CONCERNING POETIC CREATIVITY BETWEEN IMAGINATION AND ALLEGORY: ATTEMPT AT AN ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF COLERIDGE'S "KUBLA KHAN"

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Abstract: This paper explores the interplay between imagination (phantasia) and allegory across seminal philosophical and literary texts of the Western canon, contending that imagination serves a vital generative role in constructing allegorical works that gesture toward truths exceeding literal meaning. It traces the origins of this creative interplay, showing how Plato first mentioned imagination (phantasia) as polysemy and how Homer's winged words in the Iliad expressed dreams that became myth. While critiquing imagination's limits, Plato affirmed its power to shape fables and myths, conveying multifaceted ideas with his notion of "poetic madness," integrating imagination and allegory to explain artistic inspiration. This classical foundation can be found in later eras like Romanticism, exemplified by Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," a prime example of a polysemous allegorical poem constructed through imagination, transcending temporal and spatial boundaries. The sea imagery in the poem is interpreted as an allegory for life's cyclical nature and the unconscious mind. The paper emphasizes the crucial role of allegorical hermeneutic interpretation in comprehending literature, particularly in Mongolian culture, which often eschews practical concreteness in favor of metaphysical, allegorical, and imaginative elements. It suggests and advocates for adopting an allegorical approach to unlock a more profound understanding of the deeper dimensions not only in Mongolian culture and literature but also in literature and art as a whole.

I. Introduction

Concerning Poetic Creativity, there has been a long tradition of studying philosophical approaches to *Phantasia (translated to imagination, appearance, presentation, representation, etc.),* which originated in ancient Greece, usually connected with Plato and Aristotle. Although some critical terms appeared in the earliest Greek literature and thought, the word *phantasia*as is a concept that first appeared in Plato. Anne Shepard says that etymologically, the abstract noun *Phantasia* is closely related to the verbs *phainesthai*and *phantazesthai,* "to appear," Greek philosophers never lost sight of this relationship, using the word to refer to what appears to us or the part of the mind that deals with such appearances (Shepard, 2014, 2-3).

As the concept or the sense of "appearance" (*phantasia*; imagination; representation) in both *Republic* (381e-382a) and *Theaetatus* (152c), *Socrates* indicates and criticizes passages of Homer in which the gods are described as appearing to human beings in different shapes and goes on to criticize the deceitful dream sent by Zeus to Agamemnon at the beginning of *Iliad* (2.7).

> "So he spake, and uttered to him winged words" (2.7, tr. Leaf, 1911)
>
> Or we can see the same part in Alexander Poe's more poetic translations.
>
> "Fly hence, deluding Dream! and light as air,
> To Agamemnon's ample tent repair." (2.7, tr. Pope, 1899)

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Socrates points out that Homer's *Phantasia* is used above the discussion of views and shows that *Phantasia* (imagination) cannot equal knowledge in *Theaetetus*. (152c) In fact, from this beginning, the discussion of the *phantasia* (imagination) is mainly negative. Although Socrates in the *Republic, Timaeus, Sophist, Philebus,* and *Ion* subjected *phantasia* (imagination) to a negative critique, Platonic Socrates also remains means there included some paradoxical ambivalences and used the function of *phantasia* (imagination) role the reflection of a mirror (mimesis) of humans on a positive review, even making people *phainesthai* (imagine) one more complicated state, such as the allegory of Cave (*Republic*[514-519]). In the allegory of Cave, we can even imagine (*phainesthai*)more out of the Cave that sunlight suggests reflects images or as light appearances (*phantasmata*) and following Platonic Socrates instructions to explore and imagine the highest state of ideal and soul. These are all through associated images or imagination to imagine and accomplish supreme allegories and lead us to preternatural reality and truth.

Therefore, *phanatsia*(imagination) is just a single word that allows us to access or recognize the myth and depth of meaning in Plato's allegories, whether in Homer or Plato. Imagination (*phantasia*) is an independent perceptual process or a creative catalyst that constitutes polysemous and paradoxical ambivalence. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in sustaining the element of fable-allegory in story and drama, similar to the beginning of the *Iliad* and Plato's allegories and fables. Imagination (*phantasia*) and allegory provide a complex, rich variety of meanings. Imagination (*phantasia*) helps create and convey the fable-allegory, while the allegory transforms into an intricate system of meaning, leading to our understanding. It is analogous to Plato's Cave, which must first be imagined and then shaped and created into an allegorical, symbolic form. Ultimately, it is through interpreting Plato's allegorical arguments that we can realize and recognize the value of poetry.

Penelope Murray points out that Plato's epistemology of the poet and poetry is perhaps nearer to the true nature of poetry.

> Plato's attitude to poetry is neither simple nor consistent: when he banishes poetry, he does so in terms which suggest the renunciation of a sinful love in the interests of a higher good; equally, when he speaks of the poet as divinely inspired, that image does not carry with it an unambiguous respect for the poet's message. Plato's presentation of poets and poetry in his dialogues has generated an extraordinary variety and range of responses." (Murray, 1997, 24)

Following mentor Plato, Aristotle pointed out *phantasia* (imagination), particularly in *On the Soul* (*De Anima*), was crucial and essential for late thinkers, especially since it might be thought that aesthetic contexts are central to any discussion of mental imagination. Also, it is supported by Aristotle's definition of *mimēsis* ("imitation") of *Poetic Phantasia (imagination),* "which came to be expressed in increasingly technical terms as critics of literature and art developed their own technical vocabulary. Rather than simply talking of 'making you feel as if you were there' and 'putting before the eyes' critics came to use the term *energetic, 'vividness,'* regarding this as a virtue of *mimēsis* ('imitation') and associating it with literary and artistic realism" (Shepard, 101).

