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Blake's London: Times & Spaces

Author(s): Paul Miner

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# Blake's London: Times & Spaces

WILLIAM BLAKE IN *JERUSALEM* DECLARED "I WRITE IN SOUTH MOLTON Street, what I both see and hear / In regions of Humanity, in Londons opening streets," and in the bio-celestial atmospheres of "The Mental Traveller" Blake "travel'd thro a Land of Men . . . & Women too / And heard & saw [my emphasis] such dreadful things / As cold Earth wanderers never knew," phrasing which reflects Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* (a work annotated by Blake), whose extensive title mentions "*the Wonderful Things Therein, as Heard and Seen, by Emanuel Swedenborg.*"

"A WALK through London and Westminster, Or, *Serious and Comical Amusements for rational Minds*," an article published in the *Oxford Magazine* in June 1776 (pages 34–37), surmised that a "Otaheitan" would find London Town "a great and uncommon animal, where the streets are so many veins where people circulate" in "the heart" of the metropolis, and in *Jerusalem* (33/37:29–38) "London," "A Human Awful Wonder of God," a Man-City, declares that "My Streets are my Ideas of Imagination," while "my Inhabitants, Affections, / [are] The children of my thoughts," thoughts which appear "walking within my blood-vessels," "veiny pipes" or concourses of the Heart.<sup>1</sup>

In Blakean allegory it is in the "Exchanges of London," the *heart* of this English city "favour'd by Commerce" ("King Edward the Third" 2:30, E 425), that redemption takes place. In *Jerusalem* (4:9) the solar-cardiac "Fibres of love" unite "man to man," "mutual in love divine," for in "Eternity" it is possible to "enter / Into each others Bosom (which are *Universes of delight*)" (J 88:1–5; my emphasis). Blake took note of Lavater's statement that "Each heart is a world of nations" (E 599), and in the Exchanges of London in *Jerusalem* (24:42–45, 27:85–86) "every Nation

1. Blake's language word-plays upon a *vein of thought*, and his imagery deliberately revises Swedenborg's *The Divine Love and Wisdom* (par. 412), where the "heart corresponds to love," flowing in "arteries and veins," because "the blood-vessels from the heart" symbolize "affection"—which "produces thought," for "thought without affection" is "impossible." (Blake changed Swedenborg's emphasis, because Blake believed that "genius finds thought . . . & thought thus produced finds sense" [E 594].) All citations to Blake are taken from *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman, newly revised ed. (New York: Anchor, 1988). Standard abbreviations of Blake's work will be used in the citations.

walked,” “Mutual each within each others bosom in Visions of Regeneration.” Such hearts *reborn* relate to the earthly quadrangle of the Exchange, called the “Walks,” for its many porches of Commerce within were designated by the names of the nations (such as America, Portugal, Ireland, Norway).

Swedenborg, who greatly influenced Blake, stated in *The True Christian Religion* (Notes 809, 811)<sup>2</sup> that the *good* English after death go to the “middle” or *heart* of a spiritual London, “where there is a meeting of merchants, called the [Royal] Exchange” or the Walks. The “centre” of another “great city,” also associated with London by Swedenborg, is reserved for English miscreants—those “inwardly wicked,” and this City leads to an “open communication with hell” (a deduction repeated in Swedenborg’s *Last Judgment*).

In *The True Christian Religion* (Note 161) hell is accessed through a “grinding mill,” where Swedenborg sees an “arched roof above the ground, to which there is an entrance through a cavern” (a similar description of this mill also appears in Swedenborg’s *The Apocalypse Revealed*, par. 484).<sup>3</sup> The Swedish philosopher “descended” into his hellish space, and upon entering Swedenborg sees an “old Man” assembling sacred “Passages,” words “collected” by “Scribes” who then “copied them into a Book.”

In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (6) Blake as scribe “collected” hell’s “Proverbs,” and in *The Marriage* (pls. 17–18) Blake also speaks of a “cavern” of the Senses that leads through a “stable & down into a church vault” at the end of which is a [starry grinding] mill” (the heavens of hell). Blake’s topo/astro imagery relates to St. Mary’s Church of Battersea, where Blake’s marriage ties were enunciated in 1782. St. Mary’s Church had a vault or crypt where burials took place during Blake’s lifetime, and precisely next to the church, in 1788, was erected a huge grinding mill with stables.

According to the *Universal Magazine*, September 1796, the horizontal mill at Battersea was converted into a mill for grinding corn, and its stables were greatly expanded for oxen, providing a “separate stall for each beast.”<sup>4</sup> An engraving of stables, church and grinding mill (which had *louvers* rather

2. *The True Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1925).

3. *The Apocalypse Revealed* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1921). All other citations to Swedenborg are from works published by the American Swedenborg Society with date of publication cited in the text.

4. The mill continued as a successful enterprise. In 1808 the mill at Battersea had “extensive bullock houses, capable of holding six hundred and fifty bullocks,” animals in part “fed with the grains from the distillery”; see David Hughson, *London* (London, 1808) vol. v: 397. Note Frederick Shoberl, *The Beauties of England and Wales: or, Original Delineations . . . of*

than turning wings) appeared in *The European Magazine* (March 1804: 168), while an earlier view of St. Mary's spire and mill, a perspective from the south, is shown in Joseph Farington's *View of CHELSEA & BATTERSEA, from East Wandsworth*, dated 1795. The mill, which strikingly dominated the Battersea landscape, Blake potentially saw as the Mill of "Natural Religion," for the mill at Battersea was constructed upon the site of Deist Lord Bolingbroke's former residence, and part of the mansion, Alexander Pope's "favorite study," remained preserved (see the *Universal Magazine*, August and September 1796, and the *European Magazine*, June 1801: 268.) Blake unfavorably mentions Bolingbroke in *Milton* (40/46:11-13) and *Jerusalem* (65:8).

Blake was an astute recorder of what he saw and heard in London's Streets. Street cries were passed down from generation to generation, and the street-wise document of *An Island in the Moon* mentions the "pritty & funny" street cry of "*Want Matches*" (my emphasis), an enduring street song later preserved in Francis Wheatley's *Cries of London* (1794), where the print of a Matchboy is captioned "*Do you want any Matches?*"

Blake's enslaved "Little Black Boy," whose "*soul is white*" in *Songs of Innocence* (1789), finds his London street-reality in the quack Gustavus Katterfelto's advertisement of early 1784, where "A LITTLE BLACK BOY," Katterfelto's runaway servant, could readily be identified because of "*a little white Spot on his Forehead*" (*Daily Advertiser*, 22 January and 23 February, 1784; my emphasis). Katterfelto's "Little black Boy," from Jamaica, according to the advertisement, "sometimes" said "he had been stolen away from his Father and Mother by a Gunner of a Ship."

Despite the fact Englishmen cherished the concept of liberty, England enslaved its own subjects. Blake speaks of the "thousands" of Slaves who were "carried away" from "Westminster & Marylebone in ships closd up" (*J* 65:33-34), and Lambeth, where Blake lived from late 1790 until late 1800, was particularly subjected to impressments. In February 1793 the Press Gangs were "very severe," for hundreds of "seamen have been laid hold of," while some three weeks later additional ships were "stripped of their hands" (*Times*, 18 February and 9 March 1793).

On 12 January 1795 the *Morning Chronicle* reported that a mob in Lambeth, near the Obelisk, St. George's Fields, forcibly released prisoners from a Crimping House, after which "the empty Bastille" was chalked upon the door of the house. In July 1795, according to the *Universal Maga-*

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*Each County* (London, 1813) vol. xiv: 97-98. See also K. G. Farries and M. T. Mason, *The Windmills of Surrey and Inner London* (London, 1967) 50-52.

zine (August 1795: 732), a mob, protesting such terrible impressments, crossed Westminster Bridge and proceeded to burn the furniture of one of His Majesty's "recruiting" houses in Lambeth Road, a street running diagonally behind Blake's residence at Hercules Buildings.

At "Great Queen Street [where Blake served his apprenticeship] & Lincolns Inn, all is distress & woe" (J 84:15-16). Despite the fact Blake in his context is speaking of the heavenly tribulations of Art and Science, part of the *earthly distress* of Lincolns Inn, nearby Great Queen Street, was reflected in the "neat fluted Corinthian column" which supported "a handsome sun-dial" in the center of this square. Although the corners of this pedestal of Art and Science were ornamented with "four naked boys, intended to spout water out of Triton-shells," "this has been long out of repair."<sup>5</sup>

In relating heaven to earth the gates of Blake's "Rainbow," stretching from Hyde Park to Tyburn's deathful shades in west London, find their topographical analogue in the many gates admitting visitors to Hyde Park along Hyde Park Lane, an avenue that ran south to north, terminating at the Gallows Tree (which Blake equated with the Tree of Knowledge). When celestial Hand, Blake's evil adversary, opposes Blake on earth in *Jerusalem* (8:74-76), a mighty vortex appears "thundering" from north to south, from the "Brook of Albions River" (Tyburn's stream at the gallows' site) to "Ranelagh & Strumbolo," and "from Cromwells gardens & Chelsea / The Place of wounded Soldiers" (located on the mighty Thames).

Blake's "Place of wounded Soldiers," the Chelsea Hospital, was located across from Ranelagh, a tea garden which closed in 1803, and by 1813, the probable date of Blake's reference, the place was "All desolation," for the famous Rotunda of Ranelagh had been pulled down and the area "was covered with clusters of tall nettles, thistles, and docks," according to the *Monthly Magazine* (1 April 1813). (Earlier, the *Monthly Magazine*, 1 December 1805, recorded that the Rotunda of Ranelagh Gardens soon was to "come under the hammer of the auctioneer.") A "Ranelagh St[reet]," nearby "Strumbolo" Tea House, is shown on S. W. Fores' *New Plan of London* (1 July 1789), and Strombolo House, just to the east of the more famous Jenny's Whim, was opened in 1762—later to become the Orange Tea Gardens.

Slightly further to the northwest was Cromwell's Gardens, a tea garden described in *A Modern Sabbath or, a Sunday Ramble*, 1776. About 1785, as advertisements of the period confirm, "Cromwell's" was renamed the Florida Tea Gardens (adjacent to Cromwell's Gardens). The *Modern Sabbath*, 1794, confirming that "Cromwell's Gardens" became known by

5. B. Lambert, *The History and Survey of London And Its Environs* (London, 1806) iv: 33.

the "appellation of FLORIDA GARDENS" (84), declared that the Florida Gardens was the habitat of "numerous ladies of pleasure," and the 1797 issue of this work repeats the description of Cromwell's in the 1776 edition. "Cromwell's" persisted in name, however, and Cromwell's Gardens and the Florida Tea Gardens, separately named and contiguous to each other, are shown on the south west sheet of Stockdale's *Map of London*, 1797.

In rejected plates to Blake's *America* (b:20–22, c:6–11), a work which concerns the events of the Revolutionary War wherein America sought Liberty, the "cold" light of London's leprous moon is cast on "rational" sub-lunar "things beneath." (For the word "cold" Blake first wrote "gleam," relevant in that leprosy is a "bright" white disease [Leviticus 13:2].) In the rejected plates for *America* Blake contrasted the cold chaste "cliffs of [Albion's] snow" (flakes of leprosy) with America's "sweet"-scented "valleys of ripe virgin bliss" (*A* c:28–31), erotic perfumes after which Albion's Angel (as George III) lusted. Albion's Guardian Angel, in denying sensuous Liberty to the True Englishman, is enshrouded with "white garments [which] cast a wintry light," a leprous radiation complementing the light of the pale moon infecting London.

Blake's fallen moon of Pathos as a chaste orb casts snows of leprosy about the earth, and it is "Leprosy" which plagues "London's Spirit" in *America* (15:3). In *America* (c:7–9) "chill & heavy" moon-shadows as a chaste veil envelope the "palace walls / Around Saint James's," in part because warlike George III is Blake's licentious King of Plagues (recall that the tyrannical "Governor" of the Bastille in Blake's *The French Revolution* [24] is infected with "the purple [or Royal] plague," doing the pampered king's bidding)—and because the walls of George III's official residence at St. James's Palace in west London were built on the site of a sanctuary for women afflicted with "leprosy," women who "were to live a chaste and devout life" (B. Lambert III: 495).

