridge in the process of writing many important works of Coleridge such as "The Wanderings of Cain" and *The Ancient Mariner,* and contributed to the production of the supernatural elements in these poems.

Similar to Wordsworth and Coleridge's contribution to each other as poets, and Coleridge's creating his own style with the inspiration he got from their collaboration, Coleridge inspired other Romantics with his individual style and representation of the supernatural. Their influence on one another is reciprocal. While Coleridge makes the supernatural visible unlike Wordsworth who lets the readers "see through it" (Bruhn 36), Percy Bysshe Shelley is closer to Coleridge in terms of his interest in using the supernatural and gothic elements in his works. In a famous memoir, when Shelley, his wife Mary and Byron were together, Byron offered each of the three to write a ghost story while they enjoyed themselves with German ghost stories. This challenge not just exemplifies the trio's interest in ghost stories but is also important as it inspired Mary Shelley to write *Frankenstein* (1823). As Badalamenti points out, Mary Shelley and Percy Shelley have the same interest in macabre, horror and the supernatural themes (423-4). Shelley not only includes daemons or spirits in his own poetry and plays, but also through his interest in those gothic and supernatural beings he inspires his acquaintances like he is inspired by them. It can be suggested that Shelley's interest in the gothic-supernatural is very similar to Byron's. Byron is a poet inspired by Shelley's fascination with the ancient mystical and mythological stories in literature (Twitchell 603). In Byron's works, there are characters with magical powers besides the supernatural landscapes controlled or provoked by a mystery and sometimes by the psychological factors. Byron believed in

the superstitions, and when his friends ask, Byron answers, “I have from my childhood endeavoured to impress a belief of supernatural causes on my mind. I cannot say why I had such a propensity, nor why it continued so long; but I derive pleasure from the idea; even now, I actually believe such things may be” (qtd. in Hudson 718). His personal beliefs explains how he structures the supernatural elements in his works; they are visible, but the psyche of the characters affects them. As a result, it is possible to suggest that when Byron uses the supernatural elements, he combines how Coleridge and Wordsworth use it, therefore it is visible like Coleridge’s, and it has psychological and mental backgrounds like Wordsworth’s. On the other hand, another Romantic poet John Keats manifests a universe in which there is “the reality of nature” and “the reality of the supernature,” without ignoring the fact that the supernatural world comprehends the natural one. These two parts cannot be separated from each other. They generate the universe only if they are together, and Keats does not present them as illusory. As Ronald A. Sharp states, by so, Keats makes the human world spiritual, which makes “spirituality” a natural part of the realm of man (76). Therefore, Keats’s poetry of the supernatural is visual and similar to Coleridge’s supernatural, because in his poetry he defines the supernatural as the half of the universe, and as an important part of the reality of existence.

Apart from the contribution of the medieval and the Gothic traditions, the interest in inner nature in the Romantic period is another factor shaping Coleridge’s poetry. As Averill points out, Romantic poetry is defined as a new kind of poetry: “the poetry of the growing inner self,” in other words, human nature. For the sparkle of this movement, *Lyrical Ballads*’ importance is emphasised as it is “the most important volume of verse in English since Renaissance, for it began modern poetry.… [No] other book of poems in English so plainly announces a new literary departure” (qtd. in Averill 365), which indicates the book’s significance in declaring the beginning of Romantic poetry as a new movement in English literature, and its direct and implicit success. Like the other Romantics, Coleridge is aware of the beauty of nature as well, and he is faithful to it; however, he differs from the others by combining nature’s beauty and the charm of novelty in order to produce something more interesting (J. R. Watson 60), and this is one of the best ways to describe Coleridge’s interest in and the treatment of supernatural subjects. He is faithful to nature’s

charm, but he creates curiosity, and attracts the reader by adding new and mysterious aspects. As a result, while striving to please the readers by awakening their interest, he himself is also pleased with his own participation in the production of the poems with the supernatural elements when he writes *Lyrical Ballads* with Wordsworth. As Coleridge explains in *Biographia Literaria*:

> …our conversations [with Mr. Wordsworth] turned frequently on 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 the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of the imagination… The thought suggested itself… that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in *this* sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such, as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves. (5)

In the quotation above, Coleridge explains his task in forming the manifesto of the Romantic poetry, *Lyrical Ballads*, and he adds that it is his responsibility to write poems including the supernatural elements which take their subjects from everyday life, and everyday feelings. So, while they create a familiar atmosphere, and preserve the emotions and convey them to the readers easily, the novel means of their presentation attract the audience's attention. As for the expression of the inward nature by means of the supernatural elements, Mark L. Reed emphasises Wordsworth's claim that "[p]oems chiefly on natural subjects [are] taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium" (241). Both Coleridge and Wordsworth in *Lyrical Ballads* deal with the inner nature of human beings in the natural world and in the supernatural world. However, they differ in their methods while producing their works. While Wordsworth is writing poems, he mostly prefers the natural and the physical world for triggering the imagination. On the other hand, Coleridge makes the supernatural natural, therefore he creates some supernatural elements in nature, and through imagination these extraordinariness is taken as ordinary. This is Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief...., that constitutes poetic faith" (*Biographia Literaria* 6). Coleridge believes that the poetry reader is supposed to suspend reason, and accept the

extraordinary as ordinary, the supernatural as natural in order to understand and believe in the poem; only then poetic faith is to be constituted for understanding the characters, their situations and their choices. This arouses all kinds of emotions promised by the poet. Tomko comments on Coleridge's ideas on "poetic faith" and its importance as follows:

> … Coleridge writes: "Now without a certain portion of gratuitous and (as it were) *experimentative* faith in the Writer, a Reader will scarcely give that degree of continued attention, without which no *didactic* work worth reading can be read to any wise or profitable purpose"… The "experimentative faith" of the reader, audience member, or inquirer is only "for the moment." The reader walks with the writer as far as possible, attempting to comprehend as much as possible. He or she is willing to entertain propositions rather than immediately rejecting them as not fully proven. But the end of this conditional, transitory faith is truth. It will only be continued if, at the end of this experiment, the author's insights prove reliable. Without this provisional faith, however, an encounter with a work will be incomplete. (245)

According to Tomko's statements, Coleridge suggests that a work which cannot constitute the required poetic faith in the readers is an incomplete work. This faith is experimantative, provisional and needs the readers' reliance on the writer. Otherwise, the work cannot complete its purpose, it cannot teach, it cannot arouse emotions, in short it cannot be accepted into the lives and minds of the readers; in short, poetic faith is crucial. Supporting this view, Bruhn states that:

> [w]e, too, are "haunted" [by the "enchanted" narratives of Coleridge] and credit "the intervention of supernatural agency"... because Coleridge "of his free will and judgement does what the Believing Narrator of a Supernatural Incident, Apparition or Charm does form ignorance and weakness of mind…"… To the extent that such "mistaking" secures [the readers'] willing suspension of disbelief, it forces us like Coleridge's narrators and characters… to resign the vantage from which the supernatural can be readily explained as more or less natural psychic phenomena. (35)

Here, Bruhn stresses that while the supernatural elements are used in a literary work, it is hard to keep the readers' interest in the ongoing events and make them empathise with the characters. Bruhn states that, in order to ensure poetic faith, the poet must become the mentioned "Believing Narrator" and suspend the belief of the readers by keeping them inside the borders of the persona's and the narrator's point of view, because the reader is supposed to become a "subject to the poem's verbal charms" (37-8).

As it can be understood from the explanations above, the representation of the supernatural in Coleridge's poetry is not totally different or far from the physical world. In other words, while producing the supernatural elements Coleridge "never lose[s] sight of their human character"; additionally, he avoids "strict adherence to common life" (qtd in Hogle 195-6). This balance makes the work credible, but still keeps it extraordinary enough to arouse the interest of the reader, because "[t]he spirit feeds on mystery. It lives not by the fact alone but by the unknowable, and there is no highest mystery without the supernatural" (Scarborough 2). In Bruhn's words:

> [a]s a supernaturalist, Coleridge "imitates" agents and actions that, transgressing natural and rational orders, tend to be as mystifying as they are affecting, the more so because they are realized solely from the point of view of a narrator who is himself "under the controul of supernatural impressions." Coleridge normally dissembles his own knowledge and purposes in order to solicit our willing suspension of disbelief… (41)

For Coleridge, therefore, the supernatural is a force which is beyond the life experiences. In a literary work, both the writer and the reader are to transcend the personal experiences and must be open to possibilities. This is necessary for the suspension of disbelief. Then, it can be suggested that the supernatural elements are preferred by Coleridge to draw the attention of the readers who are willing to open their minds and hearts to the unknown. As Wasserman points out:

> … the Coleridgean imagination is the act of reconciling the phenomenal world of the understanding with the noumenal world of reason. It incorporates "the reason in images of the sense" and organizes "the flux of the senses by the permanent and self-circulating energies of the reason" to give birth to symbols, which are both "harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths of which they are conductors." Art, like the self-knowing subject, is "the middle quality between a thought and a thing, or… the union and reconciliation of that which is nature with that which is exclusively human"; and taste, a mode of imagination, "is the intermediate faculty which connects the active with the passive powers of our nature, [and] the intellect with the senses. (30)

Wasserman here explains the imagination that Coleridge defines as a combination of the noumenal and the phenomenal, and the natural and the supernatural. For Coleridge, imagination shall remain natural somehow, as it is required for the work's credibility, which is essential for the willing suspension of disbelief. He creates an artificial alternative world which is not completely different from the real one, but has its unique

settings and characters. This world is often adorned with supernatural elements. The world seen or depicted in his works is not extraordinary in appearance; however, by means of the unusual events or the inclusion of extraordinary characters, the supernatural elements come into existence. This usually happens by the intrusion of the magical or superstitious practices, unusual landscapes, non-human or mystical human-like characters. As the connection with the physical world is not totally suspended, the worlds and characters Coleridge creates cannot be defined as "ex nihilo" because they do not come out of nothing, but they are created out of real life experiences (Barnaud 4). Chen Hong interprets these supernatural intrusions as the power of the deeply hidden wild nature, because Coleridge himself believes that nature's power is much bigger than that of men, its whole being, and culture; so, this beautiful but frightening power of nature shall be set free (145).

Coleridge's life highly influenced his literary creativity. Coleridge was the son of a vicar, and he grew up within the light of religious teaching with his nine elder siblings (Everest 17). In his crowded family, Coleridge was well-treated and loved especially by his father, until his death in Coleridge's childhood. Besides being a pious man, Coleridge's father John Coleridge was a mathematician and he was fluent in many languages including Latin and Greek, and clearly his teachings and affection helped Coleridge become an open-minded person who has tendency and love for learning. Following his father's death, he was sent to a school where he was excluded by the other boys. He was a passionate student who loved reading and writing, but he was not praised or liked by his peers, unlike the elders who praised his perseverance. He was aware of his own maturity stemming from his "sensibility, imagination, [and] vanity," even when he is a child (Christie 15). Reading and writing were indispensable for him even in his childhood, which foreshadows how he becomes interested in literature and becomes an important literary person in his adulthood.

As Coleridge emphasises, his ideas are shaped and get stronger with his fears, difficulties, pains, and self-doubt (J. R. Watson 213); therefore, analysing his personal struggles are

significant to understand his literary identity. Apart from his childhood experiences, his adulthood full of struggle, and uneasiness of his mind had impact on Coleridge's poetry. This uneasiness is caused by his unhappy marriage, the disturbing political and social circumstances of the period, economic problems, losing a son, a physical illness that prevented him from travelling freely, opium addiction which actually began in order to elude stress and the pain of his physical illnesses, his unrequited love for Sara Hutchinson which led to an obsession and alcohol addiction; consequently deteriorated his relationships with his family and friends (Everest 19-30), and caused physical and mental pain, guilt and self-deprecation. As Coleridge writes in his letters, his uneasy mind is the reason for his feeling worthless and blaming himself for his past mistakes such as his troubled bachelor life, disloyal and unhappy marriage, opium addiction which causes problems with his friends (White 809). Besides, he writes that the physical illnesses and pains trouble and prevent him most of the time from living freely. These particular unfortunate experiences in Coleridge's life, and his unhappiness eventually are reflected in his literary works. In his works, admiration and pity are intermingled, because while his extraordinary vision arouses admiration, his distressed situation which cause his works to remain unfinished arouses pity (J. R. Watson 212). His miserable life helps him shape the framework of his works, and it may even contribute with a dark and mysterious tone, determine how his characters are formulated, and even make the poet feel too weak to complete some of his works. As Watson declares, "Coleridge's poetry is like his life: it is enthusiastic, open to experience, uneven, sometimes chaotic, and even annoying; but it is always touchingly human and vulnerable" (J. R. Watson 213). For instance, the Mariner in *The Ancient Mariner* is a miserable, cursed man as a result of the sins he commits; or the eponymous heroine in "Christabel" is a hopeless girl in a fearful situation because of the spell she is bewitched with; or in *The Wandering of Cain*, the main character is a sinner wandering in a quandary without knowing what he is going to do; or Mary, Ellen and Edward in "The Three Graves" cannot achieve happiness because of the curses put on them by Mary's mother. As can be deduced from these examples from Coleridge's mentioned works, Coleridge includes his own hopes and fears, his problems with his family and friends, his desires and failures directly or indirectly in his works.

In one of his autobiographical letters, Coleridge writes the times when his father took him to countryside and taught him about planets, stars and the sun, their extraordinary structures or unimaginable sizes, and how they awakened his admiration:

> I never regarded *my senses* in any way as the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions not by my *sight* - even at that age. … It is true, that the mind *may* become credulous and prone to superstition…- but are not the Experimentalists credulous even to madness in believing any absurdity, rather than believe the grandest truths, if they have not the testimony of their own senses in favour? (qtd. in Willey 13)

As stated above, Coleridge's tendency to consider the supernatural as a possibility in his personal life has two reasons: the first one is the scientific truths which are not seen, felt or detected by the senses but still exist; and the second one is his unwillingness to limit his imagination with the truths. In other words, for Coleridge the supernatural is a vehicle to knowledge and the possibilities of the mind. As pointed out by Coburn:

> [f]or Coleridge, nothing is more strange, more mysterious than the mind itself, especially the frightened, or troubled, or guilty mind, with all the spectres that haunt the margins of its semi-conscious and unconscious operations; from its projection come all the daemons, spirits, and phantoms the most "supernatural or at least romantic" poem requires. ("Coleridge and Wordsworth" 125)

In other words, Coleridge wants to widen the margins of his mind in order to explore the limits of his imagination, and this provides him endless possibilities for creating a supernatural world. Indeed, in Coleridge's works the supernatural has no single representation; on the contrary, he presents multiple supernatural settings, characters and occasions. For instance, while a work is set in a medieval castle, another is set in a contemporary farm house. While in a work, the supernatural has a didactic purpose, in another one the supernatural is used for evil causes. Sometimes the supernatural is a solution for the chaos, but sometimes it is the reason for the chaos. Hence, the supernatural of Coleridge cannot be defined only as good or bad; but it can be put forward that the poet encourages his readers to use their own imagination, understand his imagination as a poet, empathise with his characters, think over the supernatural occasions, and make their own judgements.

The scholarly studies on Coleridge's use of the supernatural in *Osorio,* "Christabel," The Wanderings of Cain," *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, "Kubla Khan," and "The Three Graves" mostly reveal the significance of the supernatural elements in the flow of the events, setting and the character creation. Indeed, the use of the supernatural in Coleridge's works has already been studied by several scholars. For instance, in Diljit Kaur Chantha's PhD dissertation entitled "The Supernatural as a Rhetorical Focus in the Three Major Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge," in Gamze Tekin Özdemir's MA thesis entitled "Coleridge's Use of the Supernatural in 'The Ancient Mariner', 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan'," in Ernest E. Barnaud's MA thesis entitled "The Supernatural in the Poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge", the supernatural elements in Coleridge's most popular three poems "Christabel", *The Ancient Mariner* and "Kubla Khan" are evaluated, in general, in relation to Coleridge's suspension of disbelief. When the past few decades are considered, these three mentioned works are the most frequently studied ones in Coleridge studies, and as a result, they are the most well-known works of Coleridge. In many researches, the other works studied in this thesis, *Osorio,* "The Wanderings of Cain" and "The Three Graves", are studied in terms of folk beliefs, curses or superstitions, and also miraculous religious encounters they include as in Chris Murray's article "Coleridge and 'Real Life' Tragedy", Werner W. Beyer's article "Coleridge, Wieland's Oberon and *The Wanderings of Cain*", Patricia Condon Brim's PhD dissertation entitled "Archetypes of Folklore and Superstition in Coleridge's Poetry," and Kara Davis's article "Cain in Early Nineteenth-Century Literature: Traditional Biblical Stories Revised to Encompass Contemporary Advances in Science". Explicitly, the supernatural elements are hardly in the foreground.

The influences of folklore, curses, and also superstitions are frequently studied in Coleridge's major poems. Vicki Lou Crabb Kight's MA thesis entitled "The Functions of Folk Elements in Coleridge's 'Christabel'," Elizabeth M. Liggins' article "Folklore and the Supernatural in 'Christabel'", O. Byran Fulmer's article "The Ancient Mariner and the Wandering Jew", Paul Bentley's article "*The Ancient Mariner,* Superstition and the *Lyrical Ballads"* are only a few of these works analysing the poems in relation to their folkloric elements. Apart from the works on the use of the supernatural and its folkloric connections, there can be found the studies of punishment as a response to a sin or a

crime, and as an evil activity in Coleridge's works, as in Richard Stuart Brich's MA thesis entitled "Coleridge's Conception of Sin in 'The Ancient Mariner'," in Douglas Angus's article "The Theme of Love and Guilt in Coleridge's Three Major Poems", in Peter Kitson's article "Coleridge, The French Revolution, and 'The Ancient Mariner': Collective Guilt and Individual Salvation", and also in Brittany Pladek's article "'A Radical Causation': Coleridge's Lyrics and Collective Guilt." Either as a result of committing a sin or a crime, or by encountering an evil supernatural power, it ends up with punishment by several means in the six works of Coleridge that have been named. All studies listed above are not limited to these issues only; however, it is hard to find a single study on Coleridge's use of the supernatural in a wider perspective, within the context of punishment. Apart from the coexistence of the supernatural and punishment, the scope of this thesis is not limited to the three major works of Coleridge; but rather, the research is extended by adding three, relatively, rarely studied works of the poet.

The selected works of Coleridge differ in the presentation of the supernatural; however, their most obvious common point is that they combine the supernatural and punishment in various ways. The supernatural may be a part of the landscape, appear as nonhuman and an unnatural creature, stem from a folk belief, an omen, or a practiced magic. Because of their similarities to the representations in the folk tales, mythologies and religions, it necessitates the readers' willing suspension of disbelief, which strengthens the story's credibility. Another common point in these works related to the supernatural is how the supernatural elements function as punishment. Considering the storylines, the supernatural elements and punishment go side by side throughout the works. It is observed that, in some of the works, the punishment is the result of the crime committed against nature, a person or God's will; and such a punishment is not experienced in daily life. In such situations, the punishment is considered to be a supernatural one and sent from a divine authority. For example, in *Osorio,* "Christabel," and "The Three Graves," the characters are punished by the evil supernatural power of a human or a human-formed creature; although, in *Osorio* some characters are punished as they indulge in the supernatural deeds. In short, the mediums of the supernatural and punishment coexist in the constructions of the poems.

In the light of this background information, this thesis, in two chapters, analyses the use of the supernatural within the context of punishment in Coleridge's four works of poetry "Christabel," *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, "Kubla Khan", "The Three Graves", a play *Osorio,* written in blank verse, and a prose work "The Wanderings of Cain." All the works are selected due to their different representations of the supernatural and punishment. While the supernatural is a means of punishment in most of the works, it is possible to witness the supernatural as the reason for punishment in some other. The supernatural is either a power to punish the evil deeds, or it is used by evil people to punish the innocent. As a result, the supernatural and punishment is not treated as only good or only bad, but the incidents and the characters or beings who use the supernatural power determine for what purpose they use it. Moreover, the supernatural enables Coleridge to enhance mystery and add didacticism, apart from creating a subjective and an original representation. The works studied in the first chapter portray the evil deeds of human beings and their being punished by a supernatural power in return. Chronologically, the first work studied "The Wanderings of Cain," is a rewritten biblical story of Cain who is punished to wander eternally as he murders his brother Abel. The punishment in this particular work is inevitable as Cain disobeys the rule of God, commits sin, and murders his own brother because of jealousy. "The Wanderings of Cain" contains the supernatural means in Cain's punishment and presents this religious story by rewriting it with the supernatural elements by associating Cain's punishment with a curse which makes him a wanderer forever. This well-known story of what Cain goes through, his punishment by God, his miserable situation, and the hope of redemption at the end arouse the feelings of despair and hope successively.

Next, in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, different from "The Wanderings of Cain," the supernatural is experienced in an invisible realm existing in visible nature, and this realm is presented as a part of the universe. In *The Ancient Mariner*, the protagonist murders an innocent albatross, because as a human being he has the tendency to commit sin; this is a deduction as there is not a justifying reason specified throughout the poem. The supernatural is presented as a means of punishment in the poem. The Mariner is punished

by the invisible supernatural spirits who protect nature. As a result, he is cursed and he undergoes a series of horrifying experiences. As one of the most indicative Romantic works of the period with its being a ballad, a gothic tale, and having a faraway setting, *The Ancient Mariner* is selected to contribute to the study of the supernatural because of its focus on the punishment of the Mariner by several supernatural elements such as an unusual setting and invisible spirits. The poem presents the whole process of what the Mariner goes through, how he commits the sin, gets punished, begins to respect and love nature, and learns from his past mistakes in detail.

The first chapter concludes with the analysis of "Kubla Khan," narrating Kubla's crime of disrespecting the heaven-like beauty of nature by commanding to build a pleasure dome on that region; in other words, how he destroys the natural beauty because of his selfish desire. The poem consists of many supernatural happenings which imply that the setting is hell-like and the punishment is inevitable here. It is a highly symbolic poem, therefore open to various interpretations, such as its scenery changing from a heaven-like landscape into a hell-like one. The sinner Kubla and the poet-speaker are punished in this supernatural scenery with a scary, hell-like experience. At the end of the poem, the poet-speaker's regret, and his wish to compensate for his crime are stressed. As a result, in "Kubla Khan," similar to the other two works studied in this chapter, there is a punishment by supernatural means functioning as a warning to human beings in order to make them incline to the good deeds and avoid selfishness. Different from the other two poems, this realization in "Kubla Khan" happens in the subconscious of the poet-speaker.