Quoting Penelope Murray's summarizing of the history of imagination might be more apparent.

> The history of imagination is the history not simply of a word, but of a category of mental activity whose definition and interpretation has varied very greatly from age to age and from author to author. As its basic, the term 'imagination' and its linguistic

> equivalents, *phantsia* and *eikasia* in Greek, *phantasia* and *imaginatio* in Latin refer to the image-making capacity of human beings. But that capacity manifests itself in a whole range of human experiences: in our ability to picture things which are absent, for instance, in dreams, fantasies, and illusions, in artistic creativity and invention, in the ordinary person's power to envisage the possibility of a better world or to imagine other life, as much as in the mystic's vision of a higher reality beyond the world of the senses (Murray, 1991, xii-xiii).

However, in European history, indeed, there were complicated struggles with this thought. Penelope Murray added, "In the rationalist tradition which dominated European thought from Aristotle up until the time of Kant, imagination is primarily regarded as a faculty which translates sense impressions received from the outside world into mental image. Imagination is seen as a kind of messenger between sensation and reason" (Murray, 1991, viii).

However, in modern usage, to imagine or imagine is not necessarily to visualize. Modern views of the imagination suggest its function is like a Mirror and Lamp (M. H. Abrams' book name); the tendency seems to depend on the situation, and it can be said that readers and authors are relatively free to exchange their stances.

Nevertheless, when reminded that one of the flagbearers of Romanticism, William Blake, had asserted: "One Power alone makes a Poet.—Imagination The Divine Vision"(Blake, 1988, 665), Poets and creators will especially enthusely embrace his manifesto. Imagination is still ambiguous in the Contemporary world; it still shows complex ambivalence.

In the allegory, ancient writers used the Greek term "allegorein" in composing and interpreting the text; the former is understood as conveying double meanings in writing. Despite 'allegory,' it is difficult to find out in the dialogues of Plato to apply. Moreover, the term 'allegory' is quite late, which is confirmed by Plutarch (1st/2nd century), who states that what now is called "allegory" was called "hypónoia" in the past. However, Plato uses other terms to interpret myths or opinions, such as "anigma, symbolon, hyponoia." Later, such as 'fable, a parable,' these terms were included within the meaning of the term 'allegory,' and allegorical readers used them interchangeably (Wdowiak, 2017, 213-215).

Therefore, according to the contemporary definition of J. A. Cuddon, the "allegory" of "the term derives from Greek *allegoria*, "speaking otherwise." As a rule, an allegory is a story in verse or prose with a double meaning: a primary or surface meaning and a secondary or under-the-surface meaning. It is a story. Therefore, that can be read, understood, and interpreted at two levels (sometimes three or four). It is thus closely related to the fable and the parable. The form may be literary or pictorial (as in emblem books). "An allegory has no determinate length" (Cuddon, 1999, 20). Cuddon's definition points out the allegory with "Scriptural allegory was mostly based on a vision of the universe. There were two worlds: the spiritual and the physical. These corresponded because God had made them. The visible world was a revelation of the invisible, but the revelation could only be brought about by divine action. Thus, the interpretation of this kind of allegory was theological" (Ibid., 22). Also, Plato has used "hypotonia," which is available to recognize as an allegory's synonym word nowadays.

Based on the above preliminary description, we intend to develop a model of the general imagination and allegory within the framework of literary theory. In simple terms, we can roughly explain what imagination and allegory are and how they collaborate and create.

First, Homer and Plato were among the first to mention *phantasia* (imagination) or create fables through "appearance" and allegorized themes. This model of imagination and allegory influenced later ages and gradually became an important literary device.

Second, philosophical approaches to *phantasia* (imagination, representation) imply negative and positive meanings. They mean *phantasia*(imagination), and allegory inherently contains the possibility of great creative power. We could say *phantasia* (imagination) and allegory interact with humans, enabling the creation and discovery of intellect. Or they allow us to imagine and understand another world by systematically exploring allegory.

According to such allegorical cognition and interpretation, Romanticism was the most extensive exploration and invention of the human mind through the imagination when we reached the modern age. Moreover, as C. M. Bowra states in his book *The Romantic Imagination*: "If we wish to distinguish a single characteristic which differentiates the English Romantics from the poets of the eighteenth century, it is to be found in the importance which they attached to the imagination and in the special view which they held of it. On this, despite significant differences in points of detail, Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats agree, and for each, it sustains a deeply considered theory of poetry. In the eighteenth century, imagination was not a cardinal point in poetical theory." (Bowra, 1966, 1)

Especially, as Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan," which connects the 13th century of Mongolia, undeniably reached one of the miracles in Romanticism. It seems *phantaisa* (imagination) became a single individual device creative through the perception of human beings. However, even though allegory in the ancient era emerged later than phantasm (imagination), and in the present day became an old device, Coleridge's "Kubla khan," as allegory, still is an important agent or medium of creativity through or with imagination role whole later ages until the present day. Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" shows how allegory remains a vital creative force when combined with imagination, even in modern times.