The moon's cold melancholy shadows, cast by the towers of St. James's Palace about London's streets in *America*, extended "even to the city gate," by implication the ancient Gate of Newgate in east London. In 1776 the only remaining City Gates of London, guaranteeing the "liberties" of the City, were Newgate and Temple Bar. Temple Bar in earlier times was the "western boundary of the city" (Lambert I: 235), and this gate still displayed a Rebel Head on a pike (the second head fell in 1772). Both Temple Bar and Newgate were considerably to the east of St. James's Palace, and the shadows cast by the towers of St. James's Palace signify a *sub rosa* as well as a sub-lunar political statement on Blake's part, for during the American Revolution, in 1777, ancient Newgate was torn down and incorporated into the separating walls of Newgate Prison, where the king's felons

were sent. (For an illustration of the modest solar shadows cast by the towers of St. James's Palace in 1776, see E. W. Brayley's *Londoniana*, 1829).

Edmund Burke threatened in his *Reflections of the Revolution in France* (1790): "We have rebuilt Newgate, and tenanted the mansion. We have prisons [of Law] almost as strong as the Bastille [*sic*], for those who dare to libel the queens of France,"<sup>6</sup> which Blake did with particular vengeance—since Blake at about the time he was engraving *America*, issued in 1793, envisioned Marie Antoinette as pestilential Venus, the Morning Star, a star in the dawning eastern heavens that expelled its beaming rays upon Paris, just as the chaste Moon of eventide cast plagues upon the citizens of London.

Blake's moon in the west of the English night heavens (correctly, a new moon) cast its crescent blight *eastward*, causing the leprous towers of St. James's Palace (theoretically) to overshadow Temple Bar and Newgate—and on the *west* side of Newgate, the side on which the moon's leprous shadows would fall, a niche contained this City gate's famous carved figure of Liberty, on whose cap was inscribed the word *Libertas*. At the foot of the figure representing Liberty was a cat, the famous cat which belonged to Sir Richard Whittington—possibly reflected in Blake's "Antiquarian [who] seemed to be talking of virtuous cats" in *An Island in the Moon* (E 440). As Libertarian poet Blake was well aware that the French revolutionaries wore a notorious CAP OF LIBERTY, "when France receiv'd the Demon's [Orc's] light" from rebellious America (*A* 16:15).

In the streets of earthly London in *Europe* (12:17–18), published one year after *America*, Blake's miraculous Eye of improbable possibilities saw Lord Chancellor Thurlow as Nebuchadnezzar, a mighty monarch who "came against" Jerusalem (II Kings 24:10–11; see Erdman, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, 3rd edn., 216–18). Though King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face," in abject obedience to Daniel's "God of gods," a "Lord of kings" who was a "revealer of secrets," Nebuchadnezzar, ultimately, was "driven from men" into the wilderness, where he ate "grass" like "beasts of the field," his "hairs" transformed into "eagles' feathers" and his "nails" formed into "birds' claws" (Daniel 4:32–33).

In various caricatures between 1784 and 1792 Lord Chancellor Thurlow with his famous wig was satirized as a black-feathered bird of prey, as a demon with a bear's body and a barbed tail, and as a beast with the taloned paws of a bear, and in *Europe* Blake's Thurlow, a scapegoat of Georgian politics, is seen "Groveling along Great George Street [going] thro' the Park gate," fleeing his "ancient mansion," the House of Lords where laws of the realm originated. Great George Street, immediately west of Westminster Bridge, led into St. James's Park through Storey's Gate, and

6. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Gateway ed. (Chicago, 1955).

Thurlow's probable itinerary continued along Bird Cage Walk—which was parallel to an extensive grove of trees in St. James's Park, a shaded pathway which led to St. James's Palace, the king's official residence, where Thurlow resigned his great Seal of authority on 15 June 1792. St. James's Palace abutted St. James's Park—and Green Park, and in Green Park a further grouping of trees was identified by maps of the period as the "Wilderness." The *London Observer* (1 July 1792) caustically noted that deposed Thurlow would "retire into the bosom of [rural] Norwood" in the parish of Lambeth to "contemplate" the "uncertainty of human greatness"—and to compose and read "pious homilies," in order to "restrain the alarming progress of *blasphemy* and *fornication*." Thurlow was notorious for his constant profanity.

A contemporary recorded that Thurlow's "black eyebrows exceeded in size any I have ever seen,"<sup>7</sup> and Blake as a satirical watcher of London's fashions, may have taken note of the fact that the color of a fashionable hat among milliners in London in the winter of 1787 was designated "the Chancellor's Eyebrow" (*Times*, 31 August 1787). Thurlow's "voice" indeed came forth in "a kind of *rolling murmuring thunder*," like God's resounding voice on Sinai, and in addressing Parliament Thurlow habitually began with a "growl," after which his voice expanded "in a clear and *louder roll*" (according to Lord Brougham in *They Looked Like This* 265; my emphasis).<sup>8</sup>

The *London World* (21, 22 May 1792) protested that Lord Thurlow displayed a "fractious overbearing temper, far "too much temper" for his high position as Speaker of the House of Lords, and Thurlow's anger on his impending fall from power was addressed in a caricature, *The Progress of Passion*, 4 June 1792 (*BM Satires* 8104).<sup>9</sup> Daniel (3:13) specifically speaks of Nebuchadnezzar's "rage and fury," and Blake accordingly envisioned Thurlow's beastly form gestating along the streets of London, because *wrath produces nervous tissue* in Blakean allegory.

7. See *They Looked Like This*, compiled by Grant Uxen (New York, 1965) 265.

8. Blake's Thurlow, in desperate flight, flees from the loud howls at "Westminster," and in Blake's visionary passage Thurlow's "furr'd robes & false locks," his habiliments of high office, have "Adhered" to his flesh. Blake's Thurlow is confronted with the "louder & louder" trumpets of Judgment, in part pertinent to the fiery *loud trumpets* of Sinai in Exodus (19:16, 19), where the Ten Commandments were proclaimed. David V. Erdman has called attention to the sixteenth "Probationary Ode" of the *Rolliad* (1784, 1791), where Chancellor Thurlow, warning "every rebel soul," grows "profane" with a "louder yet, and yet a louder strain," for Thurlow's "full-bottom wig" (false locks) and his formidable "black brows" kept "the Peers in awe." ("Blake: The Historical Approach," *Modern Critical Views: William Blake*, ed. Harold Bloom [New York: Chelsea House, 1985]).

9. Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, ed. M. Dorothy George (London, ND), vol. 6.



Thurlow, with “very deep lines in his countenance,” possessed a “shrivelled complexion of sallow hue” (*They Looked Like This* 265), and the lineaments of Blake’s wrathful Thurlow, hence, generate into shrunken “nerves & veins . . . hanging upon the wind . . . [as] he drag’s his torments to the wilderness.” These distending nerves and veins are visible in Blake’s design of Nebuchadnezzar, issued as a separate plate. Blake’s Thurlow in *Europe* further reflects Erasmus Darwin’s *The Botanic Garden* (1789; II.ii.211–18), for in Darwin’s description Nebuchadnezzar’s “Dark brinded hairs . . . rustle in the wind” and “Clothe his lank sides,” as this Beast-Man “crawls along” (groveling) with “shrivel’d limbs” (my emphases). In Darwin’s description Nebuchadnezzar’s “brow superb” is “Prone to earth,” as he crops the “bladed herb” in the wilderness. In *Night Thoughts* 299 Nebuchadnezzar is a beast whose “Passions [have] run mad,” and this “proud Eastern,” like a chastised ox, will “graze / On Trash” in feeding his “low, terrestrial Appetite.” Appropriately, Blake in this design to *Night Thoughts* executed a striking Nebuchadnezzar, a detailed caricature of a dark-feathered and claw-pawed Beast-Man: presumably Lord Thurlow, his famous formidable brows abjectly touching earth. (Compare Joshua Reynolds’ portrait of Lord Thurlow, attired in wig and robes.)

In *The Book of Urizen* (23:27, 25:1–4) Urizen, Blake’s satanic Prince of Light, “saw that life liv’d upon death”—where “The Ox in the slaughter house moans.” A butcher shop was located at Carnaby Market, where animals may have been slaughtered, just doors from Blake’s boyhood home.<sup>10</sup> It was a practice to insert a stick into a bullock’s skull and “stir up the brains,” for the “purpose of making the meat more tender!”<sup>11</sup> Such scenes must have etched the mind. Bull Baiting also presented a frightful sight, where on one occasion the poor animal’s “hoofs were cut off,” leaving the beast on “bleeding stumps” to confront its tormentors (*London Observer*, 22 November 1801). Appropriately, Blake in “Auguries of Innocence” (E 490:30–31) observed that “He who the [castrated] Ox to wrath has movd / Shall never be by Woman lov’d.”

In Blake’s perspective Man in his pantheistic identity with all Being appears “Screaming in birds over the deep . . . & [in the] moaning of cattle” receiving their death blows (*The Four Zoas* VIII.110[1st]:19–23, E 385). In *Jerusalem* 58 chastised “Oxen” (undergoing embryonic development), slaughtered like the generated “Sons of Albion,” “feel the knife,” as their soft “Marrow” appears “exuding in dismal pain” (cf. *J* 90:19–22), while in

10. A sketch of Carnaby Market, circa 1805, is reproduced in Michael Davis’ *William Blake: A New Kind of Man* (Berkeley, London: U of California P, 1977). Betsy Sheridan in 1784 noted that Carnaby Market was “an excellent one”; see *Betsy Sheridan’s Journal*, ed. William LeFanu (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1960) 36.

11. See the *Monthly Magazine*, February 1828: 182.

*The Four Zoas* (iv.49:15–17) “spongy marrow” issues from Los’s “splintered bones,” marrow which does “Bonify” as Los undergoes the *slaughter* of fetal formation (cf. *Book of Urizen* 25:23–30).<sup>12</sup>

Starved dog and starved child suffer the same fate in Blake’s design of *Urizen* 26, and, as Blake knew, “A dog starvd at his Masters Gate / Predicts the ruin of the State” (E 490:9–10). Blake’s compassionate conclusion found its opposing philosophy in the *Times* (24 July 1795), where “the way TO PEACE and PLENTY” was to “Destroy all useless dogs” and to “Give to no dog, or other animal, *the smallest bit* of bread or meat.” The *Times* in this same issue extended this thought on the soft mild arts of poverty in its catalogue of “RULES FOR THE RICH,” wherein the wealthy should “Buy no weighing meat, or gravy beef; if the rich would buy only the prime pieces the poor would get the other cheap.” On “RULES FOR THE POOR,” the *Times* directed that unfortunate (and hungry) persons should “Go constantly to church” and “Learn to make broth,” and later the *Times* (23 November 1799) solemnly instructed that “*bare bones*” made nourishing broth. In “The Little [hungry] Vagabond,” Blake’s temperate “modest dame Lurch . . . is always at Church.”

In Blake’s “London” of *Experience* is heard the “Soldier’s sigh,” the cry of every Man (Everyman), the “Infant’s cry,” the sorrowful “Chimney-sweeper’s cry,” and the Harlot’s blasting midnight “curse.”

Blake in London’s Streets particularly heard the “youthful Harlots curse,” and these poor creatures of the heart’s commerce were often little more than children dressed like “Christmas puppets.” The London *Times* (10 May 1786) objected to the “infant prostitutes” who paraded in front of Somerset House, which housed the Royal Academy of Arts (note also *Times*, 11 September 1788), and the *Times* (3 January 1791) continued to deplore the “swarms of infantine girls,” whores “not more than nine years old,” seen “at the [wintry] season” opposite Somerset House. Similarly, the London *Observer* (4 December 1791) recorded the presence of the “*flocks of chicken prostitutes*” assembled before Somerset House. Whores “like limpets,” frequently grasped the genitals of their prospective clients, and the *Morning Chronicle* (7 May 1794) reported that “it had of late become a common practice for prostitutes . . . to plunder [by placing their hand in the pockets of] gentlemen who passed”—and then “put the money in their mouth and swallow it.”

Blake, in his dark moods, saw London as a place where “the *souls of men are bought & sold*,” where “milk fed infancy [like veal] is sold for gold / And

12. Blake had considerable interest in the microscope, and Benjamin Martin in *Micrographia Nova* (London, 1745) observed that the bones of the human fetus enlarged under a microscope appear “soft and spongy”—“bony Fibres, which are very wonderful to behold.” Such specimens were readily available through surgeons.

youth [as soldiers of war] to slaughter houses led, / And [virginal] beauty [sold] for a bit of bread" (MS version of "The Human Abstract" in *Experience*, E 796). Blake's language is more than fanciful, for the London *Observer* (15 January 1792), commenting on the times, protested the "MARKETS OF INNOCENCE" casually found in London's streets, where "several *Cyprian Shambles* (whorehouses as slaughter houses) offered "for sale . . . YOUTH, BEAUTY, AND INNOCENCE." Blake's allusion in "The Human Abstract" is to Revelation (18:11-13), where the "merchandise" of the Whore of Babylon ("Mystery") is not only "gold, and silver, and precious stones" but also "slaves" and "*souls of men*" (my emphasis). Blake speaks of the "Slaves [who] groaned along the streets of Mystery" (Babylon) in *The Four Zoas* (IX.134:25), the "Streets of Babylon" (J 21:30) which Blake envisioned as the Streets of London.