In the second chapter, the works studied present human beings and human-like creatures who have the supernatural powers. Although the first chapter consists of the works in which human beings are punished by the divine forces for their evil deeds, in the works studied in the second chapter, the human and human-like beings possess the supernatural power; therefore, their engagement with the supernatural activities is generally because of evil purposes, and mostly out of revenge or jealousy. In *Osorio,* there is a community in which the supernatural activity is officially illegal; however, the power holders

sometimes make use of it when necessary. *Osorio* differs from the other works in this chapter as the supernatural is a gossip fodder and a rumour, and it displays the results of the people's prejudice against the supernatural. Throughout the work, there is not a real experience of the supernatural. However, still the supernatural power such as a magical activity is pretended to be used for selfish reasons, but without any certain judgement of good or bad. Interestingly, both the evil and the good characters take advantage of the supernatural and its illegality in the community especially when they want to disguise their identities to hide, and blame other people who are committed to the supernatural activities. At the end of the work, although not through the supernatural means, the evil character is punished; so it is possible to deduce that, similar to the works in the first chapter, justice is emphasised in *Osorio*. Here, the supernatural is not a response to a chaotic event; rather it initiates the chaotic events.

In the second work studied, "Christabel," the supernatural is presented as a means for initiating the chaotic relationships between two women, and between a daughter and a father successively. By including the medieval and the Gothic elements, "Christabel," presents the supernatural as a magical activity practiced by Geraldine, a mysterious evil creature in human form. As the poem is one of the incomplete works of Coleridge, the aim of Geraldine remains uncertain, but her first practice is to silence Christabel so that she does not reveal Geraldine's being a supernatural creature, and to prevent Christabel from sending her away from the castle. Hereby, the innocent human being is punished with silence by a supernatural creature in human form. In "Christabel," the supernatural is used for evil purposes. As elaborated in the chapter, Coleridge hints the evil nature of Geraldine with references to the folkloric beliefs, and thus he creates a tense and scary atmosphere for the readers.

In the last work analysed in this chapter, "The Three Graves," the supernatural is presented as a threat to domestic peace, security and unity. The mother curses her daughter out of jealousy, and this curse destroys her life and marriage. The punishment that stems from an evil curse marks the starting point of the chaotic events in the poem.

Since there are various folk tales about the evil curser and the innocent cursed, the ending of the incomplete poem is open to various interpretations. Accordingly, Coleridge may have intended to make his readers make their own judgements and decide who deserves the punishment. Accordingly, this thesis studies Coleridge's mentioned selected works within the light of this connection of the supernatural and punishment.

CHAPTER I

THE SUPERNATURAL AS DIVINE PUNISHMENT

In Coleridge's "The Wanderings of Cain," *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* and "Kubla Khan," the supernatural is presented in several ways such as an unnatural happening, an unnatural creature, a power which is controlled by a divine being, an invisible and a visible spirit, or a landscape itself. In these works, Coleridge employs the supernatural as a means of punishment as a response to a human's sin, crime or disrespect against nature, another person or the rule of God. In other words, the order of nature is disturbed by a person's selfish action, and in return, s/he is punished directly or implicitly by a divine force representing the power of the universe, and this leads to fearful experiences which end up with the sinful one's regret and repentance.

The representation of the supernatural elements and punishment in the mentioned works are different from each other. While the common supernatural elements in "The Wanderings of Cain" and *The Ancient Mariner* are the curses, and the encounters with a dead person, or a spiritual being, in "Kubla Khan" the landscape has several supernatural aspects. All these supernatural elements function as a means of punishment and cause repentance. After murdering his brother, who is a righteous person and loved by God himself, Cain in "The Wanderings of Cain" is cursed to be an eternal wanderer. He has to walk forever in thirst, hunger and weariness, yet he can never reach his home. Later on, his encounter with his dead brother makes Cain regret murdering his brother, and he seeks redemption. In *The Ancient Mariner,* the Mariner murders an innocent creature of nature, the albatross, and as a consequence he suffers from a series of punishments, and is cursed to live in agony and tell his story to other people. Similarly in "Kubla Khan", when Kubla disturbs the natural beauty with his selfish desire, he witnesses the shifts of the landscape from a peaceful, heaven-like one to a fearful, hell-like one, which makes him regret and ask forgiveness. As a result, in these selected works, Coleridge uses punishment through the supernatural means with a didactic purpose. As the punishment is imposed either by an unearthly force, or by God himself, the fear of the sinful characters

grows, and they evaluate their own wrong and sinful actions and feelings. The didacticism is revealed when the innocent characters are harmed, and the sinful characters become repentant just like at the end of *The Ancient Mariner*, the only complete work among the three. In "The Wanderings of Cain" and "Kubla Khan," the wrong choices of the characters, their final realisations of their mistakes, and their repentances following their being punished add didacticism to these works.

Accordingly, the works studied in the first chapter of this thesis mainly focus on the divine punishment by means of the supernatural in order to revive and reestablish the subverted order of nature by punishing the ones who subvert it. Commonly, in these works, the supernatural creates curiosity and mystery for the reader, although its emergence as a punishment is a fearful, therefore a didactic experience. Hence, when the misery of the character is exposed to the reader, the supernatural punishment that the character has to endure becomes examplary for both the reader and the character. Consequently, these works include the supernatural elements as means of punishment in order to advise the readers to avoid sinful deeds, which is necessary in order to re-set the subverted natural order.

1.1. "THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN"

"The Wanderings of Cain" unfolds the story of a fratricide into an examplary story of the punishment of a sinful brother. Here, the supernatural is used as a means of punishment since the murderer brother is doomed to wander eternally to compensate for his sin and realise his guilt. The idea of writing "The Wanderings of Cain," in Fruman's words, comes into being when Coleridge wants to deal with the first and maybe the most malignant crime in human history (362). Although Coleridge and Wordsworth decide to be its co-writers, "The Wanderings of Cain" remains as an incomplete work; however, Canto II, the second of the three planned parts, is written by Coleridge in 1798 and published in 1828. Coleridge states it in the Prefatory Note of the work as follows:

> The title and subject were suggested by myself, who likewise drew out the scheme and the contexts for each of the three books or cantos, of which the work was to consist, and which, the reader is to be informed, was to have been finished in one night! My partner undertook the first canto: I the second: and which ever had *done first*, was to set about the third. Almost thirty years have passed by; yet at this moment I cannot without something more than a smile moot the question which of the two things was the more impracticable, for a mind so eminently original to compose another man's thoughts and fancies, or for a taste so austerely pure and simple to imitate the Death of Abel? (286-7)

From the poet's explanation it is clear that Wordsworth is supposed to write the first Canto and Coleridge is to write the second one; however, Wordsworth is unable to write his part, and as a result, the work only consists of its second Canto. Coleridge confesses that Wordsworth is a poet with a creative mind, yet his composing another poet's ideas is impracticable, and as a result Coleridge reveals that the collapse of the plan is not surprising at all. In the following lines of the Prefatory Note, it is pointed out that when Coleridge and Wordsworth discuss the written part of "The Wanderings of Cain," they both agree on the failure of their effort, and instead, they begin to work on *The Ancient Mariner* (287).

"The Wanderings of Cain" is about Cain who is doomed to wander eternally after he kills his brother Abel. Although this is not narrated at the beginning of the work, this part is regarded as the beginning due to its thematic connection with the religious story of Cain. In the beginning of the work, Cain and his son Enos move through a forest which becomes narrow, windy and dark as a cavern after a little while. Enos is a little child whose innocence is emphasised, which explains why he is optimistic, happy and hopeful, unlike Cain. However, the appearance can be deceptive. As suggested by Norman Fruman, no matter how strong and happy Enos appears, he is a child who is lost in a wilderness with his father. He is far from home, has no friend and no caring mother (547). As a result, it does not seem possible for Enos to be actually hopeful and strong, but it is clear that he tries to be hopeful and strong. Although Cain is supposed to take care of his son, his misery constrains him from taking care of even himself. On the contrary, Enos is the one taking care of and leading his father to keep on walking. Although the punishment of Cain constrains him, and his regret for his crime is apparent, it is highly possible that Cain is

not aware of his selfishness yet. Indeed, by ignoring his responsibilities as a father, and making his young and innocent son take care of his father, he selfishly makes Enos endure his father's punishment, which may cause another punishment for Cain.

The description of Cain and Enos wandering aimlessly in a forest at the beginning of the work in fact is the implication of the beginning of the punishment of Cain has already started. The path in the forest becomes narrow and dark, which creates a fearful atmosphere and a feeling of being entrapped. Apart from the exterior factors victimising him, Cain's inner self seems to submit to the sufferings of his punishment. He is hungry, thirsty and tired, he is unable to take care of himself and his son, and he has to move forward eternally. He is cursed to walk, but he cannot reach his home to rest, to feed himself and to quench his thirst. In a little while, Enos claims to see a cake and a pitcher in the forest, and guides his father to find them so as to appease their hunger and thirst. The moment Enos sees the frightening appearance of Cain after he is cursed because of the sin he commits, and the fact that this curse lasts eternally is explained as follows in the text:

> For the mighty limbs of Cain were wasted as by fire; his hair was as the matted curls on the bison's forehead, and so glared his fierce and sullen eye beneath: and the black abundant locks on the either side, a rank and tangled mass, were stained and scorched, as through the grasp of a burning iron hand had striven to rend them; and his countenance told in a strange and terrible language of agonies that had been, and were, and were still to continue to be. (289)

Cain's miserable appearance displays the physical effects of his punishment on his body. He is no more clean and healthy. His tired face, weary body and messy hair are the indicators of his suffering, in other words his being an eternal wanderer. It is unknown for how long he has been walking, or until when he is going to continue walking; however, it is obvious that his misery is not new, and the end of this misery is not due.

Cain and Enos arrive at an open and a desolate place which has bare rocks facing each other. The shapes of the rocks resemble human shapes. Enos tells Cain that he remembers once they heard such a sweet voice as the one they hear in the forest at that moment.

However, Cain likens this sound to a miserable slave's thin, week and querulous lamentation. Clearly, the conditions they are in determine their perception of the circumstances. Enos hears a sweet voice and interprets it as a sign of hope, but Cain hears the same sound and thinks of a lamentation, which indicates that he lacks hope of salvation. In other words, as an eternal wanderer, he submits being an eternal victim. After a little while, they see a shape on a base of rock shrieking and turning round to them with Abel's face on it. Suddenly, Abel falls on his knees and begins crying: "Thou eldest born of Adam, whom Eve, my mother, brought forth, cease to torment me! I was feeding my flocks in green pastures by the side of quite rivers, and thou killedst me: and now I am in misery" (291). On the rock, Abel is in the form of a shape, and he addresses his elder brother and murderer, Cain. By reminding his brother that they have the same mother and father, Abel emphasises the fratricide and the brutality of this murder. On the other hand, Abel implies that Cain replaces Abel's peaceful life with that of a hellish one, as he is no more a shepherd feeding his flock peacefully but a dead and suffering man. This reminder functions for the justification of Cain's punishment due to the fact that Abel does not deserve any suffering, but Cain certainly does.

When the shape of Abel and Cain begin to talk, it is understood that the pitcher Enos found and the sweet mournful voice heard belong to Abel. Cain asks how Abel is forsaken by God, and Abel answers that the Lord is only a God for the living, but the dead have another God. As the shape of Abel explains, when someone offers worthy sacrifices to the God of the dead, their toil is ceased after they die; however, as Abel is loved by the God of the living, Cain does not just murder him, but also snatches Abel away from the dominion of the God of the living. Learning this makes Cain hopeful, and he wants to know who the God of the dead is, though the curse of the God of the living is already on him. Cain, in agony and misery, begins to beg Abel, and wants to learn who the God of the dead is, where he dwells and which sacrifices he accepts. Abel pities him, and wants Cain to follow him with Enos, and "The Wanderings of Cain," without a particular resolution, ends here.

Throughout the work, the sorrow of Cain is visible on his features, and his weariness is emphasised since he lacks the hope for a possible salvation. However, Coleridge is not that hopeless, and rather implies that there is an opportunity for Cain to be forgiven. Especially the incompleteness of the work contributes to Coleridge's didactic purpose. Hence, he implies that if there is a heartfelt repentance, redemption is possible. This realisation is possible only after the victimiser asks for forgiveness after being punished. The harshness of the eternal punishment, ending with death makes the punished one feel regretful and ask for forgiveness. Cain is the sinful murderer of his innocent brother commits this sin out of jealousy, but the murdered Abel pities him eventually, and helps him find a way to end his sufferings. In short, rather than repeating a story taken from the biblical Book of Genesis, Coleridge creates a new examplary story inspired by it, but differs from it in the case of the possibility of redemption.

The eponymous protagonist Cain is a Christian figure in the holy scriptures associated with the first murder by killing his brother Abel and being punished in return. As Patricia Cordon Brim points out, although the general theme of fratricide is the same, in some scripts the narration differs. In the Old Testament, Cain and Abel are said to be two brothers who decide to offer gifts to God. Cain offers fruits of his own labour, but the shepherd Abel sacrifices some of his herd. Although, Abel's offerings are accepted by God, Cain's are not. Jealous and angry because of being rejected, Cain murders his brother Abel. It is important to indicate that Cain learns how to murder by observing Abel sacrificing his animals; thus, Abel is first to kill, but Cain is first to kill a man. In the Islamic mythologies, on the other hand, the story is told differently. Both brothers have twin sisters; Habil (Abel)'s twin sister is Lebuda (Junella) and Kabil (Cain)'s twin sister is Aklima (Aclima). Adam bids them to marry the other's twin; however, Kabil rejects the offer, and wants to marry his own twin. Adam sends this offer to God by means of a sacrifice but it is rejected. Kabil disapproves Habil's marriage to his twin and kills him out of jealousy (Brim 100-2). Consequently, as stated in the Old Testament, God says to Cain that "[a]nd now art thou [Cain] cursed from earth, which had opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand ... a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" (*The Old Testament,* Gen. 4.11-2). In other words, Cain is doomed to wander

eternally. On Cain's forehead a mark in shape of the cross is put by God so that he is known and not slain by those who see him (Birch 65-6).

Such mythological and religious stories have inspired Coleridge especially for the beginning of "The Wanderings of Cain," although they do not offer him the same kind of ending. If Cain gets the idea of murder from Abel by witnessing how he sacrifices his animals, then Abel can be considered as partly guilty, and hence deserves to suffer. However, instead of questioning who is guilty or not, Coleridge only tells the sufferings of Cain after the murder, and his punishment with eternal wandering becomes the focus of the work. As an incomplete work, it is open to various interpretations in the minds of its readers. In other words, how Cain's story begins and ends can be determined according to the imagination of the readers. As stated in the Introduction of this study, the imagination of the poet shall feed the imagination of the reader, and as Coleridge rewrites a religious story shaped within his imagination, then the readers can complete the fragmentary parts according to their imagination.

There are explicit similarities with the legend of Cain in the scriptures and "The Wanderings of Cain" as Cain in all is dominated by fear, desperation, weariness, hunger, thirst, and most importantly persecution, as the mighty one, God, is everywhere to persecute him (Beyer 280-1). As Cain confesses, he feels the existence of God all the time: "The Mighty One that persecuteth me is on this side and on that; he pursueth my soul like the wind, like the sand-blast he passeth through me; he is around me even as the air! O that I might be utterly no more! I desire to die—yea…" (288). Here, Cain's repentance is apparent, however it is unclear whether it is because of his being tired of the punishment or the curse on him (Birch 66). Cain seems to have a tendency for repentance due to the fact that in the rocky setting he is in a miserable situation, and feels entrapped. This literal setting, indeed, parallels his mind. As described in the work, Cain and Enos wander in a forest, but later they come to a place with bare rocks:

> The scene around was desolate; as far as the eye could reach it was desolate: the bare rocks faced each other, and left a long and wide interval of thin white

> sand. You might wander on and look round and round, and peep into the crevices of the rocks and discover nothing that acknowledged the influence of the seasons. There was no spring, no summer, no autumn: and the winter's snow, that would have been lovely, fell not on these hot rocks and scorching sands. (289)

By describing the literal setting, Coleridge implies a supernatural landscape with the bare rocks on which the effects of the seasons are not observed. The landscape is furnished with the details of Coleridge and Wordsworths's walks through the Valley of Stones near Linton, a place with "wild and fantastic chaos of rocks" which are described as "the very bones and skeleton of the earth" (Lowes 237), and in Wieland's work *Oberon* (1780), the Valley is described as "wreckage of a world," "a chaos of extinct slags into which a volcano finally collapses, mixed with huge rocks" (qtd. in Beyer 279). William Hazlitt, while writing his trip to the Valley with Coleridge, describes the area as follows:

> At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks*… bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath… On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks… Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*, but they had relinquish the design. (qtd. in Stelzig 316)

In Hazlitt's memoir, Coleridge mentions how he planned the setting of "The Wanderings of Cain" before the attempt of writing the prose-tale was abandoned. As its description indicates, the Valley consists of a chaotic sequence of rocks as if an earthquake shaped it. It is hard to miss that the description of the Valley is proper for the setting of "The Wanderings of Cain," as Cain is believed to bring earthquakes where he passes through (Brim 107). Most descriptions of the setting are apparently dark. Therefore, it is not different from the shattered mind of Cain. The Valley is a hell-like place; in another words, it is a place for eternal punishment and suffering. Moreover, Abel is not welcomed by the God of the dead, as he never offers sacrifices to him, and it is possible to deduce that he is sentenced to suffer forever by the God of the dead in this hell-like place. Likewise, the ragged stones of the Valley, which creates the atmosphere of disorder and disturbance, can be interpreted as a representation of Cain's inner chaos, insecurity, and uneasiness (Davis 43) which stems from his curse and the successive punishment. In

short, for both the murderer and the murdered, the place stands for hell, a place of punishment.

Apart from the fact that he is a religious figure, Cain has been associated with the Legend of the Wandering Jew. Although the Wandering Jew is a figure in the holy books, the legend is a combination of some other legends about the sinful wanderers which are currently in the folklore of the Mediterranean and the Near East, and its definite shape was formed during the Middle Ages. Furthermore, the Jew is a symbol of "sin, omniscience, political liberty, social unconventionality and Jewish nationalism" which structures the rewritings of the legend in the literary works in the following years (Anderson 367-8). This is the tale of a man named Ahasuerus who lives in Jerusalem, and as a Jew, he dislikes Christ and considers him as an enemy. When Christ is tired of carrying his cross to Calvary, he stops to rest in front of Ahasuerus's door, but he drives Christ away by saying "Walk faster!", which Christ answers by saying "I go, but you will walk until I come again!" (qtd. in Birch 61). In the New Testament, the story is told as follows: Ahasuerus is a Jewish man who believes Christ is a heretic and a fake Messiah. He is a part of the group which condemns Christ and cries for Barabbas' release. While watching the crucifixion, he hold his child on his shoulder, and when Christ wants to lean against his house for one moment, Ahasuerus shouts at him to move on. Christ answers that he would stand there and rest, but Ahasuerus would walk and would not rest until the day Christ comes again (Brim 103). After Christ's death, Ahasuerus realises that he cannot go back to his house and begins to wander around the world, and serves as a symbol of lack of belief and unrepentance (Brim 115). Ahasuerus legend keeps its popularity even in seventeenth century England. Augustin Calmet writes in his work *Dictionnaire du Sainte Bible* (1732) as follows:

> I have a letter… written from London by Madame de Mazarin to Madame de Bouillon, in which we read that in that country there was a man who pretended to have lived more than seventeen hundred years. He claimed to be an officer of the Divan of Jerusalem at the time that Jesus Christ was sentenced by Pontius Pilate; that he harshly pushed the Savior outside the Praetorium, saying to Him: 'Go, get out; why are you staying here?' and Jesus Christ answered him: 'I shall go, but you will walk until my return'… He has travelled through all the countries of the world, and must wander until the end

> of time; he boasts of having cured the sick by touching them; he speaks many languages… The two universities have sent their learned men to converse with him; but with all their learning they have not been able to surprise or confute him. (qtd. in Anderson 379)

As it is explicit in the quotation above, the creativity of a writer enriches the legend, and turns it into a piece of art. Like "The Wanderings of Cain," the legend of the Jew does not have a particular ending, and this makes the writers assume what happens next. For instance, as an eternal wanderer, Ahasuerus lives in seventeenth century England. He is, indeed, a supernatural being with his abnormal longevity, power of healing people by touching them, and his speaking many languages. Coleridge, with his imagination, adds details to the legend of the Wandering Jew, and shapes the structures of his two works, "The Wanderings of Cain" and *The Ancient Mariner* in accordance with the legend[2]. Additionally, in a folktale about a Carmarthenshire squire, it is narrated that:

> …when his father was a youth, he met a remarkably clever stranger, who appeared to have studied all that was possible in the world. Languages, art, science, music, and a host of other things, were at his fingers' ends. For six months they travelled together, and then parted. Before parting the stranger told his companion that they would meet and be together on three separate occasions of their lives. 'After our third meeting and parting,' said the stranger, 'you will die, but I shall continue to wander until the day of doom'… The squire lived until he was eighty-six, and then revealed his story to his son… A year later, the stranger reappeared, and visited the old squire, who was delighted to see his former friend. Two days he stayed, and when taking leave of the Squire he said: 'Good-bye, my dear old friend. You will never see me again.' The next night the Squire died, murmuring as he peacefully passed away: 'The Wandering Jew! Poor man! He is the Wandering Jew!' (qtd. in Anderson 378)

As illustrated with the quoted tale, the stories about the Wandering Jew have importance not only in the religious texts, but in folktales as well, and it spreads from person to person, and generation to generation. Meanwhile, the idea of eternal punishment is carried out with the description of the eternal wandering of the Jew. As the eternal wanderer is a recurring figure in the folktales, Coleridge as a poet interested in folktales is enthusiastic about rewriting this legend in his work. Due to the fact that Coleridge is interested in the folktales, and uses them in order to create a familiar tone, to employ the tales of ordinary

[2] At that point, it shall be noted that Coleridge and Wordsworth are not the only ones to compose works inspired by the legend. Percy Shelley is another Romantic poet who also has a work entitled *The Wandering Jew*, which is one of his earliest poems (Andrews 86).

people, and in order to enhance the supernatural and the mysterious atmosphere, it is possible to point out that “The Wanderings of Cain,” is another story of the eternal wanderer; therefore, it presents another wanderer figure who suffers because of his punishment. Hence, the familiar dark tone of his entrapment is created, which makes the readers feel empathy for him.