However, the author of this paper suggests that literary theory should focus on the account of imagination with allegory formulated by Plato. It is when he criticized the account in *Lliad* (2-7) where the god Zeus is presented as sending deceitful dreams of messages to humans. It could also be interpreted as a creative function in *phantasia* (imagination) and allegory. In *lliad* (2-7), Zeus sends the dream to Agamemnon, and spake and uttered to him winged words: "Come now, thou baneful Dream, go to the Achaians' fleet ships" (*Iliad*. tr, Leaf 1911). However, this dream and message of the winged words lead to various allegorical figures and motifs throughout Homer's story. Therefore, we can recognize Homer's use of imagination and allegory as necessary storytelling devices. We can also identify them in Plato's arguments about poetry and poets as components of *phantasia*(imagination; representation) used to construct the deep and substantial allegorical world.

We might refer to John MacQueen's definition: "For a philosopher, he [Plato] was uncharacteristically aware of the limitations of human reason and knowledge. Consequently, many of his dialogues include 'myths', allegorical narratives, or developed metaphors, which serve to image truths beyond the reach of the discursive intellect. Many deal with the human soul." (McQueen, 1970, 9)

Therefore, when we are discussing truths, beauty, and goodness or a new cosmology, we will not only focus on one of the essential Mimesis of imagery or imagination but should focus on systematical allegory with its latent theme, or its mystery, its secret, its unexpressed, unseen, nonliteral, or simply intelligible meaning and focus how imagination (representation) serves to construct a systematic allegory, and how allegory closer to the

truth and supply us more fruitful imagination and beyond imagination that as Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" exemplifies.

II. Allegory with Imagination on Wings and Dreams

Above, the part of Homer's narrative- *Iliad* (2-7), is noted and interpreted in philosophy and how the concept of *phantasia*(imagination; representation) first appeared in Plato. However, as a dream also appeared *(phantasia)* in the *Iliad* (2-7), it was part of a very mythical, allegorical, and symbolic plot. In particular, it appears the "dream" with the language of "wings" serves as a messenger. Still, both the "dream" and the "wing" are very symbolic, and they also can be considered symbolic keywords of typical allegory or fables.

According to Angus Fletcher, a definition of the modern allegory, such as the narrated part of the Iliad (2-7), is not limited to literary allegory. The definition also extends to philosophical thought. Indeed, Plato's many dialogues and narratives are similar to drama dialogue and full of literary phantasia (imagination) and allegories, such as in the dialogues of *Timaeus*, *Phaedrus*, and *Symposium*. The myth of the Cave in Plato's *Republic* is a particularly well-known example.

Angus Fletcher connects the definition of allegory to literary theory with philosophy by defining it in the following way.

> More important is the Platonic arrangement of the theory of ideas as a vast hierarchical construct, from lower to higher forms. By adopting the "principle of plenitude," the notion that an intelligible world would possess all possible forms of all possible things—as the effluence of the One—Plato answered the allegorist's encyclopedic demand for a plenitude of "somethings" by which to symbolize his "anythings." Plenitude also implied an infinitely subdivided universe, while it led to an otherworldly tendency within the whole approach to life, such that a Platonizing allegorist would always be happy to think of X in terms of Y, since this would achieve transcendency beyond the bonds of mere material reference. By questioning the essential value of material nature, the Platonic dialectic opens the way to a spiritualizing of nature, and in the case of Plato himself this leads to the use of allegory precisely at the moment in his dialogues when the analysis of nature has reached the highest point of transcendence describable in natural, human terms. At that point a leap of iconographic faith takes place, as in the vision of love *Diotima* gives Socrates, when the realistic and human drama of the *Symposium* gives way to a "conceptual myth," a spiritual diagram of a love which cannot be represented "in terms of" ordinary human experience. The Platonic use of allegory, itself allegorized in the Myth of the Cave, reaches a climax in the *Timaeus*. There, since the universe is not explicable in purely natural terms, its ideal character is permitted to surge up in a fanciful, visionary theory of cosmic order (Fletcher 1973: 42-43).

Fletcher's interpretation of Plato's allegory, that "the universe is not explicable in purely natural terms," is similar to Homer's epic: Zeus' "the word of wing" and "dreams." Both of them had the same faction through allegory, and in the beginning, the symbolic allegory had begun from Zeus' thoughts and story in the *Iliad*. Therefore, Socrates imagined the allegory of the Cave, which is allegorically interpreted as Gods Zeus or Homer instructing people, unfolds in inspirational and symbolic language as a fable-allegory to show the Idea and truth. Plato's allegories are not only contained as "*phantasia*" (imagination) seen in philosophy but also as spiritual representations of humanity or literary allegories of pure fables and parables. Thus, Plato's discourse has a similar role to Zeus or Homer's allegorical words, and the allegory directs us to imagine the Idea and world of truth. The

allegorical fable of the Cave is a lively example; in other words, it is similar to the concept of "wings," including the "dream," and similar to Homer, which sends messages to people as allegory. Thus, the precedent set by Plato may be considered archetypal from the perspective of the history of allegory in philosophy and literature theory.

If we confine our focus to the literary genre and its creation, Platonic Socrates, in *Ion* and *Phaedrus*, once again brilliantly delineates the origins of poetic creation and the creation of literature. Despite being an allegory, Socrates' allegory defines literature successfully. Socrates, in *Ion*, spoke of poets and poetry in a manner that has had a profound and lasting impact on our understanding of literature to this day.