Blake's "London" of *Experience*, 1794, issued the same year as *Europe*, presents a profound and deliberate irony, for the dark "midnight" cry of Blake's street harlot, who was a virgin once,<sup>13</sup> in part echoes Matthew (chapter 25), wherein the "kingdom of heaven" is likened to "virgins" who go forth to "meet the bridegroom," for these wise virgins "arose" from their slumber, in anticipation of holy consummation. Thus in Matthew "at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." In Blake's astronomical "Valley of Vision" in *Jerusalem* (22:8-9)<sup>14</sup> there is a "*crying to the mountains*" of light, a phrase echoing the passionate "*midnight cry upon the mountains*" of the Virgins who seek Christ with their lamps in *The Four Zoas* (VIII.109:20, E 384; my emphasis).

The manuscript of "London" substantiates Blake's poetic equivocations in assessing the "midnight harlots curse" (E 796), for this important imagery of the weaving deadly whore, blasting the "marriage hearse" with plagues, was an *afterthought*: documented in that these lines in the MS were written in much smaller script, inserted between "London" and the poem that followed.

13. In *Jerusalem* (61:52) "Every Harlot was once a Virgin." Compare Thomas Holcroft's poem (published in the *Times*, 12 April 1785, and in the *Lady's Magazine*, April 1785) on the "DYING PROSTITUTE" in her "winding sheet" on a bier, a harlot who "wander'd many a midnight hour." Holcroft's prostitute, subjected to the "wintry storm," blasting "disease," and "curst" by morality, was "virtuous once." Blake almost certainly knew Holcroft.

14. Blake, in relating heaven to earth in *Jerusalem* (22:8-9), speaks of the "cry of the Hounds of Nimrod [The Hebraic Orion and his fiery Dogs] along the [zodiacal] Valley / Of Vision," a valley of starry Cherubim, the "deep valley situated by the flowing Thames" (A b:8). Blake's lines recall Isaiah (22:5), where "in a day of trouble" the "Lord GOD of [starry] hosts" is found in the "valley of vision." Swedenborg in *Arcana Coelestia* (No. 1292) states that the "*valley of vision*" in Isaiah signified false "phantasies and reasonings" (Swedenborg's emphasis).

Blake at the engraved state of "London" changed *smites* to *blights* to achieve alliteration with "Blasts," and thus, in its final version, Blake's lines read as follows: "But most thro' midnight streets I hear / How the youthful Harlot's curse / Blasts [like a fiery trumpet] the newborn Infants tear / And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse,"<sup>15</sup> a deadly vehicle with funeral curtains, where the dead body, which will undergo a spiritual *new-birth*, anticipates a symbolic "marriage" with God.

In Blake's *Jerusalem* (89:60–62) the regenerated "Burst the bottoms of the Graves & Funeral Arks," Marriage Hearses which belong to the weaving females in moony "Beulah" (a word signifying *marriage*). Such Funeral Curtains later are reflected in *Milton*, where the lunar female weaves an appalling "black" plague (*M* 29/31:56) as a "Woof of Death" (*M* 35/39:8) about the heavens, a Veil of Mourning.<sup>16</sup>

Blake's imagery in "London" in part derives from the blasting "trumpets" filled with "great plagues" in Revelation 8, while the prophecy of Elijah in II Chronicles (21:12–18) speaks of those who "go a whoring," for such "whoredoms" precipitate a "great plague" which will "smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives," causing a "great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day."

The Whore in "London" in her later evolution in Blake's symbolism is equated with Hecate, a threefold goddess who in Classical fable presided over the major events of the Life of Man: Birth, Marriage, and Death—from weeping infant in Cradle to corpse in Grave. In attempting to understand the Whore's significance in "London," 1794, it is important to recall that the generative Caterpillar on its Leaf in Blake's initial issue of *The Gates*, 1793, in the later issue of this work (circa 1818) weaves "a devouring Winding sheet" ("Keys," no. 6), for this lunar female as "Mother from the

15. In Hervey's *Mediations Among the Tombs* (1789, I: 34–35), a work which considerably influenced Blake, "relentless death" turns the "bridal festivity . . . into the funeral solemnity," causing the "marriage-bed" to become a "gloomy hearse," for, as Hervey states in *Contemplations upon the Night* (1789, II: 65), "the bridegroom closet" is "an ante-chamber to the tomb" (Hervey's emphasis). These quotations to Hervey's works are taken from *Meditations and Contemplations in Two Volumes* (London, Printed for John Taylor, 1789), Two Volumes in One, A New Edition (identified in the "Advertisement" as a "Third Edition").

16. In *Tiriel* (5:25–34, E 282) Tiriel's "four daughters," representing four of the senses, all except the *Sense of Touch*, lie dead in the streets, "falln by the pestilence," while others "moped round in guilty fears." Tiriel's "sons" also await a pestilential "black death," for Tiriel commands: "let the curse fall on the rest [of his children] & wrap them up together"—as in a deadly garment or a winding sheet. Also compare Psalms (109:18), where the Psalmist is "clothed . . . with cursing like as with his garment," a curse that will "come into his bowels like water" (my emphasis).

Womb" also is "Daughter to the Tomb" ("Keys," nos. 15–16). In "Auguries of Innocence" (E 492:113–18) Blake posited that "The Whore & Gambler by the State / Licencd build the Nations Fate," for "The Harlots cry [of commerce] from Street to Street / Shall weave Old Englands [Albion's] winding Sheet."<sup>17</sup> Thus, "The Winners Shout the Losers Curse / Dance before dead Englands' Hearse."<sup>18</sup>

In Blake's later allegory *Dead England's Hearse* is the holy Ark, which Blake envisions as a lunar orb—moving in its phases about the heavens. Blake saw this Ark as Noah's Ark as well as the Ark of the Covenant, Arks of generation and regeneration. In Hebraic etymology *ark* connotes *coffin*, and "Harp" music and "shouting" and "dancing" preceded the (moony) Ark of the Covenant, when it was moved from place to place (see II Samuel 6:15–16, 21; and I Chronicles 15:16). In I Chronicles (15:28–29) "All Israel brought up the ark of the covenant . . . with shouting" and with the "sound of . . . trumpets, and with cymbals" and "harps," and in I Samuel

17. There are many modulations in Blake's early poems that anticipate the imagery of death and weaving in "London" of *Experience*. Blake in a "Song" in *Poetical Sketches*, issued in 1783, speaks of the female's "silks [woven by a caterpillar] and fine array," clothing exchanged for a "winding sheet," since "True love doth pass away"—becoming a *dead body* because of the "wintry cold" heart of the female's indifferent lover (cf. *VDA* 5:21–25). Blake early on was influenced by Bishop Percy's *Reliques*, and in *The Brides Burial* in this collection the betrothed maiden undergoes a "chilling cold" and "pangs of death," whereat the "passing-bell" is tolled, as the bride's "arraye," caterpillar "laces of silk," is exchanged for a "winding-sheet." In *Corydon's Doleful Knell*, also in Percy's work, the bridegroom has "lost my true love," for the bride's "silks so gay" are replaced with a winding "shroud"—as her "corpse" is "wrapt in clay." Blake in a letter (10 January 1803) quotes stanza 7 of Thomas Tickell's *Lucy and Colin*, an Irish ballad found in Percy's *Reliques*, where a maiden, a "lily pale," rejected for marriage, out of despair becomes a "corse" in a "winding sheet," while the "bridegroom" (suffering from his callous rejection) is inflicted with the "damps of death." Compare the "damps of death" in "The Couch of Death" in *Poetical Sketches*, and note the "lilly pale" in *The Four Zoas* (11.34:28). Citations to Percy are from Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1858), 3 vols. Blake's letters are from *The Letters of William Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1968).

18. Blake in *The Book of Los* (6:20–23) denounces the "privy admonishers of men," those nefarious kings and priests who "call for fires in the City [of London] / For heaps of smoking ruins / In a night of prosperity & wantonness," an inverse allusion to Job (36:10–11), in which those who reject "iniquity" will "spend their days in prosperity and their years in pleasures," for Blake saw King James's licensing of "gaming-houses for cards, dice, bowling-alleys, and tennis courts" in London and Westminster as a plague-curse. Blake's language diametrically revises Milton's poem *On the Fifth of November*, which praises "devout [King] James" and his accession to the English throne, where "The joyous streets are all lurid with genial bonfires," where "In throngs youth goes dancing." Imaginative Blake saw this dance as a pestilential Dance of Death (associated with the Music of the Spheres), and Blake's point is accentuated in the fact that the formal ceremonies which welcomed James (of Scotland) to England as king (March 1603), after the death of Queen Elizabeth, were postponed until the following year because of the "continuance of the plague."

(4:5–6) “all Israel shouted with a great shout” as the holy “ark of the covenant” appeared, for the “ark of the LORD was brought up “with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.”

Blake engraved the Ark of the Covenant transported (Joshua 4:13–16), after Raphael's designs, for *The Protestant's Family Bible*, circa 1781, and in Joshua (6:4–6) Hebraic priests went “before the ark” with a “long blast” of their trumpets, at which a “great shout of the people” destroyed the “wall of the city” of Jericho (*Jericho* means *moon city*). Blake alludes to the transportation of the Ark in *Jerusalem* (22:4–7, 21:43–50), where Vala, the Whore of Nature, “in a golden Ark” is borne “before . . . [warlike] Armies,” where regenerative caterpillar-like spirits, “Bursting their [funeral] Arks,” again “rise . . . to life.” These weaving creatures “infolded in moral Law”—a bloody “scarlet Veil”—play on “loud cymbals,” as they shout “deadly cries.”

King David appears “dancing and playing” a harp before the Ark of God in II Samuel (6:5–7, 14–15), and Blake in a design to *The Divine Comedy* sketched King David with his harp, as he precedes the deadly Ark, an Ark which is surmounted by Cherubim and enveloped with huge radiating flames.<sup>19</sup> In Blake's drawing malevolent fires smite Uzzah dead (as in II Samuel 6:6), and Blake calls attention to this biblical passage in his early annotations to Lavater (E 596). In *Jerusalem* (68:49–51) the moony pestilential “fires” of the female's “secret tabernacle,” her “ark & holy place” (the Ark of the Covenant) smite “Uzzah of old”—with the *fatal blight of chastity* in Blake's intended meaning. In *Night Thoughts* 448 Blake illustrates King David playing the elemental Music of the Spheres, the weaving “spiritual” music that Blake associates with Thomas Gray's famous Bard.

Blake's weaving harlot in “London” finds part of her arcane genesis in Gray's *The Bard*. In Gray's poem the Bards weave their fatal music upon the heavens, and in the night heavens of *Jerusalem* (94:1–15) the “*famished Eagle screams*” over the “Body of Albion” on his “white Rock,” imagery which recalls language in *The Bard*, where the “*famished eagle screams*” upon the air, while Bards of the “tuneful art” reappear and sit “On yonder cliffs” (lines 37–45; my emphasis).<sup>20</sup> (Three Bards are illustrated on the Cliffs of Albion in Blake's 1809 design after Gray, analogous to the weaving Three Destinies.) In 1785 Blake exhibited a design after *The Bard* at the Royal Academy, and he subsequently executed several designs of *The Bard*. In

19. Albert S. Roe, *Blake's Illustrations to the Divine Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1953) 150–53, pl. 80.

20. An allusion noted by Molly Anne Rothenberg, *Rethinking Blake's Textuality* (Columbia, Missouri: U of Missouri P, 1993) 54. For Blake's probable sketch for “The Bard from Gray,” c. 1785, see Martin Butlin, “Six New Early Drawings by William Blake and a Reattribution,” *BIQ* 23.2 (Fall 1969): 111.

Blake's 1798 depiction of *The Bard* the gut-strings of the Bard's harp-loom, which *weave death*, are colored red and drip profusely with ruddy gore, for the strings of the Bard's harp equate with Human Nerves.<sup>21</sup>

Gray's Welsh Bard Blake particularly associated with the blighting harlot in "London," where *Death is given bloody birth* by weaving *fit sounds* into fettering *Nerves of Mortality*. Gray's Bard of artful tunes will "Weave the warp, and weave the woof" of the "winding sheet of Edward's race,"<sup>22</sup> playing visceral Harp Music of "dreadful harmony" (DC, E 541) in creating the "*tissue of thy line*" (Gray's words, my emphasis): to Blake, it is biological music which weaves a fetus into its bloody Fabric of Death.