In “The Wanderings of Cain” the focus in on Cain’s punishment by supernatural means. As a punishment for the crime he commits, he is cursed to wander eternally in a miserable situation without any particular destination. In the passages of Ecclesiastes, it is stated that there is “a time to be born and a time to die” (Ecc. 3.2). While the man who dies when his time comes is blessed, the man who lingers on until he begins to live like he is already dead is cursed (Ecc. 4.2), and the day of death is better than the day of birth (Ecc. 7.1). As clarified, living abnormally long is a curse for a human being, because if one does not die when he is supposed to die, he lives as if he were dead, and this indicates how important it is to die when the time comes. For Fruman, Cain is “like one who struggles in his sleep because of the exceeding terribleness of a dream” (366). Consequently, Cain is described as a walking dead or as if someone in a dream. On the other hand, the curse on Cain is different from the curse on any guilty or sinful person. Considered in relation to guilt and absolution, the curse on the sinful Cain is a punishment for his crime, and his guilt and regret bring him pessimism, yet his absolution is also possible with this curse, as regret and penance lead to redemption (Brim 105). Moreover, in some legends of Cain, it is narrated that the curse on Cain is not just his punishment as Cain brings plague, bad luck, storms, earthquakes, and even death to the places he passes through (107).

Consequently, in “The Wanderings of Cain” Coleridge rewrites the tale of Cain, who is the first murderer in the Book of Genesis, whose legend also exists in the folktales. Coleridge adapts this legend to his purpose of reflecting the moral lesson of not committing sin, and as a result, he employs the figure of the eternal wanderer, who suffers from a punishment by a supernatural means, as the punished one is condemned to walk

forever. As Cain's punishment has a supernatural feature, it makes this punishment much more severe and frightening; yet, the intervention of Abel foreshadows God's mercy. Cain would become completely repentant, he would discover some moral truths, and in the ending he would be promised salvation (Birch 67). Coleridge's works studied in this thesis, makes it obvious that the poet avoids making any absolute judgement about the characters, their sins and repentance. However, as the beginning and the ending of "The Wanderings of Cain" are missing, the beginning can be assumed from the legends and the religious context of the work, but the ending can only be predicted.

1.2. *THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER*

The Ancient Mariner is an examplary story of the Mariner who is the murderer of the albatross without a justifying reason. His subsequent punishment by the supernatural spirits of nature functions as a didactic story advising people to refrain from breaking the order of God, or the order of nature particularly. Obviously, the supernatural is presented as the means of punishment in the poem. *The Ancient Mariner* was published in *Lyrical Ballads*. While composing *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth and Coleridge classify poetry in two different groups, the natural and the supernatural, and each of them decides to focus on one. Coleridge presents the reality through a different point of view by including the supernatural in it, and Wordsworth uses several characters as real as "the characters and incidents to be found in every village" (Coburn, "Coleridge and the Supernatural" 89). Through the use of the unusual happenings, extraordinary creatures, curses, and the recurring motifs in the legends, Coleridge adds various supernatural aspects to *The Ancient Mariner*. Although the first version, "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere," was published in *Lyrical Ballads,* the poem's popular and modern version is its 1817 edition. In addition to the altered lines, it has glosses on the left of its stanzas. The new version was published in Coleridge's *Poetical Works* in 1834. As the co-writer of *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth also contributed to *The Ancient Mariner* during the planning and also the writing process.

The Ancient Mariner contains several autobiographical elements, such as Coleridge's feeling of guilt. According to Harry White, Coleridge's depressive mood is caused by his feeling of guilt as a result of his bad choices and bad behaviours in his youth. According to his moral and religious understanding, this guilt is most probably the reason for his ill health (White 807). In other words, his ill health is a punishment for the sins he has committed, and for his mistreatment of the people around him. As White stresses, committing a sin and having penance is in the nature of guilt, and it is the dominating theme in Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner,* in which "[a] mariner tells a tale of crime and punishment in an attempt to validate the chronic feelings of remorse from which he suffers and to project a sense of moral order onto the otherwise senselessly traumatic events that he had experienced" (807). The Mariner appears as an old wise man who gains experience after passing through many stages, and they lead him to an ultimate stage of "evangelical faith in God's grace" (Chatha 41). The poem begins with the Mariner's stopping a wedding guest to tell him a story. Although the Wedding-Guest is scared and tries to run away at first, the glittering eye of the Mariner –according to Diljit Kaur Chatha it is gained in return for his faith and wisdom (41)- mesmerises and urges him to listen to his tale. Despite the fact that he constrains the Wedding-Guest with his eyes, the Mariner is not a supernatural being with a supernatural power. However, his experiences provide him a connection between the natural and the supernatural worlds (Barnaud 14). In Gardner's words, it is ambiguous whether the Mariner has a supernatural power or not because of the fact that "a miraculous power said to emanate from the eye of certain individuals, is a superstition well-nigh universal throughout the world from ancient times to the present… The possessor of [that] evil eye was not necessarily evil himself; the power was sometimes regarded as an unfortunate talent over which the possessor had no control" (40). In the poem the Mariner's eye, which prevents the Wedding-Guest from leaving, is implied to have a supernatural feature, although the Mariner does not possess any supernatural feature.

On the other hand, the Wedding-Guest may represent Coleridge's readers. When the Wedding-Guest encounters a strange narrator and a narration with supernatural content, he is scared and tries to escape at first, and he even accuses the narrator of being a mad

man. However, the unusual glimpse in the eye of the narrator impresses him and he feels as if a spell is cast upon him. Although the unusual glimpse scares him due to the fact that in folk beliefs it is a symbol of evil, this glimpse impresses him and arouses his curiosity at the same time. As a result, he begins to listen to the narrator. The beginning of *The Ancient Mariner* includes Coleridge's ideas on how the readers react to the supernatural elements, how they are attracted to them, and why they continue reading them. Although Coleridge's works which have the supernatural elements can be scary for the readers, the works also have mystery which triggers the interest of the reader. On the other hand, the ordinary human beings and familiar incidents in them make these works plausible for the readers.

The Ancient Mariner begins with a plausible story when the Mariner begins to tell the story about when he was a member of the crew of a ship. He narrates that there was a ship which departed from the land for the voyage to the line, Equator. They set sail in fair weather, however suddenly a storm broke out and draged the ship towards the South Pole. When the crew were surrounded with nothing but ice and fog, an albatross came through the fog. It followed the ship and was fed by the crew. Since it was a bird of good omen, the fog lifted and the ice on the sea split for the ship to pass through. After that, the albatross followed the ship, the crew love and feed it; however, one day the Mariner murdered the albatross shooting an arrow with a crossbow. In Coburn's point of view "[a]n innocent creature, and possibly a symbol of man's primitive beliefs, a guardian spirit connected with the life-principle, possibly imagination itself; the wanton killing of it ruined the Mariner's relation to the crew, and his relation to the whole creation including himself and his self-command" ("Coleridge and the Supernatural" 89). Coburn not only explains the importance of the innocent albatross in the poem, but also how its appearance and how its cruel murder change the course of events. After the murder, the Mariner was expelled from the natural order of life, and faced a numinousness, which is later described as the invisible guard of nature. The albatross he kills is a big white sea bird symbolising innocence, holiness and purity, which are the features attributed to Christ; therefore, it can be deduced that the albatross symbolises Christ who comes to save the crew from the hazard of the storm (Rowell 133). Rowell's comparison of the albatross and Christ is not

incoherent considering the fact that the bird dies because of the sinful nature of mankind, and its dead body is hanged around the Mariner's neck as the crucified Christ. Since the Mariner murders the innocent albatross, he deserves a punishment in return for it, and his punishment becomes a means for him to achieve salvation in the end. Meanwhile, the albatross is the reminder of the sin that the Mariner commited and the necessity of repentance.

As mentioned before, Wordsworth's contributions to *The Ancient Mariner* are highly important as they influence the development of the storyline, they raise the tension by adding more horror, and arouse interest by adding several supernatural happenings. Adding the albatross into the poem was Wordsworth's idea, and he explains this as follows*:*

> Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention, but certain parts I suggested; for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvocke's "Voyages," a day or two before, that while doubling Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. "Suppose," said I, "you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime." The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. (qtd. in Gardner 17)

Wordsworth's suggestions of killing of the albatross, the revenge of the tutelary spirits in response to the Mariner's crime committed against nature, and later the dead shipmates who navigate the ship are highly important due to the fact that they enrich the poem with many supernatural and gothic elements adding twists to the events. In his readings, Wordsworth learns that the albatross inhabits the south region, and follows the ships, thus is observed by the sailors frequently. As a result, in *The Ancient Mariner*, while the sailors are visited by this bird, the Mariner shoots and kills it, and therefore is avenged by the spirits of the region. Wordsworth's contribution is unique as this crime of killing the albatross is a turning point in the story of the Mariner. As a result of this pointless and cruel act, the sailors suffer from the unusual torments of the supernatural happenings.

For the sailors, the albatross has a superstitious meaning. Observing an albatross when they are sailing is interpreted either as a good or a bad omen. The black albatross in Captain George Shelvocke's book *A Voyage Around the World by the Way of the Great South Sea* (1726), for example, frightens the sailors as they consider the possibility of its being an ill omen (Gardner 47). Furthermore, sometimes the sailors believe that the albatrosses carry the souls of the evil captains who have transmigrated after their death (49). On the contrary, like the sailors' interpretation of the albatross as a good omen, there are superstitions associating the bird with good luck. Hence, if one sees this bird, it is believed that his or her life would be in order, and s/he would be lucky. However, considering the fact that the bird is associated both with evil and innocence, and it is killed by the Mariner without any particular reason, the murderer cannot escape punishment. The Mariner is not only guilty of killing an innocent bird but also is responsible for awakening a possible curse or evil that the bird carries. In both cases, the Mariner is doomed to be punished. His deserved punishment is, therefore, imposed by the spirits of nature avenging the murder of their creature.

At the end of the first part of the poem, the Mariner confesses to the Wedding-Guest that he has killed the albatross, and he is full of grief when he remembers this crime. At this point, Coleridge does not explain why the Mariner commits this crime. According to Fruman, by not specifying any reson for the crime, Coleridge aims to put emphasis on the demonic nature of the fallen man, and to base this crime on this sinful nature (404). As Kitson suggests, Coleridge's aim is to present this crime as the sin of all mankind, resembling it to Eve's eating the forbidden fruit (205). Humphrey House also indicates that "if such a link [between the Fall and the crime of the Mariner] is there, it lies in the corruption of the human will by the Original Sin and must be imported into the poem from outside, to explain the Mariner's motive, when he is not able or willing to explain himself" (qtd. in Birch 47). Thereby, many critics agree that the Mariner's unprovoked crime derived from the Fall is the result of the corrupt and sinful nature of mankind. Therefore, Coleridge portrays the Mariner in remorse, because a fallen soul is not

necessarily supposed to remain unrepentant. By emphasising the Mariner's repentance, Coleridge implies that anyone who regrets their misdeed can cleanse their sinful souls, and better themselves (Kitson 205), which also implies the didactic aim of Coleridge.

Coleridge narrates how the albatross' murder creates a chaos once the crew realise that all are to suffer after the murder. The albatross's murder shocks the other sailors, and they stand against the Mariner, and they get angry with him for killing the bird. They blame the Mariner for this "hellish thing" (91) which is probably a clue for their punishment. However, when the sun shines bright, contrary to the crew's fearful expectations, the crew begins to disregard and approve the Mariner's killing the bird as it only causes the fog and mist, not good luck. The crew's ignorance of the crime, in fact, makes the crew an accomplice in the crime of the Mariner. Not much later, the crime committed begins to be avenged. While they keep on sailing to the north, the ship and the breeze stop suddenly. The view is "[a]s idle as a painted ship / Upon a painted ocean" (117-8). Just like the ship, the ocean is still, too. Although they are surrounded by water, the crew do not have water to drink, thus they have to endure drought under the sun. The sea, on the other hand, begins to rot and becomes slimy. Slimy creatures, water snakes, green, blue and white fires appear on water. This is the time when the punishment begins and they realise that a curse is upon them. The spooky change of the landscape tortures the confused mind of the Mariner, yet it is only the beginning of his punishment. The Mariner watches them but they do not disappear for days and nights. For the creation of such details, Coleridge is inspired by the travel books he reads mentioning viscous and slimy waters, and creatures such as small "slime-fish" and "snail slime-fish" used by the sailors in order to make traps for spiders (Gardner 56). Hereby, Coleridge combines the supernatural with the natural. These extraordinary creatures in the poem are inspired by the real creatures mentioned in the travel books by the sailors who claim to come across them during their voyages. Hence, in Coleridge's imagination, the ordinary creatures in nature turn into supernatural creatures participating in the Mariner's punishment.

As Coleridge highlights; "[a] Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels… They are very numerous and there is no climate or element without one or more" (191). It suggests that living beings share this world with many other beings, and they are everywhere. As a result, when people commit a crime against nature, its invisible inhabitants avenge it:

> …some in dreams assured were
> Of the spirit that plagued us so:
> Nine fathom deep he had followed us
> From the land of mist and snow. (131-4)

In all their distress, the crew again blame the Mariner for killing the albatross, and as a symbol of his guilt, they hang the dead Albatross around his neck. This is another punishment for the Mariner, since this time he is punished by his fellow mariners. Hence, by hanging the bird on the Mariner's neck, the crew put the whole blame on the Mariner, and let the spirits punish him. The crew also believe that the Mariner is guilty, and for this reason they let him suffer its consequences.

Yet, the guilty Mariner is not the only sufferer on the ship. Days keep passing by and the crew's misery on the motionless sea continues increasingly. Suddenly, the Mariner sees a ship coming towards them:

> With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
> We could nor laugh nor wail;
> Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
> I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
> And cried, A sail! A sail! (157-61)

The Mariner is excited to let the crew know about the approaching ship, however his dry throat prevents him. Later he sucks his blood as a ransom to regain his ability to speak, and to be freed from the curse of dry thoat. His sucking his own blood is the first redemption of the Mariner in return for his guilt. They are entrapped in a supernatural setting in which they suffer without any water to drink. Yet after his repentance, the curse on the Mariner is lifted, and he begins to speak. The Mariner notices that the ship he sees moves without wind or tide, and when it approaches they see only its skeleton. The crew is as unusual as the ship is: Life-In-Death, who is a leprosy-white woman, and her mate,

Death. Just like the other horrifying occasions and beings, the appearance of Life-In-Death also arouses fear.

Especially when the skeleton ship approaches with its crew who are as scary as their ship, the Gothic tone of the work stands out. The function of the supernatural differs in the Romantic tradition and the Gothic tradition. While the supernatural used by the Romantics does not necessarily have dark connotations, the supernatural employed by the Gothic writers mostly include death, resurrection or ghosts, in order to present an evil and scary reality. After being cursed, the setting loses its natural aspects with the appearance of death fires on the water and the extraordinary slimy creatures. As a result, the dominance of the Gothic supernatural stresses the horrifying atmosphere. While the Gothic atmosphere arouses horror, there is a bigger challenge for the Mariner. Life-in-Death and Death play a dicing game and at the end of this game, Life-In-Death wins the Mariner, and all the other sailors are won by Death. The shipmates of the Mariner die cursing the Mariner with their eyes.

When he writes his own epitaph in 1833, Coleridge introduces himself as "…He, who many a year with toilsome breath / Found Death in Life, may here find Life in Death" (qtd. in Whalley 383). As Whalley indicates, for Coleridge, Life-In-Death stands for remorse and loneliness (383), which are felt by Coleridge in his youth, and by the Mariner when Death and Life-In-Death cast dice in order to decide the fate of the crew and the Mariner. Therefore, the survival of the Mariner is not a prize but a punishment for him, because he has to keep on living along with the dead crew. Consequently, when the dicing game is over, the Mariner experiences the realisation of his crime and remorse respectively, and the death of the crew one by one increases his grief and loneliness, which becomes another punishment for him.

> Four times fifty living men,
> (And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
> With the heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
> They dropped down one by one. (217-20)

The Mariner is now the only living being along with the slimy creatures on the sea. According to Gardner, when the Mariner says "…a thousand thousand slimy things / Lived on; and so did I" (238-9), he equates himself to the slimy creatures, and this marks the beginning of the Mariner's remorse and the realisation of his sinful act (70). These creatures appear as if they are nature's lowliest creatures (Angus 659). The Mariner looks down upon them, and envies their being alive though all of his shipmates are dead.

> An orphan's curse would drag to hell
> A spirit from on high;
> But oh! more horrible than that
> Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
> Seven days, seven nights, I saw the curse,
> And yet I could not die. (258-63)

These lines reveal the Mariner's realisation of the crime he has committed by killing the innocent albatross. However, for the Mariner, his punishment is much crueller. He is forced to live along with his dead shipmates for days and nights, and see their dead faces and eyes. Therefore, the Mariner's punishment is both physical and psychological. Hence, he goes through not only physical agony on the idle ship for days, but also suffers from emotional agony because of his remorse and his being alone. Besides, he is out of the natural order (Kitson 206), therefore he experiences the extraordinariness created within this supernatural setting.

The supernatural happenings in the poem function as punishment for the Mariner. As Chatha states, Coleridge prefers to employ them in order to add depth to the Mariner's crime and also to his suffering. The curse begins to disappear when the Mariner begins to comprehend the supernatural happenings. As Chatha adds, his loneliness, and fear of physical and spiritual pain make the Mariner feel the necessity of love, and as a result he begins to bless the creatures and pray (38). Alone in the ship, the Mariner looks at the water-snakes on the sea, and notices the white and golden trail they make while swimming:

> O happy living things! no tongue
> Their beauty might declare:
> A spring of love gush'd from my heart,
> And I bless'd them unaware:

Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware. (283-288)

When the Mariner realises the beauty of the creatures on the sea, the curse is broken and the dead albatross on the Mariner's neck falls to the sea. This appreciation indicates the Mariner's belated respect to nature and all of its creatures, both natural and supernatural. His appreciation of the natural beings begins along with his remorse, though his appreciation of the supernatural beings begins while observing them on the water. In this particular section of the poem, Coleridge uses the dark and the Gothic supernatural elements in order to create a frightening atmosphere, and while doing it, he emphasises the harshness of the Mariner's punishment. However, the Romantic supernatural elements such as the colourful fires on the water and the colourful trails the creatures make, the Mariner realises the beauty of all creatures; then his pain begins to ease.

After the days without any sleep, he is able to sleep eventually, and when he wakes up it rains, which is a spiritual and a physical cleansing for the Mariner, and also the beginning of his restoration (Kitson 207). Later, the Mariner's dead shipmates suddenly stand up and they steer the ship. They are, indeed, not revived but replaced with the angelic spirits sent after the Mariner's invocation to his guardian saint. Although the spirit from the South Pole helps the ship move with the other spirits, the Mariner's punishment is not over, yet. The Mariner hears the voices of the fellow-demons of the Polar spirit. They talk about the Mariner who "[w]ith his cruel bow he laid full low, / The harmless Albatross" (401-2) and the punishment given by the spirit "[who] loved the bird that loved the man / Who shot him with his bow" (405-6). By introducing and expanding the details about various supernatural creatures such as the creatures on the sea, and the angelic, demonic and guardian spirits, Coleridge implies that the invisible supernatural realm is as huge as the visible nature. In other words, he presents the existence of the supernatural domain hidden in the surrounding nature as reality.

The angelic spirit moves the ship through the Mariner's country so fast that the Mariner falls into a trance. When he wakes up he realises that his penance is not over because he

is still with his dead shipmates. Finally, the curse is broken, and the Mariner keeps on sailing with the sweet blowing breeze and a beautiful view of the sea; then, he sees his country eventually. However, the supernatural happenings do not end totally. When the ship approaches the Mariner's country, his shipmates fall motionless again; on each of them an angelic spirit stands and radiates a blinding light. This light is a sign for the main land, and it makes the Pilot, the Pilot's boy and the Hermit on the shore come to the ship. They are the first human beings to witness such an extraordinary view; therefore, their reaction is important. This part also demonstrates how ordinary people, or the readers at that point, would react to this supernatural experience (Jeanie Watson 169). First of all, what brings the Hermit, the Pilot and the Pilot's boy near this blinding light coming from the middle of the sea, as they take the light as a sign; however, more than this, it is their curiosity which makes them come closer to the ship:

> "Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look –
> (The Pilot made reply)
> I am a-fear'd"—"Push on, push on!"
> Said the Hermit cheerily. (539-42)

Possibly, like the readers, the Pilot and the Pilot's boy are scared by the unknown and the mystical supernatural appearance. After seeing the ship and the strange appearance of the Mariner, they think that the landscape is "fiendish" (539), and the Mariner is "The Devil" (570). Both for the Pilot, the Pilot's boy and the Hermit, such a fiendish ship and the unknown it brings is not caused by a good reason. Similarly, the Hermit is scared of this extraordinariness and crosses his brow when talking to the Mariner; however, unlike the Pilot and his boy, the Hermit is curious and enthusiastic; therefore, perhaps closer to Coleridge's readers. He is the first to approach the ship and talk to the Mariner: "What manner of man art thou?" (578). Thus, he, indeed, represents both the scared readers and the curious readers who read the poem rather than refraining from it. With this particular resemblance, it is revealed that a poem consisting of the supernatural elements eventually attracts the readers.