> I believe, that the songs they bring us are the sweets they cull from honey-dropping founts in certain gardens and glades of the Muses—like the bees, and winging the air as these do. And what they tell is true. For a poet is a light and winged and sacred thing, and is unable ever to indite until he has been inspired and put out of his senses, and his mind is no longer in him: every man, whilst he retains possession of that, is powerless to indite a verse or chant an oracle. Seeing then that it is not by art that they compose and utter so many fine things about the deeds of men as you do about Homer—but by a divine dispensation, each is able only to compose that to which the Muse has stirred him, this man dithyrambs, another laudatory odes, another dance-songs, another epic or else iambic verse; but each is at fault in any other kind. For not by art do they utter these things, but by divine influence; since, if they had fully learnt by art to speak on one kind of theme, they would know how to speak on all. And for this reason God takes away the mind of these men and uses them as his ministers, just as he does soothsayers and godly seers, in order that we who hear them may know that it is not they who utter these words of great price, when they are out of their wits, but that it is God himself who speaks and addresses us through them. (534 b-d. Trans., Lamb 1925)

Here, Socrates talked to us about allegorical fable and symbolic "winged air," like a poet through "dreaming" to imagine and speak allegorically about how poetry is created. He argued that poetry is not created through technique or craftsmanship but through divine possession. Only through this divine privilege can one create truly magnificent poetry. It is a kind of sacred ecstasy or a gift from the Muse goddesses bestowed through inspiration, despite implying some satirical attitude with ambivalence here. Even if we can understand this as a pantheistic belief, it has already become a typical allegory, metaphorical narrative, or symbolic legend in the modern era. It points to an interpretive meaning. In other words, it encourages multiple interpretations, such as literal and interpretive meanings. It is because if we were to understand it in a literal sense, in the context of pantheistic belief, poets would be seen as "light, winged, sacred beings" who take flight through inspiration or madness, "flying in the air with wings like bees," and gather "poetry from the gardens and valleys of the Muse goddess" to bring it to us. Especially devout believers often speak of such spiritual phenomena.

However, suppose we interpret it not in a literal sense but allegorically. In that case, it will mean that the poet's thoughts and consciousness take flight, not only through inspiration or poetic madness, but instead, they become "light, winged, sacred beings," and their thoughts and imagination flutter like "wings," like bees, flying through the air. They gather "poetry from the gardens and valleys of the Muse goddess" to bring it to us. In other words, poets and bards, while being surrounded by "more than twenty thousand people" in the ancient circular theatres (*Ion*. 534d), have their thoughts take flight with their "wings" witnessed by others, carrying poetry from the Muse goddess's garden. What allows their thoughts to take flight through this inspiration or poetic madness is a capacity

for creating and imagining. Moreover, these thoughts are like those of "light, winged, sacred beings" capable of fluttering their wings. Simultaneously, it suggests or indicates that Platonic Socrates tells us various ways of interpreting allegory, just like Homer or Zeus taught us symbolical and allegorical myth.

Thus, the word "wings" in Homer, too, is a divine word, spoken allegorically, and can be understood as the substance or something that gathers poetry from the honeyed springs in the gardens and valleys of the Muse goddesses, bringing it to us, allowing one to approach and understand the gods. Therefore, in both Homer and Plato, poets who sing through divine inspiration or madness were praised as "sacred beings," their capacity for divine inspiration, madness, and possession was highly valued. Moreover, the poets' madness and the fact that it was carried by "wings" and celebrated through their poetry was significant. Socrates states, "For their words are true" (as mentioned earlier). Here, Socrates praises Ion and poets as sacred individuals and values their divine inspiration abilities as highly as those of prophets.

On the other hand, an interpretation contrasts with this, suggesting that Socrates takes a condescending attitude towards poets like Ion, who create poetry by losing reason, which contradicts reason. Additionally, some interpret this as an example of Socrates' irony or as a reflection of the ancient convention that "there is an ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry." (607b. Trans., Lamb, 1925)

Notwithstanding this, when Socrates speaks of the honeybee that flies through the air, it is as if he uses the same word with "wings" that Homer used. Socrates speaks of poets with "wings," which occurs where reason is absent, in a state of ecstasy or dreamlike words, which he claims to be the highest form of poetry. Therefore, Socrates' discourse on poets and poetry should not be seen merely as a product of imagination; instead, it is an allegory that goes beyond imagination and is created by elements of imagination itself. Imagination supports his allegory, forming a systematic and allegoric narrative about the creativity of the highest poets and poetry.

III Allegory with Poetic Madness

In this manner, literature depicting divine, inspired, and frenzied poets and the literature born of poetic madness has traditionally been defined with its origins in "*Ion*." It has become a traditional answer to what literary creativity is and how it proceeds. On the other hand, in "*Phaedrus*," Plato provides a more explicit definition of the poet's state of divine inspiration, categorizing it as "poetic madness" (inspiration). Furthermore, he praises this madness and defends it. Socrates states allegorically, "But in reality, the greatest of blessings come to us through madness, when it is sent as a gift of the gods." (244a. Trans., Lamb, 1925) He then discusses the four types of human good: "prophetic madness," "healing madness," "poetic madness," and "erotic madness" (244b-245c) and vividly describes the "third" type of poetic madness, known as the frenzy, bestowed by the Muse goddess, as an allegory.