The youthful whore's curse, which weaves its deathly fabric in "London," blasts the newborn infant's "tear," a curse that finds its additional correspondence in the "hapless soldiers sigh" in this same poem of *Experience*. The soldiers sigh of lust "Runs in blood down Palace walls"—"palace walls" which belong to leprous King George III in *America* (c:7–9). Blake early on speaks of the "palace . . . heart" in "Samson" in *Poetical Sketches* (E 444), and in the bio-astro equation in "London" the soldier's sigh (an exhalation of breath from the lungs) literally *runs in blood down the palace walls of the heart*, explained by *The Divine Love and Wisdom* (1892) (par. 420), annotated by Blake, where Swedenborg states the "affections of love," signified by the respiration of the lungs, purify the "heart's blood," causing it to assume a "brilliant hue" as it reenters the heart's chamber.

Blake speaks of the corrupted "Palace walls" of the heavenly heart in *The Four Zoas* (v.64:16), and the soldier's *sigh of blood* in "London" later is reflected in the "Blood" that in "whirlpools" drowns "kings in their palaces" in *The Four Zoas* (ix.119:5–8). Blake thought of the specific gravity

21. Blake's imagery in this Bardic theme also word-plays upon the deathly music played in *Night Thoughts* 107, in which "*Disease*," personified as a female, casts down phials of pestilence upon vegetating tree roots, *raw nerves* envisioned as "tender [musical] Strings of Life, / Which pluckt a little more [as a *Harp of Time*], will toll the [death] Bell," where "feeble Nature" at a "Funeral" perhaps "drops . . . a Tear."

22. Near the period Blake was experimenting with his own Bardic language in "London," the *Times* (27 September 1792) reported on the "MEETING OF THE WELSH BARDS ON PRIMROSE HILL," a "SOLEMN BARDIC DAY," for the Welsh Bards took notice of the Equinoxes and Solstices, while the appearances of the "new moon and the full moon" also were associated with "bardic, or solemn days." The Welsh Bards resident in London often assembled on Primrose Hill for Druidical ceremonies, and it was declared that the "English language is now, for the first time [1792] opened . . . and proclaimed a bardic language." The *Times* on 1 January 1793 again took note of the solemn "Druidical Gorsedd," while the *Monthly Magazine* in 1798 (Part I, Vol. v) reported on the continuing rites of the "WELSH BARDS" at "Primrose Hill," stating that these "Bards of the Isle of Britain" would "adjudge a prize" for the "best Translation, Into Welsh, of Gray's Ode, 'The Bard.'" See also Dena Taylor, "A Note on William Blake and the Druids of Primrose Hill," *BIQ* 17.3 (Winter 1983–84): 104–5.

of the sigh in his design to *Night Thoughts* 188, where a "weigh'd Sigh" on the Scales of Justice outweighs a King who holds a heavy Scepter. In *The French Revolution* (246–47, 290–94), a poem written before the composition of "London," "blood ran down the ancient pillars" of a cloudy "palace" in the heavens, while "bright infantry" (as Cherubim) among the clouds proceed across the heavens to the sounding "wind of trumpets [which] smote the palace walls with a blast."

Keeping in mind the fiery woven curse of Blake's Whore, which blights the infant's tear, and the sigh of the hapless soldier's blood, which runs down palace walls, another audible sorrow is heard in the hellish environs of London's opening streets, the Chimney sweeper's weeping cry: seen by Blake as a Veil of Tears that forms an appalling funeral veil cast upon the heavens of London Town. The harlot in the *MS* of "London" utters her midnight cry upon cold wintry streets, while the cry of the sweep in "The Chimney Sweeper" of *Experience* comes from a "little black thing" among the winter's "snow."

Blake in amending a popular nursery rhyme from Mother Goose, which he was fond of reciting, replaced the phrase "dirty whore" with "blackamoor" (E 498), and Blake's melancholy whore in "London" (*MS* version), who blasts the black-veiled Hearse full of dead men's bones, finds her allegorical correspondence in the London Sweep and his blackened Sepulcherbody. Blake's Sweeps of *Experience* and *Innocence*, respectively, are "clothed" in black mourning, melancholy "clothes of death," for these sweeps are "lock'd in coffins [or sepulchers] of black," *the mortal body as corpse*, a living-death possibly in irony of the Pharisees in Matthew (23:27) who are "like unto whited sepulchres . . . full of dead men's bones, and . . . uncleanness." M. Grosley in *A Tour of London* (London, 1772, Vol. 1:183–84) refers to the festivities of the "chimney-sweepers," who on May Day traditionally "whitened" their faces with meal and covered their heads with "periwigs," "powdered as white as snow" (a caricature of which Blake—after another artist—engraved for the *Wit's Magazine*), and the sweeps in their masquerade, according to Grosley, maintained an "air" that was "nearly as serious as that of undertakers at a funeral."

Significantly, Blake's Sweep in *Innocence* subtly is envisioned as a weaving Caterpillar, a creature regenerated from death. Blake's allegory in *Innocence*, issued in 1789, derives from Swedenborg's *The Earths of the Universe* (Section 79), 1787, as noted by Kathleen Raine,<sup>23</sup> where the seminal heavenly Spirits of Jupiter are envisioned as "sooty" sweeps who inhabit "the province of the SEMINAL VESSELS in the GRAND MAN, or heaven" (Anthropos).

23. Kathleen Raine, *Blake and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968) 1: 25–26.



In Swedenborg's text these blackened chimney sweeps harbor the semen until it is ejaculated for "impregnation of the ovulum." Swedenborg's planetary Sweeps in turn evolve as weaving caterpillar-worms from their cocoon-sepulchers, wherein they are attired in "new shining raiment" and become winged "angels": butterflies. They thus, as Swedenborg states, "celebrate their marriage" in the sexual "propagation of their kind" (generation as a form of regeneration). Swedenborg in *Heaven and Hell* (1885) (par. 108), which Blake in part annotated, noted in wonderment: "What can surpass the wonders displayed in caterpillars, which are among the lowest productions of the animal kingdom? They know how to nourish themselves with . . . leaves" and "wrap themselves up in a covering . . . as it were, in a womb," after which they emerge with beautiful "wings" and "fly in the air as in their proper heaven," to "celebrate their marriages."

Swedenborg also noted in Memorable Relations (xxxviii) in *The True Christian Religion* that the regenerated "silkworm . . . will fly forth and sport with . . . [his] companions," providing for his "posterity" (my emphasis). Appropriately, in Note 80 of this work, a Swedenborgian devil declares the "unlearned masses," who from a "desire to fly, love to imagine things above their bodily senses"—thus they are "like butterflies in the air," and their "faith . . . is like a silkworm in his cocoon, from which he comes forth as a king of the butterflies." In affectionate allusion to Swedenborg's text, Blake's unlearned Sweeps of *Innocence* as seminal spirits wash "in a [generative] river" of Life, and in acquiring their New Marriage Garments as winged Butterflies they "shine in the Sun" and "rise upon clouds" to (sexually) "*sport in the wind*": for they will "*never want joy*" (my emphasis).<sup>24</sup> Thus, Blake's blackened ambulatory wintry Sweep as a caterpillar in *Innocence* has ironic relevance to the weaving caterpillar-like Whore in "London," a harlot who weaves curtains about a "Marriage hearse"—from which Man redeemed will be reborn upon the heavens.<sup>25</sup>

The Harlot's plague curse that echoes "from Street to Street" in "Auguries of Innocence" (E 492:115) further is reflected in the mournful "voice of Wandering Reuben [which] echoes from street to street" in *Jerusalem* (84:14), for Blake's vegetative Reuben is an extension of the seminal

24. Blake's *connotation* associates sexual pleasure with spiritual regeneration, a frequent metaphor in Blake's poetry. Compare Anna Laetitia Barbauld's *Hymns in Prose for Children* (London, 1781), where the caterpillar which "spun itself a ['silken'] tomb . . . burst" into life and "sailed on coloured wings through the soft air," as "it rejoiced in its new being" (85).

25. There is a concerted and unintended irony to Blake's symbolism of the new-born Caterpillar-soul, which participates in the sexual act, for Linnaeus noted that "life expires" after the "moth and butterfly" copulate—though if this insect is confined "like a nun in a convent, it will survive many months." See Cliff Bush, "Erasmus Darwin, Robert John Thornton, and Linnaeus' *Sexual System*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 7.3 (Spring 1974): 319.

Sweep in Swedenborg's allegory, a Sweep of Generation whose plaintive "cry" in "London" casts a smoky *black plague* or funeral pall upon St. Paul's, Blake's heavenly Church of Generation that is portrayed in *Jerusalem* 84.

When "first descry'd" the 18th-century observer saw London "enveloped in thick smoke, or fog," a blackening pall through which the church of "St. Paul's arises, like some huge mountain."<sup>26</sup> M. Grosley in *A Tour of London* noted that smoke, rolling in a thick heavy atmosphere, covered "London like a mantle" (I: 44), and this Veil of Smoke was so concentrated that "black rains" literally fell from the heavens (Grosley I: 43). Grosley stated further that the smoke along with the fog "wraps . . . up [London] entirely" (I: 44), and that the "smoke of winter" left "a sort of black snuff" on the grass plots and trees in St. James's Park.

Blake in "then She bore Pale desire" (E 448:85–88) did not exaggerate when he stated "destruction hovers in the [city's] smoke," for indeed the smoky voids above London were so vitriolic that these *heavens* digested meat on a kite within an hour.<sup>27</sup> The *Monthly Magazine* (March 1815: 116) recorded that smoke was of such volume over London that it caused a tactile "solemn Egyptian darkness" to descend upon the heavens, in turn depositing an "unctuous mixture" upon the pavements, causing them to be "slippery." The "exhalations from sea-coal fires" were so deleterious that the smoke literally eroded or disguised the architectural carvings on Somerset House, where the Royal Academy Exhibitions were held (Lambert III: 468–69), and so blighted was the ornamental "filigreen-work" of this structure that it appeared like "the state of metal . . . corroded by aqua-fortis," a chemical utilized in etching engraving plates (Grosley I: 44–46).

Although St. Paul's was constructed with white Portland stone, stated Grosley, the structure seemed "to be built with coal." The "parts most exposed to the rain," however, retained "some degree of their first whiteness" (I: 45–56), and Sophie v. la Roche in 1786 observed that the "Rain and coal-smoke" affected "large portions" of St. Paul's, the former "keeping patches" of it "quite white . . . while the latter coats it with black crust, making it difficult to distinguish some of the finest statuary."<sup>28</sup> A French traveler in his *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain, During the Years 1810 and 1811* (1815, 17–18) declared that as he entered London from Hyde

26. See letter, 1 June 1782, in Carl Philip Moritz's *Travels, Chiefly on Foot, through Several Parts of England in 1782*, trans. from the German by a Lady (London, 1795) 25.

27. See *An Eighteenth-Century Journal, Being a Record of the Years 1774–1776*, compiled by John Hampden (London, 1940) 221.

28. See Sophie v. la Roche, *Sophie in London, 1786*, trans. by Clare William (London, 1933) 125–26. For an enumeration of the carvings on Somerset House, see Lambert III: 468–69.

Park Corner, in west London, he was confronted with a “maze of busy, smoky, dirty streets,” and as he approached mountainous St. Paul’s church to the east he noticed that this high edifice presented a very “strange” color, “very black and very white, in patches which envelop sometimes a column; the base of one, the capital of another;—there, a whole row quite black,—there, as white as chalk.” The cause of this discoloration was London’s pall of smoke, a mantle so dense the air was “loaded with small flakes of smoke . . . a sort of flower [*sic*] of soot, so light as to float without falling,” a “black snow” that “sticks to your clothes” or “lights on your face” (38).

In Genesis (11:3–4 and gloss) Babel was a “Mighty Temple,” a tower of black bricks burned “to a burning,” whose “top may reach heaven.” In *Jerusalem* (24:29–33) Blake speaks of the black “Wall of Babylon” composed of the “Souls of Men,” recalling the Whore of Babylon who possesses the “souls of men” in Revelation (18:13). In *Jerusalem* (45/31:10–12) these souls are “bak’d / In [stellar] bricks,” for Babel’s “Towers are the Miseries of once happy families,” *constellations as sorrowful Specters of the Dead imprisoned in the heavens*. The seminal “Ungenerate” walk within Blake’s heavenly “Mighty Temple” of “confusion,” the etymological meaning of Babel (*J* 58:21–28), for “Babel” has “a thousand [confused] tongues,” as Blake notes in “then She bore Pale desire” (E 446:13).