When the crew finally land and the Mariner wants to confess his crimes and sins to the Hermit by telling his story, and he realises that his pain tormenting him eases when he begins to tell it. As a punishment for the crimes he has committed, he is cursed to feel

agony. In order to relieved of his agony, he has to tell his story to other people, and his penance will continue throughout his lifetime. The curse's agony makes him travel from country to country, and only when he confesses his crimes, this agony abates. Besides, being possessed by a power on which the victim has no control is a theme Coleridge uses in many of his works. In *The Ancient Mariner,* the Mariner's grief and pain are brought by such an undefinable force that it obliges him to tell his story. According to Tinker, the Mariner's glittering eye and the unusual power of speech are the results of this power (19). Then, the sin committed by the Mariner is an example for mankind because of their tendency to commit such crimes against nature. This final and major punishment is imposed on the Mariner by the supernatural forces of nature. He is cursed to wander around the world eternally in order to tell his story; as only then the pain of his punishment eases. In other words, like Cain and the Wandering Jew described in detail before, the Mariner also becomes an eternal wanderer.

Coleridge's interest in the religious narratives and the folk tales is apparent in *The Ancient Mariner* as well, since he uses sin, crime, punishment and curse in *The Ancient Mariner* in a very similar way he uses them in "The Wanderings of Cain." He most probably knows the legend of the Wandering Jew due to the popularity of the legend in England (Anderson 379). It is known that "The Wanderings of Cain" is the inspiration for Coleridge's writing *The Ancient Mariner.* As Lowes points out, "[g]uilt-haunted wanderers… were the theme which for the moment was magnetic in his brain" (254), and when Wordsworth suggests the killing of the albatross, and being cursed with the vengeances of tutelary spirits, it paves the way towards the writing of *The Ancient Mariner* (215). In his notes, Coleridge expresses the similarity between the Wandering Jew and the Mariner as follows: "[i]t is an enormous blunder… to represent the Ancient Mariner as an old man on board ship. He was in my mind the everlasting Jew—had told his story ten thousand times since the voyage, which was in his early youth and 50 years before" (qtd. in Fulmer 799). The Mariner, the Wandering Jew and Cain are quite similar to each other in many aspects. Similar to the Mariner's crime against nature, killing the albatross, and being punished by the tutelary spirits, Cain's and the Wandering Jew's crimes are against God's will. Davis points out that:

> ... the Mariner wanders through the ocean until he comes to understand the unity of nature that belies the existence of God. Much like Cain, the Mariner breaks social code when he kills the albatross, a bird taken as good luck during a voyage. The Mariner comes to understand that the bird is a piece of nature which represents God, so attacks against the bird symbolize an attack against God. Cain, like the Mariner, breaks moral code when he chooses to kill Abel. His fratricide might also be viewed as an attack on God, since Cain destroys one of God's creations. (42-3)

Hence, the crimes of Cain and the Mariner are not only against the natural order, but also against God, therefore, their punishments are also the same: to wander eternally. Like Cain and the Wandering Jew, the Mariner is also doomed to wander eternally; but as a suffering wanderer he has to tell his tale to everyone in order to teach them the necessity of holding every creation of God in high esteem. Although there is no biblical account that says Cain wandered eternally, it has become a part of his legend (Birch 65-6). Likewise, in *The Ancient Mariner*, the Mariner is described as a very old and "ancient" man, who probably cannot die; but he is depicted as an eternal wanderer. Following their punishments, all of them experience redemption. They commit crime all of a sudden with their free will because of the their irrationality and corrupt passions. Cain has a childish jealousy, the Wandering Jew Ahasuerus is excited as he witnesses a fake Messiah's punishment, and the Mariner just wants to shoot the albatross without any particular reason. Additionally, during their sufferings despite their dissatisfaction with their situations, they become more aware of God's power (Birch 68-9). Another thing these three characters have in common is the mark of their sins. Cain has a mark of the cross on his forehead so that he is recognised and not killed, the Wandering Jew has a sign of a flaming cross, a warning sign that no one shall harm him as he is responsible to God only; and when he kills the albatross, the crew are scared of the spirits and hang the dead bird around the Mariner's neck in order to mark him as the guilty one. Like Cain and the Jew, the Mariner is also responsible to God only, because although his fellow shipmates die, he survives to pay the penance for his crime (Brim 105-6). Although there are plenty of similarities in these works, they differ in the way they end. As an incomplete work, the ending of "The Wanderings of Cain" is ambiguous. Similarly, the ending of the legend of the Wandering Jew is obscure although there are writings claiming his being still alive. Among these, *The Ancient Mariner* differs from the other two as it intermingles the legend with the poet's creativity, therefore it does not simply imitate the legend of the Jew but

also includes original details (Fulmer 799). Thus, Coleridge's work, though inspired by a well-known legend, presents another world with its unique creatures, and rules.

Another source of inspiration for the eternal wanderer motif in *The Ancient Mariner* may be a Dutch sea legend. In the legend, a murderer named Falkenberg is punished for his sin and is doomed to wander lonely on a shipboard until the Judgement Day (Gardner 64). Highly relatable to the Mariner's experiences, Falkenberg is accompanied by two black and white spectral figures, a spectre woman and her dead mate who play dice for his soul (Brim 111). This similarity indicates that Coleridge is inspired by this legend, but he also adds new features to it since the punishment is imposed as a response to the crime comitted not only against nature's order, but also against God's will. Before ending his words, the Mariner advises the Wedding-Guest to love every creature of God, which is an advice not just for the Wedding-Guest but also for the reader (Chatha 40). After listening to the tale of the Ancient Mariner, the Wedding-Guest turns from the wedding door, and when he wakes up next morning, he is "[a] sadder and a wiser man" (625). At the end of the poem, the readers learn that the purpose of the supernatural force that binds the Mariner to spread his tale is achieved because the Wedding-Guest becomes a wiser man, and he possibly respects and loves all the creatures created by God. As Jeanie Watson claims, like the Wedding-Guest, the readers are also mesmerised by the unusual Mariner, which urges them to read his story, and eventually he becomes an advisor to the readers (166), which makes the work a didactic one.

In the poem, the temporary physical or psychological pain that the characters suffer from as a result of their sins is not sufficient for their redemption, as a temporary pain only urges them to have impermanent virtuous behaviour; however, a deterrent punishment is required (Birch 35). In order to prevent people from committing crime, the supernatural punishments are presented. When the Mariner tells his tale to the Wedding-Guest, he finishes his words with the following statements:

> Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
> To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!

He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all. (611-8)

The Mariner advises the Wedding-Guest to remember that a person shall love and respect all creatures of God not only to achieve his mercy and grace but also for the fact that the same God creates and loves them all. The Mariner realises this only after passing through a series of painful supernatural experiences. Supporting Coleridge's use of deterrent punishment, although most of the curses that frighten the Mariner dissolve, a curse that gives pain to him for the sin he committed continues and reminds him about the lesson he has learned. For Brett, the albatross' murder "is symbolical, if you like, of all sin… The Mariner is a true son of Adam for he, too, acts from pure wickedness. The acquiescence of his shipmates in the Mariner's crime makes the parallel even clearer; for we, too, though we did not actually participate in Adam's act are accomplices in his sin" (qtd. in Birch 46). According to Brett's claim, the Mariner, his shipmates, and also every other human being including the readers and himself have the same sinful nature of Adam. Coleridge's treatment of the Original Sin as the reason for the corrupt nature of human beings can be considered as a starting point to trace the religious implications of the Mariner's sin in *The Ancient Mariner*. Although, there is no reason specified for this sinful attempt, it is possible to suggest that the Mariner kills the albatross as a result of his personal depravity; "[a] little thoughtless act throws the Mariner out of his companions' and God's favour, and the pity of his guardian saint restores him to God's grace" (Chatha 55). Although House claims that the human will is corrupted after the Original Sin, and this is the only motive behind the murder of the bird in the poem (158), Coleridge does not tell this directly as the reason for the Mariner's committing the crime. Rather, it is presented as a sin committed against nature, and hence the Mariner is punished by being estranged from nature; as a result, the murder of the albatross is avenged through the extraordinary happenings and the supernatural beings.

For Coleridge, the greatest of all crimes is the denial of God and Christian morality, and the Fall of Adam and Eve stands for the denial of God's wisdom (Birch 23-4). As his

works contain didactic purposes, it may be an important reason for Coleridge's making connections between the crimes of his characters and the Original Sin despite his refraining from a direct connection between the crime and the Original Sin. The Mariner may kill the albatross because he is a human, therefore he is sinful in nature, and he lacks love and respect for the creatures of God. Consequently, like Adam and Eve, the Mariner is punished eternally at the end of the poem. However, Coleridge does not judge whether the Mariner is a victim or a victimiser; rather, he tells his tale, the consequences of his crimes, how he is evolved into a wise man, and the advice he gives to the Wedding-Guest. The concluding judgement is left to the readers, the actual addressees of this didactic work.

1.3. "KUBLA KHAN"

The role of a human being in the distruption of the harmony in nature is one of the main issues in Coleridge's other poem, "Kubla Khan." In the poem, the speaker describes the caverns of ice with its gothic atmosphere and warns against an approaching war as Kubla destroyed a natural beauty for his own pleasure. The poem, indeed, lacks a victim, a victimiser and an actual punishment; yet, there are connotations of sinfulness, hell and the possible punishment. Although it is a fragmentary poem with fifty-four lines, "Kubla Khan" is one of the most prominent works of Coleridge and the one in which the supernatural is represented uniquely within an extraordinary landscape, an unusual human being and the dream-like state of the poet-speaker. As a poem written in the summer of 1797, the year accepted as the time of Coleridge's great poetry, it is not published until 1816 alongside "Christabel" and "Pains of Sleep," with the title "Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment." The poem differs from the other works mostly in terms of the conditions of its composition. Coleridge combines his contemplated ideas while writing the other works studied in this thesis, however in "Kubla Khan" he tells what he dreams. In the preface of the poem it is explained that:

> In the summer of the year 1797, the Author then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm-house in between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his

> chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in "Purchas's Pilgrimage": "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines ... On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. (295-6)

As expressed in the Preface, "Kubla Khan" is an account of Coleridge's dream. He dreams because of an anodyne or opium taken to reduce the pain caused by the poet's particular disease, and under the influence of his readings. In the rest of the Preface, it is stated that the writing is interrupted unluckily by a businessman from Porlock and after being kept busy by him more than one hour, Coleridge turns back to complete the poem, but he only remembers the general purport, and the rest unfortunately fades away, and as a result, "Kubla Khan" remaines as a fragment.

"Kubla Khan" presents an oriental picture, and has characters who have remote and exotic features as its setting: Kubla Khan who is an oriental emperor with his endless power, a woman hunting the moon and wailing for her demon lover, the Abyssinian maid who is a source of inspiration for the poet, and the poet-speaker who experiences all these in his opium induced dream. As a result, it does not sound extraordinary when the poet-speaker is defined as a "spirit of adventure," and the poem is assumed to be "unreality" and a "glamorous escape from reality" (Bliss and Bliss 261). Stork points out that when "Kubla Khan" was produced, the oriental tales were in rivalry with the gothic tales of terror as both tales are written one after another by various writers (323). As a poem which can be introduced as one of the productions of this rivalry, "Kubla Khan" both presents the Romantic and the Gothic descriptions of nature and its combination with the oriental themes and setting. The poem consists of three stanzas having shifts of a dream-like state in their mood and atmosphere. They thematically change respectively from being pleasant to being chaotic, being in the present to leaving all in the past. Briefly, the contradictory moods, atmospheres and acts fluctuate in the poem from the beginning to the end.

Bate defines the first stanza as the “architectural splendor of an oriental monarch” (77), because the poem begins with the Mongolian leader Kubla Khan’s order to build a pleasure-dome in Xanadu. The place has a sacred river running to a sunless sea through the caverns which are measureless to men. With its gardens, walls, rills and forests it is a mesmerising place, and apart from its Romantic descriptions of nature, it displays a supernatural scenery. Barnaud remarks that with its remoteness, the scene is “beyond the reach of the external senses” (39), therefore, it is quite similar to the Garden of Eden (40). The landscape is not a totally unknown place. With its sunny gardens and rivers it pictures and reflects the feeling of a peaceful atmosphere easily. In this stanza, Coleridge describes a natural scenery in an extremely colourful way in order to create a sense of the supernatural in the poem (Hagen 18). Moreover, the forest described as “ancient as the hills” is similar to the forests in Coleridge’s other works such as “Christabel” and “The Wanderings of Cain,” in which the forest is also a “paradise garden” (Baker II 40). Apparently, the depicted landscape is a spooky place with its unworldly creatures (Brim 52), and with its unwordly beauty and peace, therefore it easily transfers the impression of heaven to the reader. The supernatural feeling strengthens the suggestion of heaven in the stanza. Because, the poet does not present an ordinary garden to his readers; instead, he presents a fascinating scenery. Nevertheless, the construction of Kubla’s dome is an intrusion which violates its beauty due to Kubla’s arrogance as a leader (Stillinger 218). William Christie puts forward that Kubla Khan is the embodiment of oriental despotism renowned in the Western point of view with its passion for luxuary and authoritarianism; so, Kubla’s selfish pleasures bring the end of its untamed vegetation and its fertility (88). Accordingly, at the very beginning of the poem, Kubla’s crime and his disrespect to nature is on the foreground, and the emphasis on the beauty and purity of nature implies the violation of innocence, and forshadows a punishment.

In “Kubla Khan” there is almost no action, and this makes it hard to suggest that there is a particular punishment, but still there is an unseen but an implied punishment. In Stillinger’s words, the poem is a highly symbolic work, and the critics have various comments on the meanings of its symbols (218). The setting described in the second stanza is commonly believed to reflect hell, a place for eternal punishment. Likewise, the

characters described throughout the poem, including the persona, contribute to this particular suggestion. Especially after the first stanza, with the heavenly scenery's slowly fading away, the tone darkens and the setting becomes chaotic:

> But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
> Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon-lover! (12-6)

The bright gardens, blossoming trees and the green scene with sunny spots in the first stanza are not in sight now in the scenery described in the second stanza; rather, there is a holy, enchanted and a frightening place. Surely, the romantic chasm arouses a kind of emotional disturbance, especially for the woman who wails for her demon lover under the waning moon (Angus 665). The supernatural atmosphere is literally and figuratively darkened and intensified with the mentioned supernatural "demon lover." These contrary depictions in the successive stanzas corresponds to the shift between the heaven-like scene and the hell-like one. To being with, "a waning moon [which] was haunted / By woman wailing for her demon-lover" (15-6) adds a dark tone. The moon haunted by a demoniac power call to mind Christabel's being possessed by Geraldine in Coleridge's poem "Christabel" (Tinker 20). They both put emphasis on the presence of an evil force. This dark tone and the evil force connotates a punished creature, in other words, a demon-lover.

Brim lists many tales about demon-lovers, which is a useful source presenting the motif's significance in the Biblical and literary narratives. First of all, Brim states that a demon-lover is a highly popular motif mainly in folk ballads, and a demon-lover, either male or female, is often described as a ghost, a corpse or a soul coming from another world in order to seduce or abduct a mortal (67). Besides, in the footnote of "Kubla Khan" in *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1966), the demon-lover is a term used in Byron's *Heaven and Earth* (Coleridge 297). As Brim explains, in Byrons's work a Biblical tale about the angels Samiasa and Azaziel is narrated. In the tale, because of the sinful love of the angels for the daughters of Cain, Anah and Aholibama, the angels force the barrier between the mortals and the immortals, and they even stand against God as Lucifer did before. Apart from this revolt, they teach the secrets of God to the mortal

women about making jewels, garments and parfumes, and by doing so, they subvert the morals and manners. Consequently, they become fallen angels and are named as demon lovers (Brim 68-9). Brim states that Coleridge is very attracted to the story of the demon lovers, therefore he produces Romantic poems which are inspired by these stories, and she also adds that even Geraldine in "Christabel" is presumably a demon lover; a demon because she has evil powers and she deceives the mortals, but her being a lover or not is open to question (70). Briefly, with reference to the demon lover, Coleridge draws attention to the supernatural with mysterious and unusual characters. The demon lovers who are implied to be punished or sinful creatures strenghten the implication of hell and accordingly the supernatural scenery.

Another imagery of hell is in the description of the mighty fountain gushing out of its spring. It makes the rocks fly in the air, and scatters them like hail and grains. The setting in "The Wanderings of Cain" is similar to the Valley of Stones near Linton, and it gives an impression of hell like the setting in "Kubla Khan." There are similarities between the chaos of the rocks in "The Wanderings of Cain" and the dancing rocks in "Kubla Khan." To be clear, in his article Beyer likens the Valley of Stones to a collapsing volcano with huge rocks (279). Coleridge describes the fountain coming out of its spring as follows:

> As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
> A mighty fountain momently was forced:
> Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
> Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
> Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail (18-22)

The water gushes out of the fountain, and the rocks scatter in the air as if a volcano collapses. According to Stelzig, the similarity between the Valley of Stones near Linton and "Kubla Khan"s setting is often overlooked and mostly overshadowed by the similarity of the Valley and the setting of "The Wanderings of Cain." However, the rugged seashore, and the rocky caverns of the Valley geographically resemble to the caverns, the seascape and the deep romantic chasm of "Kubla Khan," since the stones and the rocks of both landscapes are thrown up by the same chthonic force (316-7). That's why, similar to "The Wanderings of Cain," in "Kubla Khan" there is an impression of hell due to its similarity to the Valley of Stones.

Bliss and Bliss interpret this hell-like description of the setting quite differently, and assert that the fountain and the rocks have sensual connotations; therefore, they imply a forbidden sensual dream. Symbolically, the lines "As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing, / A mighty fountain momently was forced" (18-9) can be interpretted as male ejaculation (Bliss and Bliss 264). If so, this unconscious sensual dream may be the result of the poet's self prescibed opium (Fruman 336). The demon lover, then, can be assumed as cruel and abusive male sexuality, and the bursting rocks represent the agression of a violent a male lover (Chatha 98-9). Hence, the supernatural punishment in the scenery is not only caused by Kubla's crime. As "Kubla Khan" is a poem written after the dream the poet had, the punishment also belongs to the poet-speaker who has a sensual dream caused by opium. Even the poet-speaker is aware of his crime, and the implication of the supernatural punishment in his dream; as a result, while describing the punishment of the poet-speaker, Coleridge associates the subconsicious with the supernatural.

In the following lines, in the middle of the gushing fountain, dancing rocks, and the lifeless ocean disturbing the peace with a chaotic noise, Kubla hears the ancestral voices prophesying a war. Fruman claims that Kubla's realisation of his crime of corrupting nature and also the implied sensual dream foreshadow this prophesy. Indeed, in the first version of "Kubla Khan," Kubla hears "threatening and fearful ancestral voices" (398-9). The sin to harm nature, the forbidden love, and the sensual dream arouse the fear of punishment. According to Heninger, "[s]ince the prophesying voices are 'ancestral,' they may very well belong to our first ancestors, Adam and Eve, who from their own settling experience proclaim the folly of seeking to know the unknowable" (qtd. in Chatha 116). Heninger, by referring to the Original Sin, claims that the voices are the warnings from Adam and Eve who know the consequences of standing against God's order very well. This interference is highly possible since in the first paragraph, contrary to this, the setting is like the Garden of Eden, and Adam and Eve dwell in this edenic scene with trees and a sacred river (96). When these connotations are considered, it is possible to assume that Adam and Eve are the ancestors warning the sinners and the evil against the consequences of their crimes and sins.

The last lines of the second stanza, however, contradict the description of the setting in the first stanza. As given in the following lines, its description is contrary to its sunny and calm atmosphere, and its exotic and paradisical beauty:

> The shadow of the dome of pleasure
> Floated midway on the waves;
> Where was heard the mingled measure
> From the fountain and the caves.
> It was a miracle of rare device,
> A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice! (31-6)

Now, the scene is darkened in the shadow of the pleasure-dome. The sunny dome with caves of ice offers a contradiction, and it is a supernatural territory, which definitely does not give the impression of a peaceful atmosphere. According to Maude Bodkin, the icy caverns are the counterpart of the caves of ice in the lowest region of hell in Dante's *Inferno* (1308-21). In contrast to the sunny dome and the blossoming gardens, the caves of ice evoke a terror of ice. The caves of ice in *Inferno* are in the last part of hell, hence they are in the farthest place from life and love (Brim 49). Similarly, Angus points out that Coleridge creates a paradox when he describes the sunny dome with icy caverns. He claims that this arouses astonishment and pain at the same time since "the warm source of love is inwardly, secretly, cold and empty of love," and Angus further states that this makes the poet-speaker desperate as revealed in the third stanza (666-7). The caverns associated with a demonic ambiance reminds Brim about the earlier literary works about the evil spirits which are believed to live in the northern regions, in addition to the ballads telling the demon lovers abduct the maidens to the snowy and frosty mountains known as "the mountain of hell" (Brim 50). Thereby, all these sinister associations of the caves of ice in a sunny dome ensue on the imagery of hell; in other words, the place of punishment for the sins and the crimes committed.

In the third and the last stanza, the poet-speaker refers to his dream of an unidentified woman playing her dulcimer and her mesmerising songs about Mount Abora :

> A damsel with a dulcimer
> In a vision once I saw:

It was an Abyssinian maid
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora. (37-41)

Here, the poet has a vision of an Abyssinian/Ethiopian damsel playing a dulcimer and singing about Mount Abora. The damsel's song about Mount Abora/Amara has several connotations. Mount Abora, or as written in the first version of the poem Mount Amara, a real Abyssinian/Ethiopian site, is known as the mount of the Abyssinian kings in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), and Milton's Mount Amara is similar to Coleridge's Mount Abora as both of them symbolise a false paradise (Raiger 656). According to Piper, the maid actually sings about "the Earthly Paradise in Eden" as a woman who knows the paradise in this world (156). This earthly paradise is created by the kings on Mount Amara (Fruman 345); on the other hand, the mountain is a place where the younger sons of the Abyssinian kings are punished so that they can neither come back home, nor threaten their elder brothers (400). Mount Abora, accordingly, symbolises a combination of what is suggested in the previous paragraphs; it stands for paradise, and a place of punishment at the same time. Mount Abora, in addition to being a combination of the previously presented sceneries and the experiences, it is a source of inspiration for the poet-speaker.