> And a third kind of possession and madness comes from the Muses. This takes hold upon a gentle and pure soul, arouses it and inspires it to songs and other poetry, and thus by adorning countless deeds of the ancients educates later generations. But he who without the divine madness comes to the doors of the Muses, confident that he will be a good poet by art, meets with no success, and the poetry of the sane man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madmen.
>
> All these noble results of inspired madness I can mention, and many more. Therefore let us not be afraid on that point, and let no one disturb and frighten us by saying that

> the reasonable friend should be preferred to him who is in a frenzy. (245a-b. Trans., Lamb 1925)

In this way, Socrates eloquently employs allegory in his discourse with Phaedrus, praising the benevolent aspects of madness in art, poetry, and literature and celebrating its achievements. On the other hand, while affirming that there is nothing to fear about it, he also suggests that divine inspiration and madness can carry inherent risks.

IV. Allegorical Wings and Dreams

Indeed, in "Ion," Socrates describes divine madness and the frenzied poet as "light, winged, holy beings." He also mentions that these poets let their thoughts soar and take flight into the garden and valley of the Muse goddess. However, what did these flying wings, so to speak, signify? In *Phaedrus*, Socrates, while explaining the immortality and perfection of the souls of gods and humans, references "wings." In his interpretation, Socrates begins by saying,

> Concerning the immortality of the soul this is enough, but about its form, we must speak in the following manner. To tell what it really is would be a matter for utterly superhuman and long discourse, but it is within human power to describe it briefly in a figure; let us therefore speak in that way. (246a. Trans., Fowler, 1925)

He then narrates the famous metaphorical allegory of the "soul" and its "wings," shedding light on their meaning.

> We will liken the soul to the composite nature of a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. Now the horses and charioteers of the gods are all good and (246a) of good descent, but those of other races are mixed; and first the charioteer of the human soul drives a pair, and secondly one of the horses is noble and of noble breed, but the other quite the opposite in breed and character. Therefore in our case the driving is necessarily difficult and troublesome. (246b. Trans., Fowler, 1925)

Socrates says that all beings with a "soul" possess "wings," but the gods are perfect while humans are imperfect. So, what about the "holy" poets among humans, such as Homer, for example? It is something that must be considered, but in fact, the allegorical symbolic "feathers" and "wings" have been repeatedly used by Homer. For instance, when Achilles addresses the goddess Athena in the Iliad, it is mentioned that "he spoke to her with winged word and: …" (1:201. Trans., Murray, 1919). Also, as previously mentioned, Zeus is depicted sending "winged words" in his dream (*Iliad* 2:7). In the *Odyssey*, phrases such as "I spoke and addressed him with winged words: …" (12: 296. Trans., Murray, 1919) or "and with wailing she spoke to him winged words: …" (17:38. Trans., Murray, 1919) are used. These "winged words" are closely related to gods, dreams, and the words of the gods themselves. While they are thought to hold many meanings, they remain words of concern that have not yet been fully understood. In a sense, "wings" or "feathers" have been indispensable allegories for mythology and literature from their origins, forming meaningful symbolic allegories closely related to the gods. Socrates further explains about these "wings."

> The natural function of the wing is to soar upwards and carry that which is heavy up to the place where dwells the race of the gods. More than any other thing that pertains to the body it partakes of the nature of the divine. But the divine is beauty, wisdom,

> goodness, and all such qualities; by these then the wings of the soul are nourished and grow, but by the opposite qualities, such as vileness and evil, they are wasted away and destroyed. Now the great leader in heaven, Zeus, driving a winged chariot, goes first, arranging all things and caring for all things. (246d-e. Trans., Fowler, 1925)

In this way, the "wings" are "More than any other thing that pertains to the body it partakes of the nature of the divine." Socrates allegorically envisioned "wings" connecting the human soul, stating that if it is nourished and grows, it will be obtained "the divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and all such qualities." It can be interpreted that "wings" became an allegorical media, transporter, and bridge. Incidentally and interestingly, this symbolic allegory might be backgrounded by Hesiod's "*Theogony*" the concept of "wings" appears as the goddess Iris, also known as "And Thaumas wedded Electra the daughter of deep-flowing Ocean, and she bore him swift Iris and the long-haired Harpies, Aello (Storm-swift) and Ocypetes Swift-flier) who on their swift wings keep pace with the blasts of the winds and the birds; for quick as time they dart along." (266-269. Trans., Evelyn-White 1914) That Gods had wings and was considered a messenger of the gods or the message itself. Therefore, for poets like Ion and their poetry, "wings" represent something divine granted in a state of madness, equivalent to divine inspiration. As mentioned above, these "wings" frenetically send us poets, and "the songs they bring us are the sweets they cull from honey-dropping founts in certain gardens and glades of the Muses—like the bees, and winging the air as these do" (534b. Trans., Lamb 1925). In essence, it is an allegory that depicts poetic madness as the wings of imagination, soaring thoughts, and carrying back the poetry plucked from the Divine. The message of this poetic madness is the poetry granted by the gods, but it is a polysemous and systematized allegory. In contemporary terms, it can be seen as a polysemous allegory achieved through the imagination and inspiration of poetic madness.

By the way, this was neither an extreme phenomenon in ancient Greece nor were the definitions of Socrates and Plato particularly unique. Instead, it was a phenomenon commonly observed at the time and a common aspect of life. Faith in the Muses, as evidenced by the remains of semi-circular theaters, temples, and other sites in Greece (including Epidaurus), was an everyday occurrence and a highly widespread practice. Therefore, we can partly understand why Platonic Socrates' dialogues use allegory to tell us about truths.