Blake’s black halls of generation also are relevant to the high heavenly dome of blackened St. Paul’s. Blake’s inventive design of *Theotormon woven* illustrates celestial females with generative spindles, and these Daughters of Albion weave mournful Theotormon’s fetal veins before the threshold and three heaven-aspiring domes of St. Paul’s. Blake’s vein-weaving females also appear above St. Paul’s in a heavenly “World of Generation” in plate 57 of *Jerusalem*. In Night the Second of *The Four Zoas* (29:9–42) this archetypal Tabernacle, a celestial universe, possesses “three Central Domes” (a *triple* Tabernacle), “twelve bright [zodiacal] halls,” and “twelve steps . . . erected at the chief entrance.” Blake’s *twelfefold* halls are clarified by St. Paul’s architectural floor plan—where twelve halls emanate from beneath the central major dome. Although the principal west portico of St. Paul’s, the “Grand Entrance” facing Ludgate Street, had 22 black marble steps, the north portico had an ascent of 12 steps, while the south portico, being lower, had 25 steps (see *The Picture of London for 1803* [London, published by R. Phillips, 1803] 35).

In “London” Blake’s whore weaves plagues about the “marriage hearse,” a womb/winding sheet which contains a fetus/lover/corpse, and such a theme is explored in Blake’s cryptic “ancient Proverb” (E 475): “Remove away that blackning church [St. Paul’s] / Remove away that marriage hearse [the deadly veiled Ark] / Remove away that [place *del*] of

blood / Youll quite remove the ancient curse [of chastity].”<sup>29</sup> The “blackning church” of St. Paul’s, erroneously, was believed to have been built on the site of a Roman altar of sacrifice dedicated to Diana, the lunar Goddess of Chastity. In addressing the ancient *Sin of Chastity* in *The Four Zoas* (VIII.1098:10–14, E 383) sorrowing Albion, in gnomic derision, asks: “Will you seek *pleasure* from the *festering wound* [the female’s lubricating tissues] or marry for a Wife / The ancient Leprosy”? And the latitude of Albion’s plaintive question finds its allusion in *Samson Agonistes* (185–86) where the Chorus speaks of the “Balm” applied to “*fester’d wounds*” (my emphasis).

A poem by “W. Whitehead, Poet Laureate,” on “THE [CHIMNEY] SWEEPERS” in the *Wit’s Magazine* for January 1784 (an edition in which Blake engraved a plate after Thomas Stothard) implores the “kind churchwardens!” to take the Sweep’s “meagre limbs / Shivering with cold and age, and wrap them warm / In those blest mansions” that “Charity rais’d.” But Blake decidedly knew the “Church . . . [was] cold,” and Blake’s little black sweep of *Experience* laments: “because I am happy & dance & sing” on May Day, “They [of State Religion] think they have done me no injury.” In irony, the parents of the poor Sweep have “gone up” to the (blackening) “Church to pray” in acknowledgement of “God & his Priest & King,” the unholy trinity of State Religion, who “*make up a heaven of our* [the Sweep’s] *misery*” (my emphasis): an appalling Garment or Veil of Starry Miseries.

Blake’s “sleeping” (dreaming) Sweep is Bunyan’s Christian with a pack on his back, seeking salvation on his way to heaven, a figure touchingly seen in his miniscule form in the “C” of the “The Chimney Sweeper” in *Innocence*. Just as the corpulent Belly-God priest “wraps himself [up] / In [the succulent] fat of lambs” in *America* (11:15), in a more terrible sense in “The Chimney Sweeper” of *Experience* (MS version) “God & . . . Priest & King . . . *wrap themselves up*” in the “*misery*” of the Sweep (my emphasis): a woven Garment of Morality, where the hell of the little black Sweep’s raiment is made into a false heaven. The fair ringlets of the Sweep of *Inno-*

29. Blake’s regenerating “marriage hearse” of “London,” with its funeral veils, contains the spectrous dead body of love, and Blake’s “place of blood” relates to the “*place of the blood*” of the “trespass offering” in Leviticus (14:28). In Hebrews (10:3–4, 11–12, 25) this bloody place of sacrifice was the “Holiest [place] of all,” within the “second veil,” located in the Tabernacle where was the (moony) “Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold,” a “holy place” where the “blood” of sacrifice was sprinkled (Hebrews 9:3–5, 7). Blake in his MS “ancient Proverb” changed the “*place of blood*” to “*man of blood*,” a revision which relates to the moralizing priest of the Tabernacle: who at the “sin offering” dipped his (phallic) finger into the blood of sacrifice and sprinkled it upon the (vaginal) altar before the “veil of the sanctuary” and the “mercy seat” of the Ark of the Covenant (Leviticus 4:1–7; my emphasis). Significantly, Christ as a compassionate High Priest in Hebrews sexually rends the (starry) Veil of the Tabernacle, an act that permitted Man to commune directly with God.

*cence*, likened to the “curl’d” wool of a “lambs back,” are “shav’d” because of his sooty trade, language utilized further by Blake in “An answer to the parson,” written on the same manuscript page as “The Chimney Sweeper” of *Innocence*: “Why of the sheep do you not learn peace / Because I dont want you to shear my fleece” (E 469). And Blake’s phrasing is pertinent in that “the first of the fleece of thy sheep” was allocated to the Hebraic priest of the Tabernacle (Deuteronomy 18:4).

The hypocritical enwrapping Garment of Heaven made from the Sweep’s terrible Misery is analogous to the funeral curtains woven by the harlot in “London,” a weaving which in *Milton* (29/31:55–65) becomes a “veil of human miseries” (my emphasis): the moon’s chaste Veil of Stars (see the constellations as a heavenly *Family of Miseries* in *Jerusalem* 24:32). In Blake’s later symbolism the generative “Distaff & Spindle in the hands of [deadly] Vala” weave a “Flax of / Human Miseries” (J 64:31–33), a cosmic Veil. In the text of *Milton* this visceral “Woof of Death” as a *Garment of Stars* expands “over the Ocean / From the Atlantic to the Great South Sea, the Erythrean” (denominated as a “great Southern Sea,” located “south of India,” in Jacob Bryant’s *Ancient Mythology*.<sup>30</sup> This sea, as its name indicates, is a Sea of Blood.

In *The Four Zoas* (VI.71[2nd]:37) Blake’s satanic Prince of light “wrapd in his death clothes” (a garment of the revolving heavens) is reflected on earth in the Chimney Sweeper’s “clothes of death” in *Experience* (my emphasis). In “Holy Thursday” of *Innocence* and *Experience* the “misery” of the little ones of Albion again is made into a hellish “Heaven,” for in irony the poor Charity Children in “Holy Thursday” are envisioned as singing “Cherubim” (deleted in the MS, E 850), divine creatures who “flow” into the celestial “high [womb-like] dome of Paul’s . . . like [generative] Thames waters”: in Blake’s context, flaming seminal stars winding into the opening heavens above London Town (cf. J 45/31:17–20 and J 87:19–20).

The Charity Children of “Holy Thursday” of *Innocence* like waters of the Thames flow wave on wave into the “dome of [St.] Paul’s,” for in this expanding heaven the innocents sing as a “multitude [of] . . . harmonious thunderings,” lines further emulating Revelation (19:6–9) where the “voice of a great multitude” is heard, “a voice of many waters, and . . . mighty thunderings, saying Alleluia.” Blake’s allusion is particularly ironic, for the *watery voices* in the text of Revelation (19:7) “rejoice” in anticipation of the spiritual-sexual “marriage supper of the Lamb” and his Bride.

30. Jacob Bryant, *A New System or, An Analysis of Ancient Mythology* (London, 1776) III: 186–88.

In Blake's "Holy Thursday" of *Innocence* the Charity Children of London stand like "angels" (deleted in *MS*, E 850) upon scaffolding constructed beneath the dome of St. Paul's, and in "Holy Thursday" of *Experience* the marshaled Charity Children also ascend into the "heavens" of St. Paul's. These innocent children sing their "trembling cry" (my emphasis) to a God afar off (another "cry" heard in the opening spaces of London Town), and in Blake's poem the "ways" of these children will be "fill'd with thorns," bitter language which Blake derives from Hosea (2:4–6)—where no mercy will be shown the "children of whoredoms," for the Lord will "hedge up thy way with thorns," "nettles shall possess them," and "thorns shall be in their tabernacles" (Hosea 9:6).<sup>31</sup> Appropriately, Catherine Blake drew briars around the design of "Holy Thursday" of *Experience* (Copy Y), and in *Jerusalem* (45/31:63–65) Blake specifically mentions these unfortunate "children of whoredoms," where these offspring are sacrificed as the "meat & drink / Offering" in the Tabernacle (my emphasis). Blackened St. Paul's, in Blake's diabolical double vision, becomes that great Whorehouse in the Sky, for as Blake clarifies in *The Marriage* (pl. 8): "Brothels [are built] with the [moral] bricks of Religion."<sup>32</sup>

As contemporary newspaper accounts document, under the dome of St. Paul's the Charity Children frequently sang the 104th Psalm (see *Times*, 3 June 1788 and 24 April 1789), where the Lord is "clothed with honor and majesty," for he "coveredest thyself with light as with a [starry] garment" of the "deep" (which Blake turns into a *Garment of Miseries*), and in Psalms the Lord also "maketh his angels spirits" and his "ministers a flaming fire." Blake in irony alludes to the 104th Psalm in *The Four Zoas*, where the poverty-stricken "children of the elemental worlds in harmony," inflicted with cold "wintry woes" (like Blake's fallen Children of Whoredoms subjected to an "eternal winter" in "Holy Thursday" of *Experience*), are "driven into the Void" of heaven, where in an "Enormous [sexual] Revelry" the

31. In "Holy Thursday" of *Experience* the "sun does never shine, and Blake's imagery contrasts ironically with Barbauld's *Hymns in Prose for Children*, where "Heaven" is "a land, where the roses are without thorns" and the "flowers are not mixed with brambles," a land of "eternal spring, and light" where "Myriad of happy spirits . . . surround the throne of God with a perpetual hymn," while "angels . . . sing praises continually, and the cherubim fly on wings of fire" (91–92). (Note the "Roses" which are "planted" in the chaste heavens, "where thorns grow" in *The Marriage* [2:6].)

32. John E. Grant has noted that Blake in *Night Thoughts* 261 pictorially alludes to one of the Temptations of Christ, where Satan, raging in a mandala-flame of fire, shows Christ "all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time (Luke 4:5). The text to the design of *Night Thoughts* speaks of "tall Temples" which "meet their Gods" as they "Ascend the skies," and in the lower right-hand corner Blake—in contempt of State Religion—ever so lightly drew a miniature St. Paul's, an *edifice of Satan's Kingdom* to Blake's interpretation. (Grant, *Blake and His Bibles*, ed. David V. Erdman (West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill P, 1990).

“Spirits of Flaming fire on high” govern “the mighty song” of the Music of the Spheres (FZ I.13:20, 14:1–5).

Just as the cries of the Whore and Sweep in “London” cast a black pall upon the Church of State Religion so also the trembling tonal “cry” of the multitudinous poor “Babes” in “Holy Thursday” of *Experience* weaves upon the atmospheres—for their fierce “hunger” does “*the mind appall*” (my emphasis), as at a funeral where a shroud is woven upon the Mundane Shell of the Brain, closing it in a black woof.<sup>33</sup> Blake also utilizes this imagery in the Grey Monk” [E 489:17–18], where “My Brother starvd between two Walls / His Childrens Cry [as a terrible enrobing garment] my Soul appalls.”

In *Jerusalem* 84 ancient London, led by a child, walks through the Streets of London towards the Gothic Gates of Westminster, while blackened St. Paul’s appears behind and slightly to the right, contiguous to Westminster, an unusual but *accurate* perspective. The massive monuments of St. Paul’s and Westminster presented varying perspectives to those who perambulated about London, as did Blake. From Chelsea, to the extreme west of London, on the north side of the Thames (where Blake was attacked by Hand), St. Paul’s appeared to the *left* of Westminster Abbey, documented by *A View of LONDON taken from the Bridge near Chelsea* (published in the *London Magazine*, February 1783). As the viewer moved from Chelsea south across the Thames by the route of Battersea Bridge, however, St. Paul’s appeared to the *right* of Westminster Abbey, approximating Blake’s perspective in *Jerusalem* 84, and such a narrowing perspective is illustrated in *A View of London from Wandsworth Hill in the County of Surrey* (published May 1786 by J. Harris).