Although the song of the Abyssinian maid enchants the poet-speaker just for a while, the inspiration it brings is permenant, and hence the poet-speaker wants to create art and write a poem with a similar merit (Chatha 95):

Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice! (42-7)

The poet-speaker asserts that if he can revive this inspiring song in himself, the landscape he creates in his poem can be much more enrichened with his own imagination. The previous influences are gone as if they were dreamt once, his soul is already taken over by the evil, and he is left in an emotional breakdown in a hopeless dream (Angus 659-60). Now, as narrated in this stanza, whatever was described previously is left in the past, and the poet-speaker desires and longs for a recovery with the maid's inspiring music so that he can build the dome in the air (Stillinger 219), and take great pleasure as a result

of his achievement. Different from the distressful imagery attributed to the caves of ice in the early part of the poem, this time there is an abrupt shift in the mood in-between the mood of hope and the mood of despair (Angus 667). The poet, with his new Muse, has an urge to rebuild what he has formerly built, and accoringly compensate for the crime of Kubla and himself. Though, it may be hopeless now as they are all in the past.

Christie compares the poet-speaker's and Kubla's imagination and states that the speaker's imagination is neither arrogant nor selfish like Kubla's imagination. He imagines building the dome in air without harming and corrupting the heaven-like beauty of the land. In this case, he also celebrates the Romantic genius and its inspiration isolating him from the average human imagination. According to Christie, the poet accuses himself at the same time, as this poem is a product of his imagination and the evil powers hunt his dream (91). As the third stanza can be read as the interpretation of the first two stanzas, indeed there is a contradiction between the concepts of heaven and hell; the place of the innocent and the place of the guilty. The speaker is guilty like Kubla as they commit a crime against nature and its heaven-like, peaceful order for the sake of their humane pleasures; and in return for its punishment, they go through a hellish experience as narrated in the poem. However, the poet-speaker regrets destroying the beauty of nature and wants to make up for his mistake by building a dome in the air.

Towards the end of the poem, the poet-speaker expresses that if he can rebuild that dome, the ones who see it would be mesmerised and scared of his genius: "… all should cry, Beware! Beware! / … / …close your eyes with holy dread / For he on honey-dew hath fed, / And drunk the milk of Paradise" (49, 52-4). These expressions arouse fear and imply divine punishment because when poeple see the dome, the reason for their fear would be the fact that such a beauty can only be created by a divine being; however, it is created only by his ingenious imagination. Fruman claims that the "holy dread" is the connotation of the fear of the divine punishment following an offence against God's orders, and the ones who see what the poet-speaker creates are scared because what he creates can only be created by a divine power (400-1). Hence, what the poet-speaker wants to create is

another scene with a supernatural appearance or a supernatural beauty, in order to compensate for the crime of destroying the heaven like beauty. This makes it possible to suggest that the subconscious imagination of the poet-speaker does not only offer a supernatural punishment for his crimes, but it also offers an opportunity to make up for the past mistakes.

As Angus points out, for Coleridge, "honey dew" he mentions in the last stanza is the symbol of sweet, pure, forgiving and comforting love (668), and based on this point of view, it can be asserted that Coleridge actually reveals the source of his own poetic genius through it. All these symbols show that Coleridge is inspired by the peaceful aspects of life. However, what is created by this inspiration possibly makes the viewers fear divine punishment, as this kind of peace can only belong to a divinity. The honey dew and and the milk of paradise can also represent opium, as the images emerge in the poet's mind are the results of this specific substance (Fruman 401). Therefore, one of the sources of the power of his imagination is his opium addiction.

It is hard to overlook that "Kubla Khan" is a poem creating its own dream-like atmosphere with the dualities it contains. There is neither a totally optimistic nor a totally pessimistic tone, but their harmony. Possibly, because it is created in a subconscious mind, the poem shifts from one mood to another: reality and the supernatural, hope and despair, light and dark, and as Chatha further states, possible and impossible, enchanting and hunting (84-5). Like *The Ancient Mariner* and "Christabel," in "Kubla Khan" there is half benign half evil experience (Angus 659). Coleridge's willing suspension of disbelief is created in this supernatural landscape. The light and the dark sceneries evoke a sense of heaven and hell; thus, they offer a mood of peace and tumult. The readers already know the settings of heaven and hell as they are mentioned in the religious texts. Likewise, well known supernatural elements in folk tales and the traditions arouse emotional attachment and familiarity. Coleridge, by keeping this in his mind, maintains the balance between the reality and the supernatural by picturing an earthly setting invaded by an unworldly spirit (Crabb Kight 36). Consequently, as Chatha adds, what "Kubla Khan" represents can only

be inferred through imagination; with its dark and underground caves, sunless oceans and also the woman who wails for her demon lover, the poem presents malignant and sinister elements of a remote nature, which has no similarity to any human experience (84-5).

Since it begins in a romance like remote setting with a pleasure dome built by Kubla Khan, the poem is an example of poetic creativity. Although it does not focus on the supernatural happenings directly, the supernatural is evoked through what the pleasure dome of Kubla Khan and the poet-speaker stands for. Kubla's awesome dome, built in an edenic setting, attracts the poet-speaker; however, its charm is broken when its icy caverns, a waning moon, gushing fountains, and the tossed up rocks in the air are seen. Such sinister details give the impression that the dome is cursed. Once the poet-speaker rebuilds the dome in his imagination, he can attract his readers with its beauty, in other words, he can enchant them with his creativity. The combination of the supernatural and punishment, and constitution of the supernatural atmosphere in "Kubla Khan," the shifts between the moods present the subconscious state of the mind, and emphasise that this poem is a product of a dream. According to these interpretations, from the beginning to the end "Kubla Khan" and the dualities that the poem centers upon are created by being engaged with the supernatural experience, and such experience is related to the suggested but unexplained mystery. Kubla's strange pleasure dome, despite its beauty and attraction is described as a sunny dome with caves of ice. As Elisabeth Schneider clarifies "[t]he oppositions of image are not only the obvious ones of light and darkness, sunny dome and sunless sea or caves of ice, Paradise garden and hints of hell … The whole poem oscilliates between giving and taking away, bright affirmation and sunless negation, light flowing music that nevertheless stands still and rings the portentous sound of *dome* time after time" (qtd. in Ting 221). On the basis of this assessment, the dualities of light and dark, calmness and chaos, peace and fear evoke the contrast of heaven and hell, and therefore, the reward in the former, and the punishment in the latter. Hereby, through the dualistic images evoked by Kubla's pleasure dome, the reader is implicitly asked to choose either the evil represented by Kubla's dome, or the edenic, represented by the one the poet-speaker wants to build. Hence, the reader either has pleasure or suffer, depending

on their choices. By presenting both of the choices and their consequences, Coleridge's purpose of didacticism become evident.

Consequently, in the works studied in the first chapter, the crimes against living beings, God's rules, nature, in short, anyone or anything innocent are punished by God or the supernatural powers of the universe. Human beings who have a tendency to commit sin are punished due to their selfishness, evil actions, crimes and misdeeds. Although the two out of three works are incomplete, they still give didactic messages, warn against harsh punishments, or give some hints of punishment as a result of the evil deeds. The highlighted virtues in all works are to love and show respect to all the creations of God. The supernatural elements come into being as a means of punishment to remind the necessity of respect for nature, the innocent, and all creations of God, and also to warn that if this is forgotten or violated, the punishment is inevitable by means of any supernatural interference; so, all people shall refrain from destructive and sinful deeds. Due to their religious faith, people have the fear of punishment which makes them obey the rules of God and respect his creations. Similarly, in Coleridge's works, the characters who have flaws commit sins, and in the end they realise the necessity of love and respect, and the significance of the purification of their sinful souls. Even if they have selfish commitments, throughout their punishments, mostly by means of the supernatural interferences, they realise their crime or sin, repent for it, suffer the consequences, and finally are forgiven or are implied to be aware of their mistake; therefore, they do not repeat it. This displays Coleridge's skill in combining the didacticism and mystery in a subjective and an unusual way. The punishment of God in "The Wandering of Cain," the punishment of the invisible spiritual inhabitants of the universe in *The Ancient Mariner,* and the punishment implied in "Kubla Khan" infer that regardless of its being from a divine authority or an unknown spiritual being, when the order of nature or any innocent being is harmed, the sinners are doomed to be punished and an unavoidable ordeal awaits them.

CHAPTER II

THE SUPERNATURAL AS EARTHLY PUNISHMENT

The second chapter includes the study of *Osorio,* "Christabel," and "The Three Graves," in which the supernatural power is attributed to humans and the beings in human form. The supernatural in the mentioned works is presented as a part of a trick, a magical practice and is associated with a curse. All the supernatural activities are made use of as a punishment for another human being, as a deception, taking revenge, doing harm and disturbing the peace. In short, the supernatural punishment observed in the second chapter is caused due to the self-centered nature of human beings, and out of selfish desires.

Although the supernatural and punishment are portrayed in different contexts in each work, their common point is that they are intended for evil purposes. In *Osorio,* different from the other works analysed in this study, there is not an actual representation of the supernatural, and there is not any person who has supernatural power. The use of supernatural power is only pretended by the characters, and it derives from the folktales and rumours; in other words, there is not a real experience with the supernatural. However, still, it is pretended to be used in order to punish and harm another human being. Besides, from time to time the characters put a curse on each other or themselves in order to punish the wrong. In society mentioned in *Osorio,* the supernatural acts are considered as illegal; however, a supernatural practice is punished only if the power-holders cannot benefit from it. Different from *Osorio,* in "Christabel," the supernatural as a part of a magical practice is used to punish an innocent person when Geraldine bewitches Christabel due to an unknown reason. However, since Christabel's innocence is emphasised throughout the work, and Geraldine is presented as an evil creature of the folktales the evil purpose of her magic is apparent. Despite the ambiguity of her real identity and her use of magic, Geraldine is an earthly being, since she is in human form. In "The Three Graves," the supernatural emerges as a curses. When the mother desires to seduce her son-in-law, she curses her own daughter, her marriage, and as a result destroys the peace.

In the works studied in this chapter, it is seen that while *Osorio* is a complete work, "Christabel" and "The Three Graves" are incomplete. As a result, in most of the works how the evil is treated at the end is not clear, and left to the imagination of the readers. As the victims of the punishment by means of the supernatural are emphasised as innocent, and the controllers of the supernatural and punishment are implied as evil, it is not wrong to characterise the supernatural and the earthly creatures who control the supernatural and punish the innocents as malignant and having sinful and evil nature. As a result, in the studied works the supernatural interfere leads to chaos rather than offering a resolution for the chaos. Although the works contain didactic lessons in certain parts, such as demonstrating many clues about what is evil and accordingly wrong, it is apparent that the use of the supernatural punishment does not possess a didactic purpose. Consequently, in this chapter the earthly creatures possess supernatural powers and it is used in order to punish an innocent human being out of humanly and self-centered evil desires.

2.1. *OSORIO*

In *Osorio*, there is a pretended practice of magic as a part of a trick, which is used for selfish and evil purposes. The supernatural in this work is referred to as evil because it is made use of in order to hide the truth or deceive other people. In other words, it is used in order to punish another human being for selfish reasons. As a result, although the work does not present an actual supernatural power, still, this power is pretended to be used with an evil purpose, a misunderstanding, a deceit, and harms innocent people. The composition of *Osorio* begins towards the end of the eighteenth century. With the suggestion of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the owner of Drury Lane Theatre, Coleridge begins to write a play intended to be performed (Bate 29). As a result, a tragedy, *Osorio,* is produced in 1797, which is a contribution to Gothic drama (Birch 18). However, the play was not appreciated enough to be staged, and after sixteen years, in 1813, it was rewritten as *Remorse* with different character names, and a few changes in the course of

events. The revised version was highly regarded and performed in Drury Lane in London many times (Everest 26). The original *Osorio* written in blank verse narrates the story of Albert who is a missing man, and his younger brother Osorio. Osorio tries to convince Albert's fiancé, Maria, that Albert has died, and he strives to persuade her to accept his marriage proposal. The story of the younger brother who is after the inheritance and his older brother's fiancé attracts Coleridge when he reads a play entitled *Die Rauber-The Robbers* (1782) by the German poet and playwright Friedrich Schiller. After reading it, Coleridge writes a letter to his friend Robert Southey saying:

> 'Tis past one o clock in the morning- I sate down at twelve o'clock to read the 'Robbers' of Schiller- I had read chill and trembling until I came to the part where Moor fires a pistol over the Robbers who are asleep- I could read no more- My God! Southey! Who is this Schiller? This Convulser of the Heart? Did he write his Tragedy amid the yelling of Fiends?- I should not like to [be] able to describe such Characters- I tremble like an Aspen Leaf- Upon my Soul, I write to you because I am frightened- I had better go to Bed. Why have we ever called Milton sublime? That Count de Moor- horrible Wielder of heart- withering Virtues-! Satan is scarcely qualified to attend his Execution as Gallows Chaplain. (qtd. in Birch 70)

In the letter, Coleridge reveals how he is frightened but also impressed by the play, which makes him regard Schiller, the convulser of the heart, and a better writer than Milton. When the plots are considered, Schiller's *The Robbers* apparently inspired Coleridge's *Osorio*. Both plays contextualise a similar conflict between the envious brother and the virtuous brother. The envious younger brother (Osorio in *Osorio* and Franz in *The Robbers*) not only wants to get rid of his elder brother (Albert in *Osorio* and Karl in *The Robbers*) but he also desires his fiancé. In both plays, the Moors who are associated with rage and persecution during the civil war in Philip II's Spain against the Moorish community in the sixteenth century Spain (Parker 122). In addition to these similarities, in the plays, there are plenty of scenes in which the characters commit crime or punish themselves or someone else. Although Schiller inspires Coleridge to produce the plot of *Osorio*, punishment and persecution are the issues of Coleridge's invention.

Coleridge is known for his belief in a free society. With his friend Robert Southey, he formed a utopian scheme called Pantisocracy, which defends a system where all individuals rule equally, and have communal ownership of property (Kitson 158). While

longing for a society in which freedom of expression is encouraged, he is disturbed by the limited freedom in France, hence he supports the French Revolution. Eventually, in his writings, he indicates his personal ideas about the political restrictions and the wrongdoings of the governments (Fox 260). This is addressed at the beginning of the play when it is revealed that Ferdinand, the leader of the Moorish people, his wife Alhadra and their children are imprisoned by the Inquisition because of their identities. Coleridge criticises the political situation by contrasting the right and wrong actions and decisions in his play. Charles J. Smith points out that especially in his early years, Coleridge makes use of the same plot more than once: "a man commits a crime; the crime sets in motion the machinery of justice and punishment; it also calls down a curse upon his head; the criminal suffers severe pangs of remorse; and finally, through remorse, he finds regeneration and salvation" (qtd. in Fulmer 801). Indeed, *Osorio* follows the same course of events, and makes room for a series of crimes and punishments which are occasionally connected to the supernatural events and practices, hence make the play a gothic drama. Like the connection of the gothic supernatural with punishment in *The Ancient Mariner*, in *Osorio,* the gothic and the supernatural are again connected to punishment; however, they differ in their purpose. In *The Ancient Mariner*, the supernatural which is derived from the gothic elements in the poem punishes the wrong actions of mankind and to restore the natural order which is destroyed by these actions. In *Osorio,* on the other hand, the gothic supernatural punishment is imposed by human beings in order to harm another human being. These two different uses of the gothic and the supernatural indicate that Coleridge does not elaborate these terms through a single perspective, but by the help of his imagination, he offers multiple viewpoints.

The beginning of the play is ambiguous as Albert is missing for an unknown reason. Maria, who is Albert's fiancé and his father's ward, is still hopeful and believes that he is alive and he is going to return soon. Albert's younger brother Osorio and their father Lord Velez try to convince Maria to marry Osorio. Actually, Albert is missing because of an assassination plotted by Osorio. As Albert is the virtuous one of the two brothers, he prays for his beloved Maria to suffer from a punishment, so that she can cleanse her sinful soul. Albert, after surviving this assassination, mistakenly thinks that Maria and Osorio have

plotted this murder together in order to get rid of him. Towards the end of the first act, Albert disguised as a Moor, comes across Maria and surprises her when he calls her by her name. Albert tells Maria that the woman he loves betrays and murders him in his dream, without telling her that she is his beloved. He says that he prays for her to be punished in the world of spirits: "She would have died, / Died in her sins-perchance, by her own hands! / ... / I pray'd for the punishment that cleanses hearts, / For still I loved her!" (I.28-9). Albert, here, reveals that he has a tender heart, as he does not want to take revenge but wishes her to be purged of her sins. Since Albert does not tell his name, Maria calls him the Stranger, which is the name Albert is known by until his real identity is revealed.

Even at the beginning of the play, there is a reference to supernatural punishment, since Albert prays for the punishment of Maria by God, in order to cleanse her soul. He believes only if she is punished by a divinity, she can be redeemed from her sin and only then her soul can be saved. These lines are highly similar to the discussion that the first chapter of this study covers, and it is another representation of how divine punishment functions and how ordinary people think of this possibility. Likewise, the sins of human beings, either because they harm another human or because they destroy the natural order can be cleansed by divine interference, and through a punishment sent from divinity, which would make the sinner regret his or her actions and this regret would lead to redemption. Although *Osorio* mostly focuses on the supernatural controlled by human beings for their own benefit, it is possible to observe characters who pray for divine supernatural as punishment to eliminate the evil tendencies of mankind; or in this case, Albert expects that a punishment imposed by God can redeem Maria, and cleanse her sins.

In the later parts of the play, confirming the words of Charles J. Smith, from time to time, the characters commit crimes and regret committing them more frequently. At the beginning of the second act, when they come together with Osorio, The Moorish leader Ferdinand who is an ostensible Christian, says that he serves Osorio. He is grateful to him as Osorio saved his life more than once. Here, it is implied that it is Ferdinand who

performs the assassination Osorio has plotted against Albert, and no matter how upsetting it is, he will continue in his service: “I can bear this, and anything more grievous / From you, my Lord!” (II.35). Later, Ferdinand informs Osorio about Albert’s reaction after learning the betrayal of his brother and how Ferdinand lies about Maria in order to back this assassination:

> FERDINAND. He said-What mean you, friends? My life is dear.
> I have a brother and a promised wife
> Who make life dear to me, and if I fall
> That brother will roam earth and hell for vengeance.
> …
> At length I said (if that indeed *I* said it,
> And that no spirit made my tongue his organ),
> That woman is now pregnant by that brother,
> And he the man who sent us to destroy you.
> He drove a thrust at me in rage.
> …
> At last recovering from his trance, he threw
> His sword away, and bade us take his life-
> It was not worth his keeping. (II.538-9)

Without being aware of the fact that the plotter of his assassination is Osorio, Albert tells Ferdinand that he has a brother and a fiancé and if he is killed, his brother Osorio avenges his murder, and punishes the ones who plot this assassination. When Ferdinand says that Maria is pregnant by Osorio, and Osorio sent him to murder Albert, Albert stops fighting and wants them to take his life. Albert’s reaction reveals his disappointment, and the brotherly love he feels for Osorio. Osorio’s realisation of his unjustified envy and jealousy of his brother is the reason for Osorio’s remorse. “And you kill’d him?” Osorio answers, “O blood-hounds! May eternal wrath flame round you! / He was the image of Deity.” (II.539). As Osorio’s remorse is not enough to make up for his sin, he longs for a punishment. “What if I went / And lived in a hollow tomb, and fed on weeds? / Ay! that’s the road to heaven! O fool! fool! fool!” (II.539). Like many other characters created by Colerige, Osorio also presents how his remorse is not enough and a punishment is required for him to be forgiven, or forgive himself. Hence, Osorio bring out his confession of repentance, and he yearns for self-punishment.

Coleridge's tendency to use the supernatural in order to attract the interest of the reader and in order to add emotional and atmospherical depth is conducted through crime and punishment. The play contains a few supernatural events initiated by the so-called magical practices, and some characters who claim to have supernatural powers. Although the supernatural practices are expressed as illegal, Osorio plans a magical practice in order to convince Maria that Albert is dead. During their conversation with Ferdinand, Osorio asks him to disguise himself as a magician and pretend to have a fake séance. Hence, he would reveal the missing necklace of Albert so that Maria would be convinced that her fiancé is dead. However, Ferdinand, avoiding magic, tells Osorio that he can hire the Stranger who looks like a wizard who claims that he "bring[s] the dead to life again" (II.46). Osorio finds the Stranger, who is indeed Albert in disguise, and wants him to serve as a magician for a few hours in return for a payment. In case he refuses, he is threatened to be turned over to the Inquisition. When the Stranger accepts his offer, Osorio describes how this séance shall look like:

> OSORIO. You are a mighty wizard—
> Can call this dead man up—he will not come—
> He is in heaven then!—there you have no influence—
> Still there are tokens; and your imps may bring you
> Something he wore about him when he died.
> And when the smoke of the incense on the altar
> Is pass'd, your spirits will have left this picture.
> What say you now? (II.548)

Although there is no actual practice of magic, pretence of talking to the spirits, revealing a property of a dead person, creating smoke out of nothing to look mystical change the course of events and arouse curiosity. On the other hand, this marks the beginning of the supernatural as earthly punishment. Osorio makes use of the supernatural séances and the magical acts in order to marry Maria. This can be easily called as an evil deed and punishment for selfish reasons, because from the beginning it is emphasised that Maria waits for Albert to return and she is reluctant to marry Osorio. Additionally, as Osorio behaves in an unacceptable way and commits sins, tries to murder his virtuous brother for selfish desires is on the foreground, it is clear that the so-called magical séance he organises serves an evil purpose. The fake séance is full of descriptions of an extraordinary magical practice. However, when Albert, disguised as the Stranger disobeys Osorio's plan and instead reveals a drawing showing the assassination of

himself, Maria learns the truth about Albert and why he is missing for a long time. Osorio does not forgive it, and although the magical practices are pretended, he is convinced that the Stranger has extraordinary abilities and gets him arrested for casting magic illegally, and as a punishment for not submitting to Osorio's commands. As a result, both the use of the supernatural in order to punish another person, and punishment of the supernatural are observed in the same scene, which proves that one of the features of the supernatural is its having a frightening nature and the belief that it can do harm. Accordingly, this scene implies when human beings want to use supernatural power, the reason most possibly is evil, which can be called as the proof of why performing the supernatural acts are punished in this community.