The praise for poetic madness, imagination, and divine inspiration by the gods in the origins of Western art and literature, especially Homer and Hesiod, combined with widespread belief in them, had already been established as a tradition by the time of Socrates. In the Platonic dialogues, Socrates was the first to examine and attempt to define these concepts. As a result, his inquiries have had a lasting influence on Western creativity, from creating poetry, literature, and art to their appreciation, critique, research, and even styles of thought. This tradition, compared to Socrates' own theory of mimesis (artistic imitation), antagonizes or combines each other, is passed down through the ages and has fluctuated in prominence over time. Despite periods of obscurity, it has continued to be influential up to the present day.

V. Allegory with "Kubla Khan"

In this light, imagination, which has been highly regarded until now, clearly works alongside various images and representations, perhaps even constructing allegories and, in turn, shaping poetic geniuses and their poetry.

Let us look at Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," acclaimed as the supreme work of imagination, one of Romantic poetry. It can be said that it is not simply a poem constructed by imagination but rather a polysemous allegorical poem assembled through imagination.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 54-line masterpiece, "Kubla Khan," consisting of an assemblage of imaginative allegories, is highly esteemed in the English-speaking world today. It is considered one of the most mystical pieces of poetry, revered in educational settings and among the British populace.

The genesis of this poem dates back to a summer day in 1797 when Coleridge, seeking relief from illness, took opium as a painkiller and was reading Samuel Purchas's *Purchas His Pilgrimage*(1625), in which Coleridge of the construction of Kublai Khan's (1215–1294) palace. He dozed off and, in a dream, saw beautiful verses related to Kublai Khan's palace flowing abundantly. Upon waking, he hastily began jotting them down. However, he was interrupted by a visitor, and when he returned to his writing, many lines had faded from memory, and he could only preserve 54 lines.

The poet Lord Byron (1788–1824) recommended that this poem be published nineteen years after it was written. In 1816, it was published under "Kubla Khan or A Vision in a Dream," prefaced by an explanatory note recounting the above-mentioned circumstances.

"Kubla Khan" has been acknowledged as a product of flawless spiritual or poetic imagination or even divine poetic inspiration. Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) has emphasized the "demon-lover" of "Kubla Khan" and Keats' "perilous seas" as this.

> Remember that in all the millions permitted there are no more than five—five little lines—of which one can say "These are the pure Magic. These are the clear Vision The rest is only poetry. (Kipling, 1904, 263-264)

Kipling indicated three lines of "Kubla Khan": "A savage place! as holy and enchanted/ As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted/ By woman wailing for her demon-lover!" (lines, 14-16).

Considering this critique, Bowra said, "Today it is hard to see how anyone could give quite that praise to Coleridge and Keats. The lines are indeed wonderful, but they are not the only pure magic or the only clear vision in all poetry. Yet for nearly a hundred years, such a judgment would have commanded wide assent, and this shows how the Romantics imposed their love of strangeness on the world." (Bowra, 1966, 286)

"Kubla Khan" 's enigmatic content, structure, rhythm, and sound have been meticulously analyzed over the generations. Different eras have offered varying focus points and interpretations, resulting in accumulated research. Nevertheless, the poem remains mysterious and inspirational, continually captivating the hearts of its readers. Although appearing in a dream, the poem's motif refers to something that existed in reality but had already been destroyed for nearly four centuries before Coleridge's time – the palace and paradise of Kublai Khan, no longer extant.

Indeed, in the 13th century, long before Kublai Khan ascended to the Mongol Empire's throne, he dreamed that it was a beautiful palace. (Da-Jun Yu, 1997, 325) In 1256, he commanded a Chinese man named Bing-zhong Liu (1216–1274) to build it, which was completed in 1259. In 1260, Kublai Khan ascended to the throne, and from then on, he resided in that palace only during the summer seasons as a retreat for the Yuan Dynasty, where he conducted his political affairs.

The word “Xanadu” in the first line of Coleridge’s poem originally comes from the Mongolian word “shand,” meaning “spring or fountain.” In Chinese pronunciation, it becomes “shang-du,” and in Chinese characters, it can be represented as “閃電” (shan-dian), “上都” (shang-du), or “商都” (shang-du), all of which have their origins in the Mongolian word “shand.” Additionally, around this “shand.” there was a river known as the “Shand-in-gol” (Shand River) in Mongolian, which was the only river leading from the Inner Mongolian grasslands to the sea. It is sometimes called the “閃電河” (Shan-dian River) in Chinese. This river meandered gently eastward from the grasslands, eventually merging with the “Luan River” downstream, flowing south to the sea near Beidaihe in Hebei Province, China. (cf., Terenguto, 2016, 174)

The Shand Palace (Xanadu Palace), constructed along the Shand River, spanned a total area of 2.88 square kilometers, consisting of outer, imperial, and palace cities. It was an opulent retreat resembling a paradise, with rare animals collected from around the world, springs, rivers, surrounding forests, pastures, and hunting grounds. Marco Polo (1254–1324) briefly mentioned it in his *The Travels of Marco Polo*, as did Samuel Purchas in *Purchas His Pilgrimage,* and it is also referenced in *The History of Yuan*. However 1359, during a peasant uprising in China, the palace was utterly destroyed, consumed by fire, and the entire site returned to wilderness. Consequently, this palace and paradise, which had flourished as a center of power each summer for about a hundred years on the eastern side of the Eurasian continent, quickly disappeared like a mystery, fading into oblivion.