St. Paul’s to the east and Westminster Abbey to the west, respectively, signified to Blake the Gates of Birth and the Gates of Death (cf. *J* 27:57–64). “Cathedron’s Looms” (as a center of generation) Blake envisioned as St. Paul’s, and these bloody looms “weave only Death” (*M* 24/26:35)—corporeal forms. St. Paul’s in Blake’s structured allegory is the Gate of Mortal Life (*i.e.*, the *Sleep of Death*), associated with Luban, the vegetative lunar center of Golgonooza (FZ VIII.100[1st]:2–4), while Westminster Abbey, England’s most famous monument to the Dead, is Blake’s Gate of Death (*i.e.*, *Immortal Life*).

Though speculative, Blake’s placement of these two monuments in *Jerusalem* 84 may deal with a graphic pun, for such a precise alignment was presented to the perishing Vegetative Eye from the famous tavern known as “Death’s Door,” located at Battersea Rise on the Road to Wandsworth—to the west and south of the Thames. Triangulation on *Cary’s New and Ac-*

33. Compare John Locke’s *Black Woof of the Brain in Jerusalem* (15:14–20).

*curate Map of the Country of Surry*, 1785, substantiates that the view from Death's Door aligns Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, as shown in *Jerusalem* 84.

Death's Door got its name from undertakers and gravediggers, who in conveying their corpses to interment frequently stopped at the tavern for refreshments. Death's Door was celebrated in the *European Magazine* in November 1785, and "MERRY MOURNERS" appeared "regaling" themselves at "DEATH'S DOOR" in a later engraving in the same magazine in September 1801.

When Blake moved to Lambeth in late 1790 his *opening streets* moved with him. The "whirlwind" which Blake's visionary eye saw turned loose upon the "Wheels" of Albion's "rumbling Mills" of Heaven in *The Four Zoas* (IX.138:1-6) in part reflect the constantly turning "windmill in Lambeth Marsh," located across from Hercules Buildings in Lambeth, where Blake lived. The *London Observer* (9 December 1792) mentions this large windmill, and notes that the rapid motion of the "wings" of this large mill struck and killed a pigeon, throwing the bird "a wonderful distance." All possibilities exist in the imaginative Eye of the Mind, and Blake's "Pretty [flowering] rose tree" and "peach . . . tree," in poems composed at Hercules Buildings around 1792 or early 1793, may have derived their inward intellectual focus from a corporeal garden located at Hercules Buildings, for in 1793 the *London Observer* (10 February) reported that at "Hercule's [*sic*] Buildings Lambeth" a mature "double blossom peach-tree" and a "rose tree" were in "full bloom" and "covered with flowers," a spectacular event that early in the season. One *inevitably* wonders if this could have been Blake's garden!

In his heaven-shaking voice old Nobodaddy called "aloud to English Blake," where Blake "rose up from shite," for he was in the process of fertilizing the soil of Lambeth in "giving his body ease . . . beneath the poplar trees" (E 500), trees possibly located near Blake's residence at Hercules Buildings. Before Blake took up residency in Lambeth a nursery near the Asylum given to Hercules grew poplar trees (advertisement, *Daily Advertiser*, 28 January 1785), and after Blake moved to Lambeth, an advertisement in the *Times* (24 November 1798) mentioned North's Nursery Gardens, "near the Asylum, Lambeth." A "Shields [tree] Nursery," immediately behind Hercules Buildings and the Asylum, is shown on *Cary's New and Accurate Plan of London and Westminster*, newly revised, 3rd. edn., 1 January 1792.

"Jeruselems [heavenly] foundations began" (*M* 6:14-15) at Lambeth, whose popular etymology signifies *the house of the lamb*, and Blake who knew his Bible was well aware that Jerusalem's gates were associated with the zodiacal "foundations" of "precious stones" in Revelation (21:10-21).



Blake's Mind's Eye also envisioned the furnace fires of Lambeth as flaming stars in the night sky. In *Milton* "The Surrey hills glow like clinkers of the furnace," for at this period "Lambeth's Vale"—"where Jerusalem's [zodiacal] foundations began"—was a place of appalling smoke, and foundries in this area cast their flames upon the darkness.

A contemporary source gives an account of an ironwork site, where "the night" is "filled with fire and light," and "from a distance we see, here a glowing mass of coal, there darting flames leaping from the blast furnaces," while "we hear the heavy hammers striking the echoing anvils." From these sights and sounds "we do not know whether we are looking at a volcano in eruption or have been miraculously transported to Vulcan's cave."<sup>34</sup> As early as 1792 Henckell's iron mills (a steam mill at Wandsworth in Surrey) cast shells, cannon, and other implements of war, and the sound of the hammer at these mills, weighing almost six hundred pounds, must have reverberated mightily upon the atmospheres. Lambeth continued to expand as an industrial center, for numerous manufacturers "of iron goods and machines" were located in Lambeth by the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Westminster Bridge leads into Lambeth, and William Wordsworth in his poem "Composed upon Westminster Bridge," dated 3 December 1803, speaks of a *morning view* in this Valley of Vision by the flowing Thames, where "towers, domes . . . and temples / Open unto the fields, and to the sky; / All bright and glittering in the *smokeless* air" (my emphasis). Blake, however, purveys a more accurate picture of Lambeth when his Prince of Light laments about the starry "arches high" in the sky, among "turrets & towers & domes / Whose smoke destroy'd the pleasant gardens" (*FZ IX.121:1-17*), for the famous Botanical Gardens at Lambeth Marsh, also near Hercules Buildings, were removed in 1789 because smoke from the area constantly enveloped the plants.<sup>35</sup> According to one opinion the omnipresent "smoke of sea-coals" even "impregnated" the vegetables of London. An account of about 1810 noted that a "high chimney" of a "great manufactory near the [Orphan] Asylum" (nearby Blake's former residence at Hercules Buildings) emitted great volumes of smoke, and a tract from about 1818 (*Is it Impossible to free the Atmospheres of London . . . from the Some and deleterious Vapours?*) observed that the Lambeth area was permeated with smoke.

34. An observation of Faujas de Satint-Fond, who visited the Carron iron works in 1784; quoted from Paul Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Marjorie Vernon (New York: Harper & Row, 1961) 334, n. 14.

35. See the *Survey of London, South Bend & Vauxhall*, London County Council (London, 1951) Vol. xxiii, Part 1: 17.

*Babylon the Great: A Description and Demonstration of Men and Things in the British Capital* (1825, Vol. I: 14–15) described the “Surrey side” of the Thames as a place of “smoking furnaces, dinsome [steam] engines, and great manufactories.” Blake’s heavenly Jerusalem was, in irony, “buildded here [at Lambeth] / Among these dark Satanic Mills” (*M* 1:7–8). In *Jerusalem* (90:25) the body of Reuben is “cut . . . apart [as a bloody bolt of cloth] from the Hills of Surrey,” an action that finds its topographical corollary in the Wollen-yarn Company in Lambeth, Surrey, south of the Narrow Wall and east of Beaufoy’s Distillery, the site of Cuper’s Gardens, shown on Horwood’s map, 1799 (*Survey of London*, Vol. XXIII, Part I: 15). This firm employed some 500 persons, and every branch of manufacturing clothing by machine was carried on here.

Blake, in a moment of anguish, concluded that “Jerusalem lies in ruins” in Lambeth’s vales, for Blake saw the vales of Lambeth, where were laid the foundations of Jerusalem, as both Heaven and Hell. Blake’s “Naked Jerusalem lay before the [twelve zodiacal] Gates upon Mount Zion / The Hill of [stellar] Giants” (*J* 78:21–24). Hinnom was located “at the end of the valley of giants,” the Valley of *Rephaim*. Blake’s phrasing relates to the *Hill of Giants* as clarified by Joshua (15:8), for “the valley of the son of Hinnom [which means *hell*], the hill of Topheth [which means *furnace*] . . . [extended] unto the south side of the Jebusite”—boundaries associated with Jerusalem. Blake mentions the “Valley of the Jebusite” in *Jerusalem* (68:23), and at the “high places” of this terrible place children were burned in the fiery furnaces of Molech, a Heathen God of sacrifice. This horrid vale was called the “valley of slaughter” in Jeremiah, and in Jeremiah (7:30–34) “the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride” will cease in Judah and Jerusalem, because of the sins of sacrifice in the Valley of Hinnom. Blake word-plays on this topography in *Jerusalem* (79:8), in which the “hills of Judea [where Jerusalem is located] are fallen . . . into deepest hell” [Hinnom]. According to the accounts in Joshua (15:8), this location was the same as “Jerusalem [or Mount Zion],” the border that “went up to the top of the mountain” which was “before the valley of Hinnom.” The Philistines, who “spread themselves in the valley of Raphaim” (II Samuel 5:18, 22), had control of the manufacture of iron tools and weapons of war (I Samuel 13:19–21), implements built plenty in the fiery forges at Lambeth.

It is no accident of casuistry that devilish Blake deliberately constructed the foundations of holy Jerusalem (*M* 6:14–15) upon the plains of Sodom and Gomorrah. “In all the dark Atlantic vale down from the hills of Surrey / A black water accumulates,” Blake states in *Jerusalem* (4:9–10, my emphasis), and he refers to the notorious and “highly offensive” black waters and “effluvia” which constantly inundated the ditches at Lambeth Marsh and

the surrounding areas. The lowlands of the Lambeth neighborhood at St. George's Fields, near Blake's residence at Hercules' Buildings, were frequently little more than an accumulation of black waters. In 1793 the *London Observer* (10 February) noted that the "cellars of half the houses" in St. George's Fields had "for some weeks past" been nearly filled with stagnant water, for the ground at St. George's Fields was below or near water level and was subjected, in addition, to waters that constantly drained off the roads.

A writer as late as 1807 complained that when one walked in the area of St. George's Fields one walked in mud above the ankles, and the *Monthly Magazine* (August, 1809: 103) reported that Surrey (where Lambeth was located) abounded with "stagnant and putrid ditches." Blake saw the dark waters that surrounded his Lambeth residence as the "plain of Jordan," that site of "Sodom and Gomorrah" which Genesis (13:10) describes as "*well watered every where*" (my emphasis). The plain of Jordan was located in the "vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea" (Genesis 14:3), described in Blake's *Jerusalem* (89:27) as the "Dead Sea by Sodom & Gomorrah[h]," cites which were flooded over (*Gomorrah* means *submersion*).

At the south side of the Valley of Hinnom was a Potter's Field, the Akeldama or *field of blood* where Judas hanged himself (Matthew 27:7-8), and Horwood's map of 1799 places Lambeth's "Potters Fields" immediately north of Paradise Row, east of the inner court of Lambeth Palace (note *J* 78:25-27 and *J* 18:22). Blake in *Milton* (37/41:21-23) associates Molech's terrible smoking furnaces with Og, who is Orion, Los's Specter, and Blake locates Los's *heavenly* "Potters Furnace" in the "Surrey hills" and "Hinnoms vale" (*J* 53:26-29). Such sacrificial furnaces have their topographical orientation in the famous potter's furnaces at Coade's Artificial Stone Manufactory, located at the Surrey-side of the Thames as one entered Lambeth from Westminster Bridge.

Coade's fiery kilns produced more than seven hundred architectural ornaments and statues (*Times*, 21 February 1785). An interior view of Coade's kilns was illustrated in the *European Magazine*, 1797, while a further account of the kilns appeared in this same magazine in January 1802: 7-8. Coade's Catalogue of 1784 enumerated the statues available from its fiery furnaces (a selection probably remaining essentially the same when Blake moved to Lambeth): this assortment included Minerva, Urania, Clio, Ceres, Hercules, and Apollo. Plinths featured the *Laocoon* group, a lion, and a tiger (the latter a modest two and one half feet in length). Also displayed at Coade's were a nine-foot River God and a six-foot Druid.<sup>36</sup>

36. For details of Coade's ornaments and statues, see David Hughson, *London; Being an Accurate History and Description of the British Metropolis* (London, 1807) IV: 522-30.