Furthermore, putting a curse on somebody is another way of imposing a punishment in the play. The characters are superstitious and they believe their curses take effect. In their monologues, they curse an enemy or an evil character frequently, and the cursed character is believed to suffer punishment. After their conversation with Osorio, and before the magical séance, Albert learns that Maria does not take part in the assassination and she is unfairly condemned. His realisation of her innocence leads to remorse and anger. Albert looks at the necklace Osorio gives him during the magical séance, which has the portrait of Maria inside, and expresses his remorse as follows:

> ALBERT. And I did curse thee?
> At midnight? On my knees? And I believed
> *Thee* perjured, *thee* polluted, thee a murderess?
> O blind and credulous fool! O guilt of folly!
> …
> I am unworthy of thy love, Maria!
> Of that unearthly smile upon those lips,
> Which ever smiled on me! Yet do not scorn me. (II.549)

Once he sees Maria's innocent face portrayed in the necklace, Albert regrets that he accused her of a crime that such an innocent person cannot commit. Therefore, Albert's remorse grows and he confesses that he is not worthy of Maria's love. This feeling of lacking worth is a means of self-punishment as a result of the unfair curse he puts on her. The scenes of self-punishment and remarking the innocence of certain characters lead the way to the judgement of the readers about who is virtuous, who is the victim, who is

sinful, and who is actually regretful. These judgements also cause how the supernatural and punishment included in the work are defined. When an innocent character is punished by supernatural means, the supernatural is defined as malevolent; and when a sinful character is punished by supernatural means, the supernatural is defined as benevolent.

Similarly, in the tale narrated by Maria's foster-mother, there is another example of why the supernatural is something to be scared of and how the ones who are believed to possess the supernatural power are punished. According to the story, Maria's foster grandfather Lord Velez, the senior, finds an abandoned baby and he brings him home. When the baby grows up, he does not learn any prayers, but he is extremely knowledgeable about nature and animals, thus he is named as nature's boy. When a friar meets him, he likes the boy and decides to teach him; "So he became a very learned youth. / … he read, and read, and read, / Till his brain turn'd—and ere his twentieth year, / He had unlawful thoughts of many things" (IV.573). However, he never wants to pray, but instead begins to have "unlawful" thoughts that are not specified in the play. One day, when Lord Velez and the boy are talking in the chapel, the earth under them heaves with a groan and the walls totter. Scared by this, Lord Velez confesses the boy's "heretical and lawless talk" (IV.573), which causes the boy to be seized, although he later escapes from the hole that he has been cast into. As both the Stranger and the boy are known to have mysterious and unnatural powers, Maria believes that the Stranger may be this boy of nature. The growing attraction and her fear of the severe punishments of the Inquisitors make her decide to save him from the dungeon: "The horror of their ghastly punishments / Doth so o'ertop the height of sympathy..." (IV.574), which is a scene revealing the intolerance of the Inquisition against the superstitious and religious beliefs (Fox 262). The tale of the foster mother shows that the supernatural exists as a rumour and as a folk belief in the community of *Osorio*. The tale clarifies that the supernatural has always been something to be scared of and when someone has abnormal behaviours, then it is possible for him or her to be accused of possessing supernatural powers, and s/he would be imprisoned from that moment on. The boy of nature is told to have supernatural abilities and the only witness is Lord Velez the senior; still, it is enough for the boy to be imprisoned and this

causes this community to give the impression of a medieval community hunting witches. This scary atmosphere and distressful characters are a Gothic aspect of the work.

Additionally, when analysed in the historical context, different views towards supernatural phenomenon can be witnessed, which is similar to the play's controversial treatment of the people with extraordinary powers or skills. In the Middle Ages, several lay and clerical people had reputation as healers and diviners, making potions, charms and poisons. Along with beneficial magic, they are also associated with malevolent magic, and people claim being physically and psychologically affected by their magical practices. They are blamed for being witches and they are accused of harming people, and causing disorder and uneasiness in the society (Jones 27). Witches are considered to be in service of the devil, and even exchanged souls in order to have the ability to perform magical arts and control the demons. Therefore, for Christian authorities, magical and demonic forces has a connection (Bailey 19-20). In the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the number of the witches and the victims increase. This caused the emergence of "witch-finders" who introduced themselves as experts in recognising the witches, and they travelled from village to village to find witches to execute them by accusing them of collaborating with demons (Jones 32). In fact, the church and the state consider witchcraft as a threat for their political and religious dominance. Such concerns start a hunt which mostly victimised the peasant women and consequently resulted in thousands of executions and burnings (Ehrenreich and English 32-3).

On the other hand, medieval society believed in the stories told about the saints, and that the clergy had unusual powers for healing the sick. Some hagiographies are about sinful pilgrims coming to a saint's shrine and confessing the sins they commit, hence cleansing not only their souls but also their bodies. It is assumed that this gives them their youth, beauty and health back (Bailey 277). Additionally, in several legends, saints turning night to day, saints visited by angels, saints who suddenly appear to advise people are mentioned. Many hagiographical narrations reveal that when a saint dedicates himself to the Christian faith, he is attributed with the supernatural powers; and especially their death

beds or graves become places to witness their miraculous natures due to their excellence in piety (Rewa 66). “Such affective demonstrations of a saint's being able to perform wondrous deeds and survive the temptations of the devils that upset his peace of mind showed that God indeed had a concern for the faithful, that He rewarded the good on earth with special powers” (75). In *Osorio,* accordingly, when nature’s boy is considered, it is possible to observe the medieval concept of the treatment of the supernatural. When people see the boy’s enthusiasm about reading and learning, they begin to consider his difference from ordinary humans. It is mentioned that a friar shows interest in the boy’s enthusiasm and wants to educate him. This examplifies how the medieval society perceives the supernatural that is unintended for giving harm. This knowledgeable boy is treated as if he is to become a saint one day. However, as the boy does not love to pray, he is imprisoned. Since he is believed to have extraordinary powers and he lacks religious commitment, this is believed to imply he has a demonic cause. As in the Middle Ages, the Inquisition in the play stands against the use of magic since it undermines their authority.

As for Osorio, his remorse for Albert’s murder does not prevent him from committing more crimes. First, he finds Ferdinand in a dark cave with an extinguished torch in his hand. Ferdinand’s situation and his description of the cave as a “hellish pit” (IV.563) can be interpreted as Ferdinand’s punishment and suffering for the crimes he committed by collaborating with Osorio. However, after a short discussion, Osorio kills Ferdinand for misleading Osorio by recommending him to hire the Stranger to perform a magical séance, and this causes the failure of Osorio’s plan. Then, Osorio visits the Stranger in the dungeon, in which he is kept for casting magic. Osorio talks to the Stranger and claims that the Stanger and Ferdinand planned a conspiracy against Osorio. Osorio decides to murder both Ferdinand and the Stranger because he believes that they both have ruined his plan of convincing Maria about Albert’s death, and offers him a poisonous drink. The poem shows that even after his remorse for Albert, Osorio still attempts to commit crime by victimising Maria for selfish reasons.

Birch puts forwards that one of the motivations for Coleridge's making use of punishment is for the sake of exemplifying the Original Sin; in other words, the Fall of Adam and Eve (1). As Fields asserts, *Osorio* and Coleridge's many poems deal with the same story of paradise lost, and falling from grace (55). Divine punishment has an important role in Christianity. In order to avoid a punishment, obeying the principles of Christian faith is required. As a result, believing in a punishing god urges people to live a righteous life (Martinez 322). Additionally,

> [t]he possibility of divine justice, that is punishment for crime, justifies the existence of temporal punishment and the condoning of temporal punishment. Only through temporal punishment can man be prepared to receive God's mercy. Although crime or sin may lead to ultimate good, such sin cannot be condoned despite the eventual benefits that accrue from it. (Birch 22)

As the quotation points out, in addition to divine justice, an earthly punishment is necessary as well. Crimes are not to be ignored or pardoned even if they have an accidental positive result. A punishment is necessary for the forgiveness of the guilty. Likewise, in *Osorio,* the sinful characters are either punished by others or their regret makes them punish themselves in order to be forgiven. Osorio, for example, desires to be punished by God when Albert does not kill but forgives him by saying "Let the eternal Justice / Prepare my punishment in the obscure world. I will not bear to live—to live" (V.594).

Contrary to the punishment of a person, forgiveness of the guilty or sinful characters is a sign of Christian mercy (Birch 19). Although Osorio intends to murder him more than once, after witnessing his remorse, Albert prays for Osorio's redemption. When Osorio visits him in the dungeon without knowing his real identity, Albert, still disguised as the Stranger, tries to save Osorio's soul, and he says:

> ALBERT. Thy faith in universal villainy,
> Thy shallow sophisms, thy pretended scorn
> …
> What have they done for thee? Have they given thee peace?
> Cured thee of starting in thy sleep? or made
> The darkness pleasant, when thou wakest at midnight?
> …
> Yet, yet thou mayst be saved. (V.591)

Albert avoids vengeance but tries to purge his brother of his sins, although Osorio responds as follows:

OSORIO. "Saved? Saved?
…
…Curse on Remorse!
Can it give up the dead, or recompact
A mangled body-mangled, dash'd to atoms!
Not all the blessings of an host of angels
Can blow away a desolate widow's curse;
And tho' thou spill thy heart's blood for atonement,
It will not weigh against an orphan's tear." (V.591)

As indicated in the quotation above, Osorio's guilt is so strong that he does not believe that his remorse is enough to be forgiven. Indeed, Osorio yearns for punishment, and rather than forgiveness as he wants to suffer the consequences of murdering a loving brother, and believing that he is cursed by Maria, a widow and an orphan. As Albert regrets putting a curse on Maria unjustly, Osorio regrets for his own crimes due to the fact that now he is under the influence of the curse of innocent people. Osorio believes this curse causes his miserable and uneasy situation; hence, he deserves a punishment so that he can be freed from the pangs of remorse. By showing Albert as a person who has Christian mercy, Coleridge expresses his virtuous nature one more time, and this indirectly supports the idea why Osorio deserves punishment. Adding details to his characters and their decisions, Coleridge actually creates two different sides. Good deeds such as innocence, mercy or virtue are attributed to one of these sides, and evil deeds such as jealousy, lust or murder are attributed to the other side. In his works discussing the crime and punishment themes, Coleridge mostly forms these sides and shows the contrast between them, their actions and decisions. As the works studied in this thesis focus on the supernatural as a means of punishment, the purpose of using the supernatural and the question of which side possesses it lead to ultimate judgement of the works; as a result, it is important to put forward that the characterisation has an important role in determining the evil and the good supernatural, and deserved and undeserved punishments.

Towards the very end of the play, Osorio learns the Stranger's real identity when Maria comes to the dungeons when he talks to the Stranger, and Osorio craves for a punishment one more time. At this point, he tries to punish himself by attempting to fall on his sword,

but this is prevented by Maria and Albert. Witnessing his remorse over and over, Albert keeps on praying for Osorio's well-being: "Heal, O heal him, Heaven" (V.594). Even if it is not by his family, at the end of the play Osorio is finally punished by the Moorish people under the leadership of Alhadra, Ferdinand's wife. They come to the dungeon and drag Osorio off the stage, implying that they are going to decide his faith. Later in *Remorse,* Coleridge "reluctantly agreed" that the band of the Moors execute Osorio, and he decided to display it on the stage (Christie 192). For Coleridge, Osorio is "[a] man who is in truth a weak man, yet always duping himself into the belief that he has a soul of iron" (qtd. in Birch 25). Obviously, his weakness is the impulse that urges him to murder the ones who do not support him. According to Birch, Coleridge refrains from making absolute decisions about Osorio's situation, and leaves the judgement about the guilt and regret of Osorio or the conditions that lead him to commit crimes to the readers (25-6).

Throughout the play, the supernatural has a triggering effect in determining the plot. Although the supernatural happenings in *Osorio* are only illusions, misperceptions, magical practices, extraordinary tales, and superstitions, they influence the characters, their decisions and the idea of punishment. *Osorio* portrays a community which possesses the fear of magic like a medieval society as the supernatural is used by human beings out of selfish reasons and in order to punish another person by harming them; accordingly, making use of the supernatural is forbidden in the community. Therefore, in this play the relationship between the supernatural and punishment underlines the frightening aspects of the supernatural, especially when this power is attributed to human beings.

2.2. "CHRISTABEL"

"Christabel" is another story of the supernatural and narrates the story of the innocent Christabel, who is the victim of the supernatural power of Geraldine, a mysterious creature in human form. The supernatural in this poem creates a mysterious atmosphere which awakens fear and curiosity at the same time, which is suitable to the atmosphere it creates. As it is implied in the poem Geraldine has evil purposes, which is not clearly

defined as the poem is incomplete and she uses her supernatural power to punish Christabel. “Christabel” is one of the most well-known poems of Coleridge. The first part of the poem is written in 1797, the year which is accepted as the beginning of the poet’s golden years (Tinker 18), and the second part is written in 1800. The composition of the poem begins a few months before he finishes writing *The Ancient Mariner*, and Coleridge plans to extend it to at least five books (Bate 140). Although his friends, like Byron, encourage and even put pressure on him to finish the poem, similar to “The Wanderings of Cain” and “Kubla Khan,” it also remaines incomplete; and in 1816 it is published as a fragment alongside with “Kubla Khan” and “Pains of Sleep” (Crabb Kight 9).

What makes “Christabel” a significant work of Romantic poetry is the exotic setting, characters, style and the story it contains. In terms of its setting, the scene clearly evokes the setting of a medieval romance. In the first two stanzas, the time is the middle of the night, and the place is outside an ancient castle where hooting owls, crowing cocks, howling dogs and the clock of the castle’s striking are heard. The medieval tone is dominant due to the fact that the poem is similar to a medieval ballad narrating a story, arousing curiosity and including several folkloric elements. Coleridge is interested in creating a ballad-like poem as the other Romantic poets did by making use of medieval literary devices in their works. This tendency stems from the fact that the poets are interested in the antiquity as they are not content with the ongoing events in the society, in the political field, and the literary area; and the interest in the antiquity has been a reason for the medieval works and traditions to be employed in Romantic literary works. Alongside the medieval style and tone, the atmosphere and the easily discernable disquiet in the sounds heard, make way for the poem to be called as a gothic poem. According to Hagen, “Christabel” is a work of the Gothic tradition due to the fact that in the gothic works with the supernatural contents, the supernatural exists explicitly by distorting the reflection of the natural world, and through this complication, an uneasy feeling comes into being in the atmosphere (19). The uneasy atmosphere created by the reference of the old times and far away setting can be likened to the atmosphere created by the supernatural, as they do not offer a familiarity as well. This uneasiness and the distress of being in a mysterious and unknown place is combined with the description of the middle

of the night with the sounds of nocturnal animals and a huge castle and a forest outside; accordingly, at the beginning, the poem presents several distinctive features of a Romantic poem.

The characters in "Christabel" are rather similar to those in medieval and gothic romances, as Crabb Kight explains that:

> [t]he shy and innocent maiden in distress who falls victim to some evil spirited villain is almost a stock character to the romantic tale of this sort. The knightly father, too, whose strict sense of nobility and honor often lead him astray is traditionally included in these tales. Bracy [the Bard], the loyal servant and protector of his youthful mistress, appears under a variety of titles; and the presence of the guardian spirit of the dead mother watching over her daughter is not uncommon. (64)

Likewise, Geraldine and the ambiguity of whether she is an evil creature or she is controlled by a providential force, relates the work to the Gothic tradition, too (Hagen 3-4). When the characters and their roles are considered, the similarity becomes much more obvious; and thus, it becomes possible to suggest that "Christabel" has a number of stock romance characters from the medieval romance and the gothic traditions. According to Barnaud, the medieval and gothic setting depicted at the very beginning of the poem and the implication of the uneasiness of the animals creates the mysterious atmosphere, and they all foreshadow the unavoidable supernatural and evil actions (27).

Enriched with the supernatural elements like the other works studied in this thesis, "Christabel" analyses the subject of possession and victimization of Christabel by a mysterious character's supernatural powers. The poem begins when Christabel leaves her father's castle in the middle of the night to pray for her betrothed lover, who is a knight but he is far away. The setting is described as a forest in an april night. It is chilly, cloudy, dark; but, lit by the full moon, and the sounds of the owls and mastiffs are heard. In the forest, Christabel comes across with a fair lady, Geraldine, who claims that she is from a noble family. According to her claim, she was captured by five warriors and left to this forest. Christabel comforts Geraldine by telling her that her father Baron Sir Leoline and the knights on his command would gladly guide her back to her noble father's hall. While

everyone in the castle is sleeping, Christabel leads Geraldine to the castle so that she can spend the night there. However, when they are about to pass through the gate:

> The lady sank, belike through pain,
> And Christabel with might and main
> Lifted her up, a weary weight,
> Over the threshold of the gate:
> Then the lady rose again,
> And moved, as she were not in pain. (129-34)

The suspicious behaviour of Geraldine is the first sign of her frightening weirdness. Geraldine is possibly an evil creature and she can enter the castle only after Christabel helps her to pass, because an evil spirit cannot pass through the threshold as castles are believed to be blessed places against such evil beings (Bate 68). Geraldine seems to be in pain and wants Christabel to help her. After they pass through the castle door, strangely, she begins to move as if she was not the one in need of help a few seconds ago.

Contrary to Geraldine, Christabel is a tender-hearted and innocent character. She is not suspicious of Geraldine's strange behaviour and this is the main reason how Geraldine and her evil is allowed to enter the castle walls. With the innocence she represents, Christabel is similar to the albatross of *The Ancient Mariner*. The Mariner is punished and cursed for his lifetime because he murdered the innocent albatross without a reason, and this brought bad luck to the Mariner and the rest of the crew. Similar to the victimised albatross, in "Christabel" the innocence and trust of Christabel is violated by an evil reason, although the evil is not clearly exposed as the poem is not completed by Coleridge. Besides, both the albatross' and Christabel's open-heartedness makes them vulnerable to betrayal and villainy. Furthermore, Christabel's name is a combination of Christ and Abel, two archetypical victim figures (Fruman 406). Therefore, it should not be overlooked that like the albatross' similarity to Christ, Christabel also has this similarity (Fruman 71). Suggesting the similarity between Christ and Christabel, William Ulmer asserts that, after Christabel is exposed to the spell of Geraldine, she wants to warn her father; but, she is unable to tell the truth about Geraldine, therefore her suffering is silent and innocent like the suffering of Christ (378). To sum up, a number of critics agree on

that Christabel represents a Christ-like innocence, while Geraldine represents betrayal and evil.

Although Christabel is a good-hearted lady with a good upbringing, she is also an inexperienced lady because she is under the permanent protection of her father inside his castle. According to Bate, even the reason why Christabel leaves the castle in the middle of the night can be counted as a sign of Christabel's innocence and naivety, as for her the forest at midnight is not more dangerous than inside the castle walls (68), and a strange lady standing alone in the middle of the forest at midnight is not scary at all. In "Christabel" Coleridge presents innocence as a state of naivety, and as a sheltered virtuousness which is not reliable because it has no outer world experience (Ulmer 383). Although many times Geraldine's behaviours and appearance imply that she does not mean well, it is clear in the poem that Christabel neither understands these clues nor hesitates to invite Geraldine in, and she shares her own bed with her. Hence, it is possible to suggest that there is no definite judgement in the poem about the innocence of Christabel as a positive or a negative characteristic. Rather, her innocence and naivety are presented as the reasons for welcoming Geraldine who has a strange look in her eyes and suspicious behaviours (Hagen 8), and afterwards, becoming her victim.

When they come to Christabel's chamber to spend the night, Christabel offers Geraldine wine as it may help her to overcome her weariness and distress. The wine was made by Christabel's mother, and it is claimed to have a virtuous power. "And will your mother pity me, / Who am a maiden most forlorn?" (194-5) Geraldine asks without knowing that her mother is deceased. The question of Geraldine clarifies that she keeps on pretending to be innocent, like the first time she meets Christabel and pretends as if she was victimized and hurt. While Christabel apparently keeps on believing the innocence and weariness of Geraldine, the spirit of her mother, who is now the guardian spirit of Christabel, is the first one to realise Geraldine's evil and the first one to resist to her. While drinking the wine, suddenly Geraldine's eyes look unsettled and she begins to cry with a hollow voice, and says:

'Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!

I have power to bid thee flee.'
…
'Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me.' (205-6, 211-3)

Referring to mother as 'the guardian spirit' is not just a figure of speech. In this very short scene, Geraldine and the mother battle for Christabel's soul (Angus 659). In this case, Christabel's dead mother is another supernatural being; however, this time there is a good supernatural spirit trying to save Christabel's innocent soul from the evil's intrusion. Although Christabel does not hear, sense or see her mother's spirit, Geraldine is aware of her as she also has an unearthly presence (Crabb Kight 31). Most probably, until this time the guardian spirit had always been wandering in the castle, but only after Geraldine, another unearthly creature arrived, the spirit interfered in Christabel's life. Therefore, the mother, as a supernatural being, is one of the most significant characters in "Christabel," especially for the study of the supernatural. Although she is not alive, and neither seen nor mentioned before, she interferes for the first time when Christabel serves wine to Geraldine without knowing her mother is in the presence as her guardian spirit. Hagen states that the wine made with wild flowers signifies the taming of nature by the mother, and it has virtuous powers which are apparently proven when Geraldine drinks it; thus, it can be taken as the taming of the supernatural at the same time (19). Accordingly, the mother's spirit can be regarded as a bridge between the supernatural and natural realms. Similar to the studied works of Coleridge in this thesis, in this scene Coleridge presents a difference between divine supernatural and earthly supernatural. As discussed before, when a divine being like a spirit owns the supernatural power, the purpose is to protect the innocence and to punish the evil; on the other hand, when an earthly creature owns the supernatural, s/he punishes the innocents out of evil purposes. For this reason, when Geraldine passes through the castle door, the guardian spirit of the mother tries to punish Geraldine to restrain her from her evil actions. Although the spirit cannot achieve her aim, the reaction and fear of Geraldine marks the difference between a divine supernatural punishment and an earthly supernatural punishment one more time.