As a historical fact, it was not until 1836 that this story became known in Europe. It was mainly due to the translation of Rashid al-Din’s “Jami’ *al-Tawarikh*” (Compendium of Chronicles), a Mongol history book, into French. In Mongolia and China, attention to the palace re-emerged nearly six centuries after its destruction, and it began to be studied and preserved in the 20th century. Finally, in 2012, the palace that Coleridge had dreamt of was registered as a “World Heritage Site.” [1] (cf., Terenguto, 2016,174)

Why did Coleridge, in England, turn his imagination to an inland Mongol palace built five hundred years before his time and to a paradise already destroyed four hundred years earlier, with only a few remnants remaining? Attempting to understand and interpret this through the lens of mimesis (imitation theory) or realistic, empirical methods is nearly impossible. In primarily uncharted territory, Coleridge dreamed of this poem across vast time and space. To this day, it continues to stimulate the imagination of readers and vividly unfolds a distant, otherworldly space, portraying an inland mystical palace and paradise. However, intriguingly, it portrays the sea as completely absent from Coleridge's own inland surroundings.

In an intriguing manner, the sea is imagined and represented as an allegory in lines one to five and lines twenty-five to thirty-four of "Kubla Khan" as follows:

> In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
> A stately pleasure-dome decree:
> Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
> Through caverns measureless to man
> Down to a sunless sea.(1-5)
>
> Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
> Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:

[1] https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1389/

> And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
> It flung up momently the sacred river.
> Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
> Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
> Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
> And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
> And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
> Ancestral voices prophesying war! (25-34)

The springs and rivers of the Mongolian grasslands in North Asia mostly remain inland, with very few leading to the sea. However, the "Xanadu" River had to be connected to the sea in Coleridge's dreams and imagination. Even without detailed geographical research, it is not widely known that this small "Xanadu" River from ancient times flowed into the sea until today. However, in Coleridge's dreams and imagination, "the sacred river" runs "Down to a sunless sea" and "Then reached the caverns measureless to man, / And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean." It is a splendidly typical allegory constructed through remarkable imagination and history, with imagination as an allegory suggesting something or substance to us. (cf., Terenguto, 2016, 174-176)

In Coleridge's dream poem, why did imagination have to begin with the "sea," considered the origin of life? It might be reflected in one of the great writers, Joseph Addison, who strongly influenced Coleridge, had, in 1712, celebrated and depicted the River and Sea about Homer and Longinus while praising the motif of "Imagination" and connected imagination to the ocean as a pleasure that for the first time in British history. Addison expressed in his *The Spectator*:

> This has suggested to me the Reason why, of all Objects that I have ever seen, there is none which affects my Imagination so much as the Sea and Ocean. I cannot see the Heaving of this prodigious Bulk of Waters, even in a Calm, without a very pleasing Astonishment, but when it is worked up in a Tempest, so that the Horizon on every Side is nothing but foaming Billows and floating Mountains, it is impossible to describe the agreeable Horrour that arises from such a prospect. A troubled Ocean, to a Man who sails upon it, is, I think, the biggest Object that he can see in Motion, and consequently gives his Imagination one of the highest Kinds of Pleasure that can arise from Greatness. I must confess, it is impossible for me to survey this Would of fluid Matter, without thinking on the Hand that first poured it out, and made a proper Cannel for its Reception. Such an Object naturally raises in my Thoughts the Idea of an Almighty Being, and convinces me of his Existence as much as a metaphysical Demonstration. The imagination prompts the Understanding, and by the Greatness of the sensible Object, produces in it the Idea of a Being who is neither circumscribed by Time nor Space. (Addison 1966: 47-48)

Indeed, according to the ideal of religion in the Bible, the sea is created by God (Genesis 1:2-3); it is associated with the origins of life and may link to the Bible (Psalm, 107, 23-30) as a metaphysical imagination. It also symbolizes the abyss of one of the fourth Elements, a source that seems to absorb everything or belong to Aristotle's thought, which is kind of the typical allegory and imagination of origin. It can also be seen as an allegory that serves as both the endpoint and the origin and as an "Ouroboros," symbolizing an allegory of the beginning and flow of time and space. Broadly, Coleridge's The Sea of Kubla Khan can be interpreted to represent the beginning and flow of time and space symbolically.

VI. Allegory with Cosmic Dream

Interestingly, the Argentine poet and writer Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) was fascinated by the wonder of Coleridge's poetry, illustrated many sources and phenomena, and explained them as follows.

He said that instances of hearing the words of a palace poem in a dream are abnormal but not without precedent. Such as both the violinist and composer Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) and Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) created works based on dreams. Furthermore, the hymn of Caedmon, inspired by a vision as conveyed in Bede the Venerable's (672-735) Ecclesiastical History of the English People, might be the same as what Coleridge saw in his dream as "Kubla Khan." Coleridge dreamed it in 1797 and published it in 1816. Nevertheless, Kublai Khan's "Compendium of Chronicles" records, initially written in 1313, were translated and became known in Europe only after 1836. These records were based on a drawing that remained in Kublai Khan's memory from a dream, and they led to the construction of the Xanadu Palace. However, without knowing anything about Kublai Khan's dreams in the 13th century or that Chinese architects had built the Palace based on those dreams, an 18th-century English poet, in a sense, dreamed further about Kublai Khan's Palace and preserved it in poetry (the dream of poetry). Borges draws attention to the relationship between Kublai Khan's and Coleridge's dreams and speculates this way.