The lunar whore Vala labours for her bread & water among the Furnaces" of heaven (*M* 19/21:39–43), where "Londons dark-frowning towers / Lament [or cry out] upon the [elemental burning] winds of Europe in Rephaims Vale," an astronomical valley where are found the stellar bones of the dead, for *Rephaim* means (giant) *Shades of the Dead* (E 561). Blake's Valley of "Rephaim terminates" in the "Surrey Hills" (*J* 37/41:12), and in relating heaven to earth Blake envisioned this vale as a Valley of Constellations. The Giant constellations of Lambeth's opening vales Blake saw as heathen Greek deities, who in the "pomp / Of warlike selfhood" (*M* 14:15–16) had been translated to the heavens as Specters of the Dead, stellar figures "erected into gods" (*DC*, E 527). "The [warring] Gods of Priam" are "The [Starry] Host of Heaven," Blake declares in *The Laocoon* (E 274), and in *Milton* Blake speaks of "Jerusalem's Inner Court" at Lambeth, the compassionate heavens "ruin'd and given / To the detestable [Heathen] Gods of Priam" (*M* 25/27:48–49). Because Priam's moralizing gods attempted to control the gates of *celestial* Jerusalem above Lambeth, Blake also rejected the *terrestrial* spaces in Lambeth named after these gods.

Blake refers "to Apollo," the Apollo Gardens Teahouse—and also to "the Asylum, / Given to Hercules," an orphanage converted from the former premises of the Hercules Tavern (see Erdman, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire* 288–90). At the Asylum given to Hercules some 200 orphan children, "which are as many as the House can at present contain" (*Times*, 23 May 1794), were taught to "read the Bible, write a legible hand, and cast up a sum in addition." In *Milton* (25/27:48–52) Blake speaks of the orphans at the Asylum "Who set Pleasure against Duty: who Create Olympick [laurel] crowns / To make Learning a *burden* & the [imaginative] Work of the Holy Spirit: *Strife*" (my emphasis). (To Blake, Education, involving Rewards and Punishments, was eating of the Tree of Good and Evil.)

The Asylum inmates also were instructed to "knit" and to "do all kinds of plain needle work," and Blake saw these weaving female orphans as laboring "in [the whore] Tirtzah's Looms for bread."<sup>37</sup> In 1793 the laboring orphans at the Asylum were "busily making flannel caps" for the hapless soldiers of His Majesty's regiments (*Lloyd's Evening Post*, 11 November 1793), and the Asylum, where "No negro or mulatto girl" was admitted,<sup>38</sup>

37. For the mistreatment and death of a female orphan at the Asylum, who had been apprenticed to a button manufacturer in Lambeth, see the *Times*, 30 July 1796. In Albion's land children were "sold to trades / Of dire necessity till laboring day & night all / Their life extinct they took the spectre form of dark despair" (*FZ* viib.95[2nd]26:28, E 360–61)—as do the *dead Sweeps* in *Songs of Innocence*.

38. See Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Lambeth*, Appendix (London, 1827) 104–5.

also sold nostrums, such as Fistula Paste, Dropsy Powder, and “Liquid Sweat” (*Times*, 7 September 1791).

Despite the fact the Gates of Heaven were occupied dutifully by Priam’s chaste Heathen Gods, the Pleasure Gardens of Lambeth beneath on earth suffered no such high standards of Moral Virtue. Nearby Blake’s residence at Lambeth was the Apollo Gardens (whose foundations were constructed on the swampy soil of a marshland). Although at this period one could obtain a “Syllabub in the greatest perfection warm from the Cow” (*Times*, 19 May 1792), the *Times* earlier reported that special tickets were passed out at the Apollo Gardens to exclude “every improper character” (11 December 1790). The Apollo Gardens, however, remained “a most eminent receptacle for thieves of every denomination” (*Times*, 6 September 1793).

The “Apollo-garden in St. George’s-fields” was a place where “many a fair one had ended her novitiate” (*A Modern Sabbath, or, a Sunday Ramble*, 1794: 105). Although in these gardens given to Priam’s “Apollo” one “might accidentally receive decent visitors,” their stay was presumed “to have been short.” This source, in speaking of these “most obstinate places of vicious amusement,” mentions that the Apollo Gardens possessed a “long room furnished with tables and benches,” where the assembled company “consisted of some of the finest women of the town of the middle ranks [prostitutes], their bullies, and such young men as could, without reflection, condescend to supply the thirsty palates of the women with inflaming liquids: the conversation was—Reader, imagine what!” Places such as the Apollo Gardens, according to this account, “flourished much too long,” for “infinite injury was done those who attended these places of entertainment.”<sup>39</sup>

While at Lambeth William Blake wrote particularly deprecatory lines in his Notebook (E 499) about Marie Antoinette, the “beautiful Queen of France,” and it has not been noticed that Blake lived within yards of Jeanne de la Motte, “the famous Countess de la Motte of Necklace Memory,”<sup>40</sup> who also defamed the Queen of France. Madame de la Motte in May 1791 lived at a perfumer’s opposite Mount Row, near the Temple of Flora just to the east of the Apollo Gardens teahouse—and near Blake’s residence at Hercules’ Buildings (see the London *Times*, June 1 and 3, 1791, which

39. See James Peller Malcolm, *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London during the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1808) 188.

40. Accused of stealing Marie Antoinette’s jewelry, Jeanne de la Motte was condemned to be branded with a “V” (*voleuse*, thief) and imprisoned for life. Fourteen executioners had great difficulty subduing the Countess for this branding, and she fought with such ferocity that she accidentally was branded upon the breast rather than the shoulder. Ultimately, the formidable Countess escaped to England, and took revenge on the Queen of France by writing her *Memoirs*.

confirmed that this "female Foreigner" lived "at a Perfumer's opposite Mount row, Lambeth"). The *Analytical Review* (August 1791) also noted that the Countess lived at this residence, "near the Asylum" given to Hercules.

The Countess de la Motte introduced the slander that Marie Antoinette, the Queen of France, had an abnormal sexual appetite, and the Countess' *Memoirs*, translated from the French, 1789, recorded that Marie Antoinette found "*something in my FORM, pleasing to her Majesty*" (21). The Countess thus declared that she forthwith became the lesbian lover of the Queen.<sup>41</sup> The Queen of France was alleged to have had other lovers, and while Blake in *An Island in the Moon*, c. 1784–85, was writing satirically of Balloon Hats (a fashion initially introduced from France), a fashionable hat in the Spring of 1785 in Paris was called "Cardinal in the straw," maliciously satirizing the Queen of France and her accommodating lover, for it was rumored that Cardinal de Rohan had to resort to aphrodisiacs in order to pacify the Queen of France, his royal mistress.<sup>42</sup> The Countess de la Motte died in Lambeth on 23 August 1792, from eating mulberries, according to the *Analytical Review*, September 1792. (Was she poisoned by Royalist sympathizers many of whom resided in Lambeth?)

A satirical reference in the *Gazetteer & New Daily Advertiser* (16 March 1790) noted that the "TEMPLE OF FLORA," near the Apollo Tea Gardens, was frequented by "*ideals of fashion, male, female, and epicene,*" and here could be seen "The Duke and Duchess of Anguish," "the "Countess of Clapperclaw, and Lord and Lady Vapid." Although the Temple of Flora, like the Apollo Gardens, attempted "To prevent the Intrusion of improper Company," assessing a charge, to be "received at the Door" (*Times*, 1 December 1792), *A Modern Sabbath, or, a Sunday Ramble*, 1794: 105 observed that the gardens of the Temple of Flora were patronized by a "Cyprian crew," and the gardens "seemed in high stile, and well calculated for intrigue as well as solitude." The boxes in these gardens, concluded the *Modern Sabbath*, were occupied for the most part by "demireps of some fashion and reps of no fashion at all." The Temple of Flora possessed "elegant" (Classical?) statues, and the songs of various birds were imitated in these pleasure gardens. This place of amusement had a greenhouse as well as a "grand artificial flower garden," exhibiting flowers that "blow throughout the year." The walls of the Temple of Flora were decorated with "fruit trees," and its "arbours [were] entwined with woodbines, [and]

41. See also John E. N. Hearsey, *Marie Antoinette* (London, 1969) 98–99. *The Memoirs of the Countess Valois de la Motte*, translated from the French, was published in 1789 and reviewed by the *Analytical Review* (May–August 1789). An extended, two-volume work of her *Memoirs* was published in 1792 (reviewed by the *Analytical Review*, September 1792).

42. See Vincent Cronin, *Louis and Antoinette* (New York, 1975) 254.

jessamines." As many as "80 persons" could walk in these gardens "at one time" (*Times*, 12 June 1793).

The *Whitehall Evening Post* (7–10 May 1796) reported legal actions taken against the proprietor of the Temple of Flora, alleging that "male visitors" at this teahouse were "apprentices, from 13 to 18 years of age; that women of certain description were admitted there *gratis*; and that indecent practices were carried on there." The proprietor of the Temple of Flora was indicted for "keeping a disorderly house" in 1796, thus closing down the site.

Across from the Temple of Flora was the Flora Tea Gardens, where in order not to offend others with "the *vulgar* traits of Cyprian freedom," ladies of "easy access" were "confined to one end of the room." Also among those present were a "few half-booted shopmen"—as well as "democrats" (according to the *Modern Sabbath* 106). In 1794 "The Apollo Gardens, and the Temple of Flora were Guillotined [*sic*] on the same day" by the magistrates" (according to the *Times*, 15 September 1794). Later in 1794 the "APOLLO GARDENS, once famous for the musical entertainment of its guests," was now "shut up, and is fast running to ruin" (as noted by *Modern Sabbath*). Violent winds in November 1795 left "the orchestra in the Apollo-gardens . . . [an] entire heapes of ruins." (By 1808 the site of the Apollo Gardens had "become a mere level.")<sup>43</sup>

Just as Blake saw Heavenly Jerusalem arise from the hellish well-watered vales of Lambeth, when he moved his neighborhood to Felpham by the sea he continued to see Visions upon the atmospheres, and other New Heavens and New Hells opened above South Molton Street when Blake returned to London in the Autumn of 1803.

It is an interesting fact that on 22 June 1799, not long before Blake departed from Lambeth to Felpham, George III inspected the Surrey Volunteer Corps, which was "drawn up between the Asylum and the Obelisk" at St. George's Fields, near Blake's residence at Hercules Buildings (as noted in the *Universal Magazine*, June 1799), and not long after Blake returned to London from Felpham in September 1803, escaping the "Soldierlike Danger" of Sedition (letter, 7 October 1803) and taking up residence at South Molton Street, he again was confronted with the formidable presence of the military. At this location Blake could not have ignored the frequent firing of cannon at nearby Hyde Park, where George III reviewed 14,500 Volunteers on 26 October 1803—and an additional 17,000 Volunteers were reviewed on October 28 (as noted in the *Universal Magazine*, November 1803, and the *Times*, 31 December 1803).

Blake's South Molton Street residence was not far west of the former location of the Tyburn Gallows, located immediately north of Hyde Park.

43. See also W. S. Scott, *Green Retreats, The Story of Vauxhall Gardens, 1661–1859* (London, 1955) 118.

Blake envisioned the gallows site as Golgotha (the *Hill of the Skull*), where the Poison Tree of Good and Evil flourished—growing from the brain, with the purling Tyburn Brook beneath. The Tyburn Gallows to Blake's view expanded as a starry Tree of Death turning in the heavens, because the gallows at Tyburn (at least as early as 1698) was known by the appellation of the "*fatal tree*." Blake amalgamates this terminology with the "*fatal Tree*" of Knowledge mentioned in *Paradise Lost* (IV.514). Blake in this aspect follows Christian tradition, for Christ's cross at *Golgotha* was made from the Tree of Knowledge, and Adam's skull was buried at the foot of Christ's cross. "We thinke that Paradise and Calvarie, / Christs Crosse, and Adams tree, stood in one place" (lines 21–22), John Donne observes in *Hymne to God my God, in my Sicknesse* (Calvary and Golgotha are interchangeable terms).

From the prominence of the gallows at Tyburn one could view Paddington to the north as well as the "prospect down Oxford Street" to the east—the foot of Golgotha or Calvary, to Blake. The earlier 18th-century observer, entering London from the north, along Edgware Road (part of ancient Watling Street, associated with the Milky Way) saw and smelled the gallows fruit of the Fatal Tree—ripening corpses (hanging in chains) which had their eyes picked out by carnivorous birds. Though hanging stopped at Tyburn in 1783 (removed to Newgate Prison), the site of the Tyburn Gallows continued to carry with it an awful reputation.

The *Monthly Magazine* (1 April 1813) mentions the terminating "Tybourn" Brook at the "top of Oxford-street," and despite the fact that the rivulet at the gallows' hill was actually part of the Westbourne stream this tributary was popularly known as Tyburn Brook (depicted in an engraving by Hogarth). Although Tyburn Brook at the gallows' location flowed westward into the Serpentine "Among the Druid Temples," the sacrificial enrooting *oak groves* of Hyde Park, Blake's *second* Tyburn Brook (the *River of Oxford Street*), a true tributary of the Tyburn stream, originated to the north of London. The River of Oxford Street plunged underground to the east of Tyburn's Fatal Tree—where South Molton Street, Stratford Place, and Oxford Street conjoined: the exact location of Blake's Calvary's foot. (See E. Homer Shepherd's engraving of "*Oxford Street in 1815, looking west from Stratford Place, toward the gallows*" [British Library (?)].) The Tyburn stream at Calvary's Foot continued south, ultimately emptying into the Thames.