On the other hand, Christabel is unaware of Geraldine's threat, and she thinks that Geraldine's strange reaction after drinking the wine is caused because of her tiredness,

since Christabel is unaware of the fact that her mother's spirit is there to protect her from Geraldine's evil. After a little while, although Geraldine keeps on drinking the wine, she once again turns into her former state of a fair lady with bright eyes. Yet when they are about to sleep, Geraldine disrobes and Christabel realises a mark on Geraldine's bosom. When Geraldine lays on the bed, Christabel touches that mark, and Geraldine says: "In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell, / Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!" (267-8). As she touches that mark, a spell mutes Christabel; thus, from that moment on, she cannot speak to reveal Geraldine's supernatural power. When Geraldine falls asleep holding Christabel in her arms, Christabel is in a kind of a trance because of the spell.

In order to study the supernatural and punishment in "Christabel," the night Christabel and Geraldine spend together manifests itself as a milestone. The supernatural asset of Geraldine, which is only assumed beforehand, becomes certain. Additionally, the moment she reveals herself to Christabel is the moment when she begins to punish her. Geraldine bewitches her to prevent her from speaking out about Geraldine's strange identity. So, Christabel would not be able to interfere when Geraldine acts as if an innocent and victimised woman. Although the purpose of Geraldine and if she succeeded or not is unknown, all the implications about Geraldine's evil nature, and her punishment for innocent and good hearted Christabel prove that her supernatural is used for her selfish causes, which foreshadows a malignancy and chaos in the continuation of the poem. Apart from the punishment, another importance of this scene is that Geraldine gives many hints about her real identity and with her actions she resembles to several supernatural creatures which are mostly associated with evil, and makes way for a series of discussions among the critics and scholars on that particular case.

Since Geraldine hides her evil under a pretended innocence and a faked victimisation at the beginning of the poem, her appearance is totally misleading. When Christabel sees Geraldine in the middle of the forest, she assumes that Geraldine is in need of help as she has been moaning; and more importantly, she appears so:

> There she sees a damsel bright,
> Drest in silken robe of white,
> …

> The neck that made that white robe wan,
> Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
> Her blue-veined feet unsandl'd were,
> And wildly glittered here and there
> The gems entangled in her hair. (58-9, 61-5)

Geraldine has a fancy but damaged look. Although she is still elegant in her dress and ornaments, it is observed that her arms and feet are naked. She introduces herself as a lady from a noble family and claims that she has been abducted by warriors. More importantly, her explanations do not conflict with her appearance, and that is the reason why Christabel is not suspicious of anything mysterious. Besides, her aggrieved looks support the first impression of her being pure, innocent and vulnerable (Hagen 9). However, in the poem, in addition to the ambiguous implications of Geraldine's villainy, the persona sometimes intervenes to foreshadow the malignancy, which will be revealed later. The persona repeats the line "Jesu, Maria, shield her well!" (54, 582) from time to time to create suspense by implying the danger that Christabel is possibly susceptible to. On the other hand, the real identity of Geraldine remains mysterious, and this is why critics make many different speculations about Geraldine's evilness based upon the clues given throughout the text.

There are different opinions on Geraldine's nature. Geraldine is probably a witch or a sorceress due to the spell she has casted upon Christabel. In addition to Douglas Angus, who describes her as a witch (659), Crabb Kight further argues that in addition to the forest described as the setting at the beginning of the poem, the time specified as midnight is a tradition of witchlore and has been known as witching hour (15); additionally, the mark of Geraldine is also a lore of witchcraft as when a witch has an alliance with the devil, a secret mark appears on a part of her body (61). Crabb Kight points out that such associations are derived from the folk tradition:

> [Coleridge] employs a number of common elements from the folk tradition to establish the initial mood of suspenseful foreboding and portent of impending evil. Because these folk elements have circulated freely for many years, they maintain a close touch with humanity while establishing an atmosphere preparatory to the introduction of the supernatural. (13)

In other words, Coleridge adds the folk elements in his works due to the fact that they pass from generation to generation which evoke certain feelings, Coleridge both prevents

the alienation of the reader from the supernatural and unusual course of the ongoing events, and also through such details he guides his readers to unveil Geraldine's mystery. Geraldine's association with witchcraft is suggested also by Bate as he also states that the mark on her body is related to sorcery (68); however, Bate has other interpretations as well:

> To begin with, she is a sort of vampire—that is to say, a creature partly living through or by means of human beings, and to that extent dependent on them, like evil itself, for what she can be or do. At the same time she is a kind of "lamia," shifting between a mortal and immortal state: and with this is the implication that she *may*—just possibly—be a phantasm, existing immortally merely *in potentia*, able to attain concrete existence only through the mind of a human being. (68)

Bate argues that Geraldine is definitely a supernatural being, and possibly a vampire, a lamia or simply a phantasm. Barnaud points out that a lamia is a kind of vampire, and Geraldine may be this kind of pitiful creature who is not responsible for her situations and necessities all the time (32). If this description is taken into account, it should be noted that, Geraldine is sincere in her behaviours towards Christabel or her father, but the curse on her causes her evil behaviours and intentions. Mostly, Geraldine's evil and mysterious actions are assumed to be intentional, and as the poem remained as iincomplete, the readers cannot learn Geraldine's real motives for her actions (Fruman 355). However, this obscurity and the estimations of the possibility that Geraldine may not be aware of her actions bring the question whether she herself is also cursed or not. According to Ernest Hartley Coleridge, grandson of Coleridge; "there are indications that the Geraldine of the First Part was at the mercy of some malign influence not herself, and that her melting mood was partly genuine. She is 'stricken' with horror at her unwelcome task, because she cannot at first overcome the temptation to do right. She was in a strait between the contending powers of good and evil" (qtd. in Barnaud 29). In addition, Arthur Nethercoat questions if the actions of Geraldine are just diabolical hypocrisy, by suggesting that the readers hate and grieve for her at the same time due to the indigent appearance, the moaning in the beginning, and also her begging for the pity of Christabel's mother when learns about her. According to the critic, if Geraldine is totally a malignant character, these feeling would not come into being; and it is alluded that, for this reason, Geraldine may not be aware or in control of her own actions (Barnaud 30). However, if Geraldine is an evil supernatural being aware of her actions and needs, then

it is for sure that she pretends to be an innocent young woman in order to gain trust of the castle folk.

Apart from all these presumptions, Geraldine's evil identity and her appearance's similarity to a lamia is one of the most prominent and possible presumptions of the critics about her real nature. A lamia is described as a female shape-shifting creature in many mythological tales which often takes the shape of a snake with curious-looking eyes (Crabb Kight 53). In order to clarify why this speculation is prominent, it is important to observe that throughout the poem, apparently or just in implication, Geraldine several times imitates the movements of a snake. For example, as narrated in the poem in "The Conclusion to Part I" when she and Christabel sleep together: "…the worker of these harms, / That holds the maiden in her arms, / Seems to slumber still and mild, / As a mother with her child" (298-301). This explains how Geraldine holds Christabel tight in her arms while sleeping. Similarly, as mentioned in the forthcoming paragraphs, like the snake's coiling around the dove in Bard's dream, Geraldine holds Christabel like a snake strangling a prey. In another part of the poem, Geraldine's eyes are compared to a snake's eyer: "A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy; / And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head, / Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye" (583-5). This comparison Geraldine to a snake along with the "hissing sound" heard from Christabel in Part II, after Geraldine meets Lord Leoline and Christabel is still in a trance because of Geraldine's spell.

Some of the illustrations and descriptions of a lamia in the folktales supports the speculations about Geraldine. In a book called *The Types of the Folktale* (1961) written by Antti Aarne, and mentioned by Crabb Kight, in a folktale known as "The King and the Lamia," a king marries to a fair but actually a serpent woman, who changes its shape into a snake when she goes to a water edge (66). Crabb Kight's remark emphasises that the folk beliefs and superstitions are transferred from generation to generation, and this transfer is not only limited to the oral literature, but the written literature also contribute to the survival of this tradition (73). As Coleridge employs folktales in order to create a familiar atmosphere, for his interest in the histories of ordinary people, and as folktales are generous about the supernatural elements. As a result, Coleridge's interest in

employing the supernatural in ordinary human stories highly similar to the folktales. As a result, the folktales can be perfect guides for decoding the clues in the poem. As quoted by Barnaud, Bates summarises all these speculations as follows: "Observe carefully the detail of the serpent position: the train looped up in curve, the arms folded out of sight, the head 'couched' side-ways, the look askance, out of the small 'shrunken' eyes. No wonder that Christabel utters a 'hissing sound.' The picture is so vivid that the idea of the snake fills her whole being" (qtd. in Barnaud 32). Accordingly, there are many indications that define Geraldine as a snake-like creature; thus, she may be considered as a lamia, another supernatural creature represented in the folktales.

Evidently, "Christabel" is another poem of Coleridge which connects the supernatural elements and punishment. Geraldine, the supernatural being who enchants, trances and bewitches other characters and manipulates their feelings or reactions, not only punishes Christabel by silencing her but she also manipulates Christabel's father. Coleridge persists to emphasise the human will's depravity, which is an issue he highlights in his other works studied in this thesis. Commonly, corruption can be counted as a motive for a crime, just like the Mariner who kills the albatross without any particular reason, and it is also a sign of human fallibility. As Birch clarifies:

> …Eve's final motives for eating the fruit are proven unsubstantial and she recognizes her crime… She did wilfully disobey God. Her Right Reason was clouded by her passions, namely pride, but we cannot say that her depravity and sin were inherent, inescapable conditions of her mental being... It is this factor that links Eve's crime with all other crime. Man has the freedom to will depravity and usually he does. But, because he does possess free will (the ability to choose), motivation is implied. One cause of action (sin) is chosen over another (virtuous behaviour) because that person is convinced, however unfounded his reasons may be, that he is doing something to his advantage, however perverted that something may seem to the normal mind. (50)

According to what Birch states in the quotation above, free will is the reason for Eve's decision to eat the forbidden fruit, which represents the depravity of the whole human kind. Disobeying God's will, vulnerable to being misled, and tendency to commit crime and do evil without a justifying reason are the results of this depravity that human beings possess. In a letter he writes to his brother George, Coleridge reveals that he is interested in the Original Sin and how it damages the souls of human beings as follows:

> Of GUILT I say nothing; but I believe most stedfastly in original Sin; that from our mothers' wombs out understandings are darkened; and even where our understandings are in the Light, that our organization is depraved, & our volitions imperfect; and we sometimes see the good with *wishing* to attain it, and oftener *wish* it without the energy that wills & performs—And for this inherent depravity, I believe, that the *Spirit* of the Gospel is the sole cure. (qtd. in Ulmer 381-2)

When Coleridge's comment on the Original Sin and the characters he creates are considered as a whole, it is easier to understand why the Mariner does not need a specific reason for shooting the albatross, and how Geraldine gains the trust of the castle folk easily. Andrew M. Cooper claims that the heroine Christabel has that typical human fallibility in return for this sinful legacy of humankind, and this ironically leads her to believe in Geraldine's innocence (Ulmer 379). As pointed out before, Geraldine's evil nature is implied more than once; however, Christabel as an inexperienced young woman cannot see the clues, and she fully believes in the indigent situation of Geraldine. As a result, it is possible to remark that Geraldine's evil spell hindering Christabel's speaking is a punishment for her fallibility. Additionally, Christabel's guilt is not limited to her fallibility, since after the night she spends with Geraldine, Christabel confesses that: "'Sure I have sinn'd!' said Christabel, / 'Now heaven be praised if all be well!'" (381-2). Christabel's fallibility is indicated in these lines, but this time Christabel is aware of her decisions, and she is scared of the consequences of her night with Geraldine: "…having prayed / That He, who on the cross did groan, / Might wash away her sins unknown" (388-90). Unlike in the midnight at the beginning of the poem, in the morning Christabel is aware of the possibility of a punishment. Although it is not a divine punishment like she is scared of, she has already been punished by being bewitched by Geraldine's spell.

In the second part of the poem, apart from Christabel, the fallibility can be observed in her father, Baron Sir Leoline, as well. When Christabel wants Geraldine to meet with her father, Sir Leoline listens to Geraldine's story and realises that Geraldine's father, Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine is a friend of his from his youth. After learning this and being allured by the beauty of Geraldine, Sir Leoline vows vengeance against those who abducted her. Like Christabel, Sir Leoline is also deceived by Geraldine's appearance and her being victimized. This makes him also vulnerable to Geraldine's supernatural powers

and evil purposes. In the following lines, in order to help her, Sir Leoline calls Bracy the Bard, who works for him, to travel to Tryermaine and invite Geraldine's father to the castle; but, Bracy the Bard hesitates and wants Baron to cancel this journey as he had a dream the other night about Baron's favourite dove. In his dream, the dove named Christabel was in the forest alone and moaning in pain, and when he wondered what happened to the bird and went closer, he saw a green snake coiling around and strangling the bird. However, mesmerised by Geraldine's beauty, Sir Leoline half-listens the Bard's dream and his warnings; thus, misinterprets it. He takes the dove as Geraldine, not Christabel, and the snake as the warriors who abducted her: "'Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove, / With arms more strong than harp or song, / Thy sire and I will crush the snake!'" (569-71). Symbolically, the dove is associated with femininity and Christianity as a figure of peace, innocence, purity; but the snake is associated with masculinity, and Satan (Hagen 13). Obviously these two symbols are representing Christabel's innocence and Geraldine's evil nature; however, blinded by Geraldine's beauty, Sir Leoline cannot identify them properly. After realising her father's interest in Geraldine and listening to the Bard's dream, Christabel feels guilty. Although she cannot reveal Geraldine's abnormality because of the spell restricting her, Christabel wants her father to send Geraldine away. Sir Leoline, without knowing the reason for this request, is embarrassed because of Christabel's inhospitaliy. He, even, scolds the Bard for finding excuses to delay the journey to Tryermaine. The poem ends with Sir Leoline who leave the room with Geraldine. Although the rest of the poem is not written, it is clear in the ending that Sir Leoline's self-righteousness paves the way to Geraldine's upcoming evil acts. It would not be wrong to deduce that, although warned more than once and being deceived easily, Sir Leoline is also going to be punished by being exposed to an evil magic as he has not sent Geraldine away.

"Christabel" lacks a conclusion; however, it is still one of the major works of Coleridge; and its incompletion is not a hindrance for its attractiveness for the academic studies. On the contrary, as ambiguities related to the supernatural beings are certain in the poem, it enriches the interpretations and widens the range of speculations made by various critics. Ambiguity of Geraldine's being an evil supernatural creature, the soul of Christabel's

mother's wandering in the castle, Christabel's and her father's falling for Geraldine's ostensible innocence, and how it leads to unindicated but implied evil support the poem's supernatural interest and present the punishment of the innocence by the evil supernatural.

2.3. "THE THREE GRAVES"

"The Three Graves" tells the story of Mary who is victimised by her mother, who curses her daughter, her daughter's marriage, and her friend Ellen as she is rejected by her son-in-law. Because of her desire to seduce her son-in-law, and jealous because of the rejection, the mother makes use of the supernatural in order to punish Mary and Ellen by cursing them and destroying their peace. As a result, the poem presents another depiction of the use of the supernatural by a human being whose evil nature urges her to punish the innocents by putting a curse on them. The years of the poem's composition, marked as 1797 and 1798 in different sources, are known as the times of Coleridge and Wordsworth's companionship, and their attempts to produce literary works together, like their collaboration on *The Ancient Mariner* and "The Wanderings of Cain" (Strunk Jr., 201). "The Three Graves" is planned to consist of six parts; the poem's first two parts would be composed by Wordsworth, while the second two parts would be composed by Coleridge, and the one who would finish first was supposed to compose the last two parts; however, the rest was never written and the poem remained incomplete (Parrish 367). On the other hand, Mays claims that Coleridge took the poem over from Wordsworth in the summer of 1797 (93), yet, Coleridge never acknowledges that the first two parts were written by Wordsworth (Luis 171).

Although the details of the shared composition are not certain, it is clear that both poets collaborated in the production of this particular poem. Fruman comments on this company by stating that as two developing young poets, they inspire each other's works; however, the greatest poems by Coleridge present a highly unique vision which are not similar to anything anyone ever wrote, including Wordsworth (265-6). Fruman's statements are

noteworthy as most of Coleridge's narrative poetry, and most of the other works studied in this thesis including *The Ancient Mariner,* "Christabel," "The Wanderings of Cain" are composed during the poet's close association with Wordsworth (Luis 144). "The Three Graves" was also produced with Wordsworth's crucial participation, but it is still distinguishable due to Coleridge's unique interests, like the story's tendency of proceeding through the supernatural at some point. In the September of 1809 while the first two parts remained in handwritten form, the third and the fourth parts of the poem were published in the periodical paper *Friend* by Coleridge with the title "The Three Graves. A Sexton's Tale. A Fragment" (Coleridge 276). However, another unfinished poem's publication was not well regarded by the readers, and in 1810's *Edinburgh Annual Register for 1808*, these complains were listed as follows: "He has only produced in a complete state one or two small pieces, and everything else, begun on a large scale, has been flung aside and left unfinished" (Jackson 6).

In some of his works, as in "Christabel,"Coleridge makes use of the features of the medieval tradition while creating the setting and the mysterious characters. This medieval charm and remoteness are mostly enriched with the supernatural elements in the plot (Stork 312). However, "The Three Graves" differs from other ballads of the poet with its not being set on a remote place and time. The story is modern and the characters are among the farmers of England. The character and the setting choice fulfils Coleridge's wish to present the ordinary lives of ordinary human beings, and colour it with the inclusion of the supernatural. The poem begins on a country church-yard with a visitor whose curiosity is intrigued by a thorn, the roots of which are all around the other plants, and the three graves beneath. He asks the Sexton about these weird looking graves of a ruthless mother, a barren-wife, and a maid forlorn. The Sexton of the church narrates the story from the beginning to the end as an eye witness of everything in that church-yard and a listener of the grievances of people. Punter points out that the Sexton functions as a survivor and the saviour of the story. He witnesses the lives of people, digs their graves, takes care of them and makes the story of these graves survive by telling them to other people ("Revising" 258-9). In the preface, it is indicated that two of those three strange looking graves have gravestones; the first one having a name and dates, and the second

having no name but a date and an inscription: “The Mercy of God is infinite” (269). Throughout the poem, which grave belongs to whom is not clarified, thus the owners of the gravestones or who does not have one remains as a mystery. As the very beginning of the poem gives the impression of a Gothic tale with the depiction of the graves and dead people, it foreshadows the frightening incidents, evil characters, and the unhappy ending of the tale. Additionally, the gothic impression implies the presence of evil.

In the poem, it is narrated that Edward, a young farmer, meets Mary, who is a lovely young woman, in the house of a dear friend of both, Ellen. They fall in love with each other and when Edward proposes to Mary, she wants Edward to get the approval of her mother, as she is quite wealthy and may stand against her marrying a poor man. The mother gives consent to the young couple and she even brings the wedding cake. One day before the wedding, while Mary is decking the bridal bed upstairs, the mother and Edward talk in the bower outside. When Mary comes to the bower, her mother yells at her and scolds her, and wants her to go away and leave them alone with “[a] deadly leer of hate” (81), as she wants to talk to Edward privately. Unable to understand the harsh reaction of her mother, Mary leaves them alone and goes upstairs, and lies on her bed with fear. In the very beginning of the poem, the mother’s causeless aggressiveness towards her daughter is explicit, and this can be taken as the first glimpse of the evil nature of the mother which is followed by her speaking ill of her daughter to Edward when they are alone again. The mother tells him that Mary is not a proper wife for him. She is an awful, fierce, proud, envious, hypocrite and a giddy girl, who is going to betray their marriage bed and break his heart. She claims to have the burden of a secret sin committed by Mary before, which even risks her life and property. She also says that if she kisses Edward once, and marries him, she is going to share her wealth with him. Clearly, in order to gain the affection of Edward, the mother uses all kinds of art of calumny, and endearment (Taylor, “Coleridge’s” 719). In response to the mother’s words, Edward bursts into laughter and says that she is either drunk or mad. This makes the mother fall on her knees, and she begins to put curse on every drop of blood that Mary has, the moment she was born, the grave she will have when she dies, and even their marriage bed. Mary, lying in her bed, hears the mother’s curses and her bed begins to stir beneath her. While the mother

continues praying to God, cursing Mary on her knees, a maid sees her, and her blood freezes when she hears her curses, as she confesses to the Sexton afterwards. When the mother's lies about her daughter, her jealousy, and the passion for her son-in-law are considered, they clearly make her an evil character so far. However, the only response or punishment she gets in return for her villainy is Edward's laughter and ridicule of her words. On the other hand, as understood from Mary's reaction, the maid's frozen blood, or the bed's stirring without a natural reason, these are the results of the mother's curse, and indicate the effects of a supernatural power. After this abnormal and terrifying experience, Edward leaves the house with Mary, saying this is a wicked house and they can not stay there anymore.

At the end of Part II, the Sexton says to the visitor that he dug these three graves; when the death knocked on the door of the maid forlorn, Ellen, and when the soul of the ruthless mother went to hell. The Sexton's words: "[t]is' a fearful, fearful tree; / The ghosts that round it meet" (216-7) imply that the curse of the mother possibly is the reason why she went to hell after her death as she devastated the lives of three young people, as elaborated in Part III and Part IV; in other words, the curse continues even after the mother's death. The Sexton's words imply that, as detailed in the previous paragraph, it is totally unknown what happens to the mother, whether she is punished or not for cursing her daughter. Only the Sexton speculates that she probably went to hell for eternal punishment for her evil deeds. Nevertheless, Mary and Edward are cursed due to the mother's desire for vengeance. In other words, in the poem there is not any punishment in return for a sin or a crime committed; but, after the revelation of the evil nature of the mother, enriched with the implications of her having the supernatural power, and controlling it for evil purposes makes the readers consider that Edward and Mary are unjustly punished by the curse of the mother.