> The first dream added a palace to the real world. The second dream, which occurred five centuries later, was inspired by the palace and created a poem (or the opening lines of poetry). The similarity between these dreams suggests a certain purposefulness, indicating the presence of a transcendent agent across vast spans of time. Exploring the intent of this immortal or long-lived being may not only be futile but also presumptuous, but it is reasonable to speculate that this intent has not yet been fulfilled. (…) To clarify further: the one who had the first dream was granted the vision of the palace at night, and he built it. The second individual, unaware of the first dream, was given poetry related to the palace. If this construction of argumentation is correct, then perhaps someday, someone, centuries removed from us, will have the same dream on a night when nobody would even think that others had dreamt it before. Instead, they might choose to materialize that dream in marble or music. (…) Perhaps there is an as-yet-unrevealed prototype, a kind of "Eternal Object" (Whitehead's Concept), gradually entering this world. The initial manifestation was the Palace, and the second was the poetry. If someone were to compare them, they would likely realize that they are essentially the same thing (Borges 2000: 182-183).

Coleridge had a dream of a poem, and by possibly seeing the same dream again as Kublai Khan had once seen, they both sought to create something identical. It might be a coincidence, but both were constructing symbolic allegories through their shared dreams. Furthermore, as suggested by Borges, one could consider the presence of a metaphysical "invisible third hand" subtly at work in this.

Thus, since the poem "Kubla Khan" was a symbolic allegory, its sea might be an allegory of the life of circulation; it is either an abyss or palace, a source of life's depths, fulfilled by supernatural means and spiritual imagination. Conversely, it might even be said that it was simply a fantasy fueled by the enchantment of opium. However, it might be more easily understood for contemporary readers as messages have been sent from the world of the "unconscious," regardless of which interpretation is chosen.

VII. Conclusion

Here, we can recognize a grand allegory constructed through the power of imagination. Consequently, we can reaffirm how the most significant poets and poetry have been created through the interplay of imagination (*phantasia)* and allegory. This tradition traces its origins back to Homer and Plato.

Unlike the single metaphor or some imagination and representation, however, Homer and Plato lead the allegory and fable (including Wings and Dream) to depart from the world of sense experience, moving toward rumination, making us reflect, criticize, and speculate. Metaphor and imagination (representation) see and show some substances, but allegory not only sees and shows but also makes humans think; it leads us to imagine further and create the other world, thus often creating a systematically other world, even a world of geometric abstraction. Also, allegory is highly ornamental; it uses elaborate symbolism and personification.

Suppose a hypothesis is set up, and a symbolic and allegorical interpretation is given. In that case, one of the interpretations should be like this: Homer, transcending the time and space of his own era, began reciting "*The Iliad*" and "*The Odyssey*" by praying to Muse and through "*anamnesis*" to recall and recollect the past. In the beginning, Homer creates the stories and plots by suggesting a dream with Zeus' wings of words. In other words, in the beginning, the epic can be said to be represented by the word *"Phantasia" or "imagination," the Phantasia (imagination) creates a vast array of fables, allegories, and myths and is* plotted and constructed.

However, Troy of "*The Iliad*," which was the battlefield, was excavated about 3200 years later by Schliemann (1822-1890), revealing that it was not the epics of the gods but the deeds of humans. Plato, transcending about 300 years of his time and space, first time analyzed and criticized Homer, utilizing logos and dialectical perspective through *phantasia* (imagination) to create the fable-allegory that he, similar to Homer's narrate, has indicated his world of Ideas through numerous dialogues and fable-allegory. Therefore, dreams, imagination, and allegory expose the limits of human expression, but at the same time, they also indicate infinite possibilities.

Kublai Khan also had a *phantasia*(imagination) dream. However, he was not similar to Homer and Plato; he used power, was commanded to reappear, represented his dream, and constructed a reality, his dream's "Xanadu" palace. The palace was returned to a desolate wilderness a hundred years later, leaving no trace. Then, transcending about 550 years of time and space, Coleridge had the same dream as Kublai Khan; he put it into words and represented and reconstructed the "Xanadu" palace in poetry. The "Xanadu" palace was confirmed only in the 20th century.

In an allegorical interpretation, dreams and fable-allegory function as agents, recollections, or memories (*anamneses*). Whether representing the inner world of humans or messages from the outside, humans have always benefited from them.

Mongolian history and culture, from *The Secret History of Mongols* to its Heroic Epics and literature in general, including contemporary poetry and literature, is based on nomadic cultural thinking, a tendency to lack practical concreteness and reality materials. Therefore, authors, including readers, are pleasured by "metaphysical," allegorical, and imaginative, somehow, even more, tastes symbolically and "inductively." This phenomenon of tendency is mostly often the opposite of practical realism. However, modern times often tend to be analyzed according to the dominant model of Aristotelian analogy in literature, or at worst, through materialism, historicism, and positivism to understand and explain literature. Mongolian literature notably lacks allegorical and

hermeneutical interpretation. Therefore, the author of this paper suggests that embracing an allegorical hermeneutic interpretation can lead to a more fruitful understanding. We may unlock Mongolian culture and literature's more profound dimensions and substance through Platonic allegorical inquiries and interpretations.

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