In Part III and Part IV, the story of the cursed newly-weds, Mary and Edward is narrated. The Sexton tells to the visitor what happened on the wedding day; how Mary tried to look cheerful while she was actually not, how she said her heart died away when they came to

the church, how she thought she saw her mother on her knees while the Vicar join her hand with Edward's, and how her limbs crept and frozen as that of the maid's when she heard the mother's curse: "The shade o'er-flushed her limbs with heat— / Then came a chill like death: / And when the merry bells rang out, / They seemed to stop her breath" (252-5). Even five months after that day, the malignancy the curse brings continues. Although Mary and Edward are lovely and fond of each other, Mary is dull and sad for no reason, although she wants to be cheerful for Edward's sake, as he is the only family she has now. She says, "Perhaps I am not well in health, / And 'tis a gloomy season" (271-2). In the next lines, the persona contradicts Mary by revealing that there is neither snow, nor ice, and even if there is, she is not going out lest she may come across with her mother. Here, the poet implies that Mary's situation is not caused by any natural reason or illness as she believes. This is an obvious result of the mother's curse haunting Mary's joy and her marriage. Taylor likens the effects of this curse to Geraldine's spell in "Christabel." Similar to Christabel, Mary is also overpowered by another woman's selfish and passionate will and her supernatural power, and this power causes silence, inability to express the feelings, and also breaks the bewitched one's free will ("Coleridge's" 718-9). Shortly, Mary suffers from the supernatural consequences of her mother's curse; she has no peace or good health without a reason.

In their desperate days, their only consolation is their friend Ellen who comes and brings joy to them: "Ellen was a faithful friend, / More dear than any sister! / As cheerful too as singing lark; / And she ne'er left them till 'twas dark, / And then they always missed her" (281-5). Ellen is described as a good and faithful friend, who makes the couple joyful as their joy is haunted by the curse. However, she eventually has her share of the curse. One day, when she goes to church, she encounters with the mother. When Ellen welcomes her and hopes for reconciliation with all her sincerity and kindheartedness, the mother curses her, too, only because Edward and Mary meet and fall in love in her house. In this scene, the description of the weather is gothic; it is a dark sky covered with dark clouds, the wind's and the rain's beating the church's windows are heard so loud that the voice of the Vicar is scarcely heard. The dark and gothic atmosphere is emphasised in this scene as a foreshadowing for the upcoming malignancies and also for the supernatural, and evil

happenings. In the following parts of the poem, especially after the last scene in the church, the mother does not take any action in the tale, unless spoken of. According to Luis, Coleridge's main purpose is to create her as a completely evil character, thus he prevents the ambivalence about the mother as a hateful and an aggressive figure. However, as the mother and her motives are not well-developed, it makes finishing the poem much more difficult, and this is one of the most important reasons for the poem's being incomplete (174-5). Still, the poem offers a huge opportunity to decide who is good or who is bad, and who is right and who is wrong by presenting the jealousy and evil nature of the mother along with the innocence of the cursed characters Mary and Ellen, who are in a miserable situation because of the curse.

Following this encounter, with the fear of the curse, Ellen's face becomes pale, and she looks with troubled eyes; however, she smiles as if nothing happened, and keeps saying that there is nothing to worry about, as it is just a curse of a wicked woman. When Mary and Edward learn about what happened in the church, their uneasiness increases. Ellen visits them more than before, but none of the three are the same as they used to be. Even Ellen's joy, which is seldom now, scares Edward as he realises that she is neither as cheerful before nor sings songs cheerfully. Ellen's punishment by the curse causes an irreversible misery upon them as now she cannot soothe Mary, and Mary's situation devastates Edward. According to Spatz, one of the reasons for Edward's situation is his being sexually frustrated. The mother warns him before their marriage by saying Mary is only a child, and offers herself as a wife instead of her daughter (111). This suggestion is highly possible as the mother curses their marriage bed at the same time in order to break their marriage bond. Similar to Mary's situation, Edward is also upset and thoughtful because of this frustration and then he has a strange dream, as explained in the last part of the poem.

Since doomed with the mother's curse, some kind of insanity begins to possess Ellen. Even if she was once a character enlightening Mary and Edward's house, but since darkened by the curse, now she has completely changed; she shrieks but laughs shortly

afterwards, and she utters words that she cannot control. When Mary desperately says that they will not be able to be happy again: "[Ellen] felt them coming, but no power / Had she the words to smother: / And with a kind of shriek she cried, / 'Oh Christ! [Mary] you're like your mother" (444-7). As noticed, the curse controlling Ellen's words transforms the house of the innocent people and the innocent relationships into a house of bitterness (Luis 181). Not surprisingly, the poem ends in a time of a restless night, and Edward's nightmare. He has a dream in which he mutters, "A mother too!" (522), and Ellen and Mary hear his muttering: "Both groaned at once, for both knew well / What thoughts were in his mind; / When he waked up, and stared like one / That hath been just struck blind" (526-9). When Edward wakes up from this nightmare, he says "'O God, forgive me!' (he exclaimed) / 'I have torn out her heart' (532-3). Edward's exclamation after his nightmare, Ellen's insanity, and Mary's never smiling after that night are mentioned in the last lines of the poem. These are the only lines explaining Edward's dream, but they obviously do not offer a benevolent sign. There are a number of deductions made by the critics. For instance, Beer suggests that Edward cries out loud as he regrets for rejecting the mother in the first place (Luis 183). On the other hand, Fruman points out that Edward dreams that his kills the mother as he is infected by his wife Mary's sorrows and oppressive thoughts (409). According to Spatz, Edward's reaction after the dream indicates that he either begs forgiveness for his vengeance on the mother or for the wrong he has done to Mary (111). These different speculations about the dream are derived from Edward's last mysterious exclamation. It is not clearly mentioned if the heart that Edward believes he has torn out belongs to the mother or Mary. Luis asserts that, when all they go through are considered, Edward's tension is not only because of his hostility to the mother, but also caused by his disappointed marriage, which eventually proves the mother was right when she rejected this marriage (180). As clear in the interpretations above, although finishes ambiguously, the ending of the poem may lead to multiple conclusions with various estimations and possibilities. However, when the evil signs and the reactions of Mary and Ellen are considered alongside Edward's frustration, the nightmare is possibly about Edward's regret after he rejects the mother. Although the mother is absolutely an evil character, Mary and Ellen are innocent but the cursed characters, yet there is a contradiction about Edward. He is not cursed directly by the mother, but he witnessed the uneasiness in his marriage because of the curse on Mary,

and later on Ellen. The contradiction about Edward makes it possible to consider that he may have a secret love for the mother.

It is known that Wordsworth offers the subject of "The Three Graves" and the idea of curse as a keystone to Coleridge; but according to Wordsworth, Coleridge made the story profoundly painful and shocking without softening or healing the storyline (Strunk 201-2). Coleridge has a unique way of narration with the painful parts originated by the unusual and somehow the supernatural effects of the curse on the innocent characters. However, "The Three Graves" is a poem interpreted as a psychological story and a story with the supernatural elements at the same time. Parrish asserts that Coleridge's words in the Preface; "[this poem's] merits, if any, are exclusively psychological" (268), indicate a psychological study of how imagination works, and how it affects the minds of people (369). As Coleridge himself states in the Preface:

> I had been reading Bryan Edwards's account of the effects of the *Oby* witchcraft on the Negroes in the West Indies, and Hearne's deeply interesting anecdotes of similar workings on the imagination of the Copper Indians (those of my readers who have it in their power will be well repaid for the trouble of referring to those works for the passages alluded to); and I conceived the design of shrewing that instances of this kind are not peculiar to savage or barbarous tribes, and of illustrating the mode in which the mind is affected in these cases, and the progress and symptoms of the morbid action on the fancy from the beginning. (269)

As the poet explains in the quotation above, the readings he makes on the effects of witchcraft in the savage tribes becomes an inspiration for writing "The Three Graves," and apparently he adapts what he reads and the results of this morbid action of witchcraft to his characters in the poem. Strunk points out that in Edwards's book, Jamaican Negroes' and Indians' dying, losing their hearts and pining away in time after learning that a wizard has casted a magic upon them are mentioned (201). The Oby or Obeah belief, referred to by Coleridge as an inspiration for "The Three Graves," is defined by David Punter as an animist belief ("Revising" 260). An animist is a person "who attributes a living soul to natural objects and phenomena" ("Animist"). In other words, animists believe in a supernatural power that controls the universe. An Oby curse is believed by the tribes named by Coleridge in the quotation above to have an overwhelming nature

(Punter, "Revising" 261). Similarly, as further stated in Hearne's anecdotes, in the belief of the Copper Indians: "[w]hen jugglers take a dislike to, and threaten a secret revenge on any person, it often proves fatal to that person; as… he permits the very thoughts of it to prey on his spirits, till by degrees it brings on a disorder which puts an end to his existence: and sometimes a threat of this kind causes the death of a whole family" (qtd. in Fulmar 47). The beliefs mentioned in the books Coleridge refers to reminds the curses' effects on Mary and Ellen, as they are similarly overwhelmed both physically and mentally by the curse of the mother. Moreover, the three graves belong to these three woman, who are participants in these curses either as the victim or as the victimiser. As mentioned in Hearne's anecdote, a curse may have fatal results, and sometimes these results cause the death of an entire family. As the curser is the cursed Mary's mother, it is possible to suggest that the mother's death is caused by her own curse; and therefore, what the Sexton narrates to the visitor, the ghosts and spirits wander around the graves at nights, similar to those mentioned in Oby or Obeah witchcraft.

Such inspirations from the supernatural narratives and folk traditions of particular tribes examplify Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief" by taking folk beliefs and offering a familiar tone to the readers by relating them to their daily lives. For instance, two commonly known facts are given in the following lines:

> Beneath the foulest mother's curse
> No child could ever thrive:
> A mother is a mother still,
> The holiest thing alive. (256-9)

As stated in these lines, in the folk beliefs, a mother is considered as the holiest thing alive; so, it suggests that her curse and evil prayers can actually come true. In other words, the emphasis on the mother's holiness is an implication of her supernatural power which is the reason how her curses actually affect the cursed ones. Therefore, it is possible to deduce that what Mary, Edward and Ellen go through after the curse is because of a supernatural happening. Punter, who defines "The Three Graves" as a phantasmal poem, asserts that this poem's interpretation in accordance with the psychological effects of the curse can only be an alternative reading ("Revising" 258). Indeed, when other works of Coleridge written in the same period, his balladries, and his use of folk beliefs or

superstitions in his other poems, and the poet's interest in including the supernatural elements in his works, and the Oby witchcraft's being the inspiration for the poem are all considered, "The Three Graves" exceedingly offers a deduction for the supernatural effects of a curse. As described beforehand, although the poem makes it possible to infer that the curse only affects the characters psychologically, it is clear that it does not just cause despair but insanity, disquiet and enmity among the three friends, especially between the newly-wed couple (Luis 181). As Hagen asserts, Coleridge defines a natural story in an unnatural way to reflect the supernatural feeling (18); and, unmistakably, in "The Three Graves" the poet uses the words 'spirits', 'ghosts', 'hell', and 'curse', thus he constitutes a supernatural feeling. Consequently, Coleridge's purpose is to write a poem offering a supernatural result of a curse. Surely, a supernatural event, particularly the curse in this poem, causes malignancy and function as a punishment for the characters who are obliged to face this curse.

It is observed throughout the poem that a jealous and a ruthless mother curses her own child, her marriage to the man that the mother wants for herself, and their friend Ellen. The cursed characters Mary and Ellen do not offend the mother, but still they are punished by her because of her envy and anger. Although he is not the direct target of the curse, Edward is punished with a disappointing marriage, guilt and troublesome thoughts. The characters, punished with the curse, are not accused of being guilty evidently, and, as a reason for Wordsworth's definition of the poem as painful, these characters are innocent. According to Stork, this is an immoral way of dealing with the subject due to the fact that innocent people suffer because of the mother's sin. Furthermore, the curse continues even after the mother's death, it can be considered as unsatisfactory in terms justice (Stork 317). Similarly, in an unsigned serial letter published in *Monthly Mirror* in 1810, the message of the poem is interpreted as follows:

> Does it not tell every envious old woman that her curses may be effective on weak minds? Does it not teach the young to encourage and foster their gloomy impressions, and to believe that the curses of the wicked are of more avail than the blessings of the virtuous? In short, does not the tale tend to encourage superstition and witchcraft, to discountenance the exertions of cheerful industry, and to discredit the happiness of a clear conscience? (Jackson 92)

As it can be understood from this letter, the innocent people may be subjected to undeserved punishments at the end of which their punisher is left unpunished, unjustly. However, as questioned by some critics, the innocence of the characters is ambiguous. For example, as Fulmer suggests, Edward is the one provoking the mother by laughing her in the first place; besides, as stated at the end of the poem, he has an implied secret desire for the mother. Mary and Ellen become the participants of this unspeakable guilt by witnessing this. According to Fulmer, Coleridge's intention in this particular poem is to present that the reason for the characters' being susceptible to the curse is the cursed ones' being guilty enough (47-8). However, Fulmer's suggestions are disputable, as they indicate that the mother is not totally evil, and the characters are cursed as they deserve the punishment. These suggestions can be interpreted as a struggle to create justice. Although the reason for Edward's misery, the reality of his nightmare and regret are not certainly known, the evil nature of the mother is certain, especially at the beginning of the poem. In addition, Mary and Ellen are represented as naïve and innocent characters, yet they are victims of a punishment which they do not deserve; or at least, there is no evidence in the poem which assure their crimes. To sum up, although "The Three Graves" is fragmentary and leaves many questions unanswered, the story and the characters introduced indicate certain outcomes. The poem presents an earthly punishment by means of the supernatural as the curse put on Mary and Ellen by the evil mother has supernatural consequences and the curse functions as a destroyer of the peace for the cursed characters.

In the works studied in the second chapter, it is observed that the humans and the beings in human form who have a sinful nature are the ones to possess the supernatural power. These characters abuse their supernatural powers and punish the innocent humans around them out of self-indulgent reasons. Although the punishment of Osorio at the end, or the plotline of the incomplete works "Christabel," and "The Three Graves" occasionally hint that justice may be preserved, due to the emphasis on the innocence and its victimisation by the evil supernatural, it is clear that the supernatural punishment does not answer to this purpose directly. On the contrary, most of the times the magical acts, curses and every other element of the supernatural are mostly connoted to be evil in this chapter. Although the punishments are different from each other and they include taking revenge, deceiving

other people for personal benefits or disturbing the peace, they all originate from selfish reasons and not for a good purpose.

CONCLUSION

The supernatural, which has been a part of literature since ancient times, enriches the literary productions thematically and widens the range of imagination for the writers. Also, it is a part of the folk beliefs as a result of people's interest and presumptions for the unknown. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, one of the most significant poets of the Romantic period, is known for his use of the supernatural in his works. While making use of the supernatural, Coleridge employs the supernatural to create some of his characters and also for some of his settings. Additionally, the supernatural in his works can be derived from the folk tales and superstitious beliefs. In order to secure the willing suspension of disbelief, which is required for the readers to believe in the supernatural by leaving their material reality behind, Coleridge uses the supernatural as a part of the visible nature. In the works analysed in this study, "The Wanderings of Cain," *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* "Kubla Khan," *Osorio,* "Christabel," and "The Three Graves," it is observed that punishment is an important theme for shaping the storyline. This thesis is divided into two chapters entitled as "The Supernatural as Divine Punishment," and "The Supernatural as Earthly Punishment," and in each chapter the mentioned works are studied in accordance with their different representations of the supernatural and punishment. With the discussion of the various ways of punishments, punishers, and their relevance to the various supernatural elements and practices, Coleridge implies that the supernatural is benevolent if only it is controlled by the rules of the universe or by a divine power; however, it is malevolent if it is controlled by a human or a human-formed being. Consequently, while divine punishment functions to reestablish the natural order which is disturbed by sinful people, earthly punishment is imposed for victimising the innocent people.

To clarify the difference between the divine and earthly punishments, in the first chapter "The Supernatural as Divine Punishment" it is revealed that when a sin or a crime is committed against the natural order or against the religious orders, the supernatural powers of this universe get involved in and punish the sinner. As a result, the punishments

imposed by the divine power are considered as benevolent due to the fact that they function as sentencing the corrupt human beings. For instance, in "The Wanderings of Cain," Abel, who is a righteous person, is murdered by his brother Cain, who is envious of God's love for Abel. As a result, Cain is doomed to wander eternally, which is the way of punishment derived from the biblical narrative and some folk tales. Cain commits a crime by murdering his brother, and breaks the rule of God, therefore his punishment is sent by a divine power, by God himself. A similar sort of punishment awaits the Mariner in *The Ancient Mariner*. The poem narrates the story of the Mariner, who kills an innocent albatross without a reason, which suggests the corrupt and sinful nature of mankind that is related to the Original Sin. As a result of this sinful act, the Mariner is punished by various supernatural means. He is punished by being left in a terrifying landscape with unusual creatures in the middle of the sea, with two gothic creatures who dice over the fate of the Mariner, and he is obliged to live with a curse throughout his lifetime. Like the setting the Mariner finds himself in after he kills the albatross, in "Kubla Khan," the description of the landscape suggests both a supernatural atmosphere and a divine punishment as a result of the corruption of the order of nature. Kubla disrespects the heaven-like natural beauty by building a pleasure dome on it, which causes the heavenly landscape to turn into a hell-like one. Hence, the landscape functions as a place of punishment for his disrespect towards nature. Accordingly, if the natural order is destroyed one way or another, those who destroy the order are punished by the hidden supernatural agencies of this universe.

The purpose of the punishment is explicit only in *The Ancient Mariner* as it is the only complete work among the three works studied in the first chapter. As it is emphasised throughout the poem, the Mariner learns to love and respect all creatures of nature, and has to tell this to the people he encounters until the last day of his life. However, "The Wanderings of Cain" and "Kubla Khan" are incomplete, therefore they do not have a conclusion; but, the punishments in these works can be inferred as the result of the chaotic events such as murder and violation. In common, these works have a didactic purpose, and the sinful characters tend to compensate for their sins and crimes. In "The Wanderings of Cain," Cain compensates for the fratricide by wandering eternally. Similarly, in "Kubla

Khan," when the persona remembers the Abyssinian maid's inspiring song, he is inspired to rebuild the pleasure dome in air, which actually is a desire to compensate for his crime committed against nature. Unlike the Mariner in *The Ancient Mariner* who learns to respect and love nature with all the creatures in it, the readers cannot find out if Cain meets God of the dead, or the persona in "Kubla Khan" attains his goal of building the dome in air; however, they become aware of the fact that their sins and crimes create chaos, they are punished by the divine power, and the punished characters regret being sinners, and they learn from their mistakes.

In the second chapter entitled "The Supernatural as Earthly Punishment," the sinful humans or human-formed beings with evil purposes possess the supernatural power, and in the studied works they punish innocent people by means of curses or practices of magic. Different from the punishment imposed by the divine power for punishing a sinner as a result of his sin or crime, the punishment of the innocent human beings by another human or human-formed being with the supernatural power initiates chaotic events. In the play *Osorio,* for instance, the supernatural power is a part of a rumour, and it is merely pretended; but still, it is made use of or imitated in order to punish a person since Osorio attempts to murder his innocent brother who loves and protects him so that he can marry his fiancé after performing a prentended magic séance. Although the criminals and sinners yearn for self-punishment in *Osorio* in order to be redeemed of their evil, they are not punished; rather, they cause the punishment of others. On the other hand, in "Christabel," a human-formed supernatural being Geraldine bewitches Christabel for an unknown but an apparent evil reason, as implied frequently in the poem. Christabel is punished by Geraldine's evil supernatural power when she is silenced, and the reason for her punishment is her trust in Geraldine in spite of all the hints indicating her evil nature. Also, "The Three Graves" provides an example of an evil human putting a curse on the innocent ones because of her selfish desires. The mother, who desires her son-in-law for herself, is rejected by him and puts a curse on her own daughter, her marriage, in addition to another innocent character, Ellen, who arranges this marriage that the mother is envious of. As observed, the punishments occur out of the evil purposes of the punishers, and as a result of a human being's involvement in an evil supernatural practice. Therefore, the

supernatural practice or mean serves to an evil purpose, and the supernatural activities offer neither a divine justice nor a poetic justice.

In the works studied the supernatural is presented as a means of punishment in various ways; as a horrifying experience, a curse, an extraordinary landcape which awakens fear and made use of in order to punish a sin or a crime, hinder and deceive people, take revenge, and disturb the peace. While the violations of the innocent beings are punished in the works studied in the first chapter, the punishment with supernatural aspects does not protect the innocents in the works studied in the second chapter; rather, it victimises them. Although in the second chapter some of the works still imply to preserve justice at the end of the texts, different from the first chapter, the supernatural punishment does not fulfil this purpose. When six of Coleridge's works studied in this thesis are considered, it is concluded that according to Coleridge, a supernatural power's existence in this universe can cause malignancy and benevolence at the same time. If this power is possessed by human beings who have a tendency to commit sin, it is the reason for the corruption in the natural order, causing a destruction, victimisation, or a chaos. However, on the other hand, the subversion of the natural order by human beings can only be repaired by divine supernatural power that the universe has. If a punishment is imposed by the earthly beings through the supernatural means, it leads to chaos as in *Osorio,* "Christabel," and "The Three Graves"; however, it leads to stability when a divine power punishes the sinners, as in "The Wanderings of Cain," *The Ancient Mariner,* and "Kubla Khan".

Consequently, in the works analysed in this thesis, Coleridge presents the supernatural as a means of punishment in two different perspectives. Apart from offering the supernatural as a manifestation of justice, Coleridge analyses the darker aspect of the supernatural at the same time. The most basic reason for this difference is that the poet presents the punishment in two different point of views, as well. While Cain in "The Wanderings of Cain," the Mariner in *The Ancient Mariner,* and Kubla Khan in his eponymous poem are punished by curses and supernatural experiences because of the crimes they commit against innocent beings, in *Osorio,* "Christabel," and "The Three Graves," the innocent

characters are punished by curses and magical activities due to the evil purposes of other characters. The analysed works clarify that while narrating the stories with the supernatural elements, Coleridge makes use of his imagination for its astounding and intriguing presentation of the supernatural, or contrary to this, for its suspenseful and gothic presentation. The poet differs the former presentation from the latter by his different representations of punishment, and accordingly questions the idea of justice.

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