At "Islington & Paddington" the vegetative Daughters of Albion, at redemption, "builded Jerusalem as a City & a Temple," an echo of Psalms (122:3) where "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together," and in this special place the fiery celestial "Furnaces of Los are builded" (J 84:2–6, my emphasis). In *Jerusalem* (12:25–29, 27:25–29) Blake's Giant Builders stand "above [the] mighty Ruin" of Zion Hill, the Hill of Giants, and



Blake asks: "What are those golden builders doing . . . near Tyburns fatal Tree," near mournful / Ever weeping Paddington"? (*ever-weeping* in part explained by the fact that here was located St. George's Burying Ground, where "Assassinetti," Louis Shiavonetti, Blake's rival engraver, was interred in 1810). While Blake's Golden Builders were building up heavenly Jerusalem above the green meadows radiating from the starry Tree of Tyburn, in the corporeal world beneath in November 1812 the construction of a sewer was taking place—to control the over-flowing waters in the Paddington area, in preparation for the development of Regent's Park. This extensive effort was described as "one of the greatest works of the kind ever attempted" (as noted in the *Universal Magazine*, August 1812: 113 ff).

Blake's meadows of Islington and Paddington and Primrose Hill expanded upon the starry voids. William Hazlitt in *The Plain Speaker* (not long after Blake's death) noted that "The true Cockney . . . never travelled beyond the purlieus of the [London] metropolis, either in body or spirit," and thus "Primrose-hill is the Ultima Thule of his most romantic desires."<sup>44</sup> English Blake, accordingly, turned to this Cockney Paradise in augmenting his allegorical purposes, after he returned to London from Felpham by the Sea.

In *Jerusalem* 27 Blake's "fields from Islington to Marylebone / To Primrose Hill" (a modest 206 feet high) were "builed over with pillars of gold" (stars of the heavenly New Jerusalem, built up by Golden Builders), and in this setting Jerusalem's bejeweled "Little-ones ran on the fields," where "Jesus & his Bride" in allegorical unity ameliorated the Laws of Moral Virtue. In these green Edenic meadows stood the "Jew's-harp-house & the Green Man," public houses among the "Ponds" where "Boys to bathe delight," in "fields of Cows by Willan's farm."<sup>45</sup> On earlier maps of the period, near Love Lane, one sees the ponds near Daget's Farm (later to become Willan's Farm).

Willan's Farm, which Blake initially may have engraved as *Williams* (possibly assuming the name was a contraction for "William"), north of London, consisted of 279 acres and was used primarily for dairy cattle, and from the watercolors of the period Willan apparently grew his own hay.<sup>46</sup> The

44. Hazlitt, *The Plain Speaker*, Essay VII, in *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover (New York: AMS Press, 1967) x.158.

45. An Advertisement for the "JEW'S HARP TAVERN and TEA GARDENS" appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, 6 June 1785. J. T. Smith in *A Book for a Rainy Day* (London, 1845) 22–23, describes the Jew's Harp House. The Green Man, a tavern at one time called the Farthing Pie House, was run by a "highly respectable publican," and one of the ponds in this area, where the boys bathed, was called "Cockney Ladle." The beadies would seize the clothes of the boys bathing in the ponds (Smith 47–49).

46. See Ann Cox-Johnson, "The Regent's Park," *Geographical Magazine* (April 1964): 664–69. The *Times* (7 January 1799) reported that "The Haymarket is to be removed from

Tyburn rivulet arose near the foot of Primrose Hill and meandered southward through Willan's meadows, and the stream in its lower reaches flowed towards the Thames, plunging underground at Blake's Foot of Calvary. A small hill by the side of one of Willan's fields commonly was called "Little Primrose Hill," and from the vantage of Willan's Farm one could enjoy the "finest view of Islington, Kentish Town . . . [and] Highgate Hill, [along] with the beauty of scenery round Primrose Hill and Paddington."

As a corporeal contradiction the paradisiacal fields to the north of London made English Blake physically ill (letter, 1 February 1826), and knowledgeable Blake knew it was not only Jesus and his Bride who walked upon the "meadows green" (*J* 27:17) of Marylebone, for the fields to the north of London were infested constantly with prostitutes and thieves at houses of the publicans. For the period, *Marylebone* in fact was a conventional Londonese epithet for *prostitute*, and the *Times* (8 September 1787) indignantly demanded that the magistrates proceed against "all the houses of bad fame in Marylebone," sardonically referring to the "numerous . . . Virgins from the apartments of the Marylebone Sisterhood." Earlier, the *Times* (18 May 1787) protested that "the fields, leading from the Jew's Harp-house to Hampstead by Primrose-hill, swarm daily with the most abandoned thieves and prostitutes, who, in defiance of all decency and good order, are openly guilty of every act of shameless prostitution in the open fields at noon-day."

The reposing fields of Marylebone perennially were subjected to sinful acts long before Blake paved them over with heavenly pillars of gold. Harris' *List of Covent-Garden Ladies; or, Man of Pleasure's Kalender, for the year 1788*, an annual publication which enumerated the attributes of the more spectacular bawds of London Town,<sup>47</sup> reversed downwards Blake's airy Vision of the fields of Marylebone leading to the sky, for Harris' volume described "Mary bone" as "the now grand paradise of love," since "No

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the street commonly so called, to Willan's Farm, near Devonshire street"—although straw would continue to be sold at the Haymarket, in "accommodation of the Ladies."

47. Harris' *List of Covent Garden Ladies*, 1788, documents there were whores up the street from Blake's Poland Street address (No. 28). At "Mrs. Wanpole's" house at No. 1 Poland Street resided a Miss Rose, whose "*Venus Mount*" was so "*nobly fortified*" that she need not "dread the *fiercest attack*," and so also at this address was a Miss Douglass, who "sings a good song." I am advised by K. C. Harrison of the Westminster Public Libraries (File D109) that the ratepayer for No. 1 Poland Street was "Eliza Walpole," probably the "Mrs. Wanpole" as noted by Harris. At No. 2 Poland Street a Miss Watpool could "*tum and twist* in all the enchanting folds of love," producing "every *high toned* sensation." (Emphases that of Harris.) Harris' volume was "published regularly every year [for some forty years], like a Court Calendar" (*Times*, 10 February 1795), and the *Universal Magazine* (November 1795) reported that the bookseller Aiken was prosecuted and fined for publishing Harris' *List*.

sooner do the stars abolish their benign influence, but our more attracting ones below [*prostitutes as earthly glittering stars of morn*] bespangle every walk and make a heaven on earth."

Though whores hung out in the fields of Paradise in north London, in these same expansive meadows of sin Blake's Jesus and his holy Bride build up "a [sensuous] Heaven in Hell's despair" (*J* 19:4), where they are seen "Forgiving trespasses and sins" (*J* 27:21). Blake in his annotations to Watson (E 619) pointedly observed that "Christ loved to associate" with "Publicans & Sinners," and in "The Everlasting Gospel" (E 878) "The Publicans & Harlots" are "Selected for his [Christ's] Company." Matthew (11:19) states that Jesus was a "friend of publicans and sinners," for Christ comes "not . . . to call the righteous" (Matthew 9:11–12). In Matthew (21:31–32) "publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God," and thus in *Jerusalem* (77:31–35) Christ, as a "friend of . . . sinners," would "to the Publicans & Harlots go," since "Hell [on earth] is open'd to Heaven."

Leigh Hunt, associated with Blake's demonic character Hand, spoke passionately of the opening meadows of north London in the *Examiner* (7 June 1812), an article signed with Hunt's *Printer's Hand*, and Blake may have read this article. Hunt praised the "dear old fields [of Marylebone] . . . where we made verses, and saw [airy] visions of mythological beauty from morning till night" (as did Blake).<sup>48</sup> "No green," stated Hunt, "ever appeared to us so green" as these fields: it was in fact "*a test of green*" (my emphasis). In these verdant "fields . . . was Willan's Farm," where were eaten "creams and other country messes." Hunt, like Blake, speaks of the "beautiful meadows" all the way to Hampstead and "St. John's Wood Farm," and Hunt protests that "houses . . . are now invading poor Primrose Hill."

Though Blake with his Mind's Eye envisioned Temples built up on the heavenly hills and fields above Marylebone and Islington, corporeal temple builders on earth below lustfully eyed these opening Meadows of Paradise. Consequently, Blake's green and pleasant Eden on earth was afflicted with the fiery smoking "brickfields" of Islington, for these kilns supplied the temple builders, and Blake's "king of Light" views the blackened whore-moon Vala wandering hopelessly "among the Brick kilns," kilns translated to the voids as *fiery stars* burning in the bituminous heavens (*FZ* II.13:1–2). Though in "great Eternity" the "River of Life" flowed against Vala's "walls," where Vala is the "Bride & Wife" of Albion (*J* 29/33:36–39), in the fallen universe Vala as a lunar melancholy whore is compelled to labor among the stellar kilns making the *burnt bricks of Human Souls*: a hell, ironically reflecting a Heavenly Jerusalem.

48. Also see Hunt's comments on Regent's Park in *Shelley—Leigh Hunt*, ed. R. Brimley Johnson (New York: Haskell House, 1972), 2nd edn., 196–99.

A commentary of about 1810 speaks with horror as London extended its "great polypus arms over the country round," where brick kilns "poisoned" the salubrious air, leaving an overwhelming odor of carrion (a *smell of death* so powerful that it caused nausea).<sup>49</sup> As a victim of the new construction, the Adam and Eve Tea Gardens in the meadows of Islington was chased from its Paradise by 1811, and the "skittle ground destroyed" and the "garden dug up" for the foundations of "Eden Street." A "NEW LAMENTATION" in the *Literary Chronicle* (22 March 1823) complained about London's horrid advance upon the meadows of Eden—"Primrose Hill" and "the fields spotted with innumerable and beautiful cows, and groups of delighted children, amid the "new-made hay." The artist Benjamin Robert Hayden, in his *Diary* about 1810, echoes Blake's imagery when he observes that "all the valley . . . from Primrose hill [to the north] wore the appearance of happiness & Peace": "Children playing in the middle of the fields, and all the meadows . . . dotted with cows," whose "long shadows . . . streamed across the grass engoldened by the setting Sun," while "behind [to the south of the fields] stood London" with "its hundred spires."<sup>50</sup>

A description of 1815 of Willan's meadows, then about to be transformed into Regent's Park, emphasizes the ferocious building up in the area: "the face of the fields and enclosures, comprising Willan's Farm, the Jews' Harp House, and other buildings which lay scattered in that part of the suburb, being entirely changed . . . [so much so that the area] cannot be recognized by any of its ancient [rural] features."<sup>51</sup> George Cruikshank at this period executed a caricature on the proposal to enclose Hampstead Heath: where these green fields, about to be destroyed, are attacked by a fusillade of black bricks; hayracks in the meadows are destroyed, while terrified sheep and cows flee their beloved green pastures—the trees of the open fields are "mortally wounded."<sup>52</sup> As Blake earlier stated to Dr. Trusler, "The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing that stands in the way" (letter, 23 August 1799), an allusion to Revelation (9:4) where it is commanded "not to hurt the grass . . . neither any green thing, neither tree."

49. See the French Traveller's *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain* II: 199–200. An observer in 1767 protested the "chain of brick-kilns that surrounds us, [for these kilns were] like the scars of the smallpox," and a "city bard" in 1773 spoke of the "burning rows of fetid bricks." See M. Dorothy George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1951) 98.

50. See *The Diary of Benjamin Robert Hayden*, ed. Willard Bissel Pope (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1960) 182.

51. See Gordon Mackenzie, *Marylebone, Great City North of Oxford Street* (London, 1972) 118.

52. *The Graphic Works of George Cruikshank*, selected and arranged by Richard A. Vogler (New York: Dover, 1979) 48, pl. 95.

The *Literary Chronicle* (21 June 1823) also lamented about the fever of the building up of corporeal temples upon the green meadows of north London, building up at such a crescendo (circa 1823–25) that it might have been thought that “necromancers and enchanters” erected these “edifices” overnight. The pretentious pillars or “columns” placed in the former meadows, to another’s view, were a form of “masquerade,” like “daws trucked out in peacocks’ feathers.” “Even where grandeur . . . seems to be aimed at,” there were too many “columns” going up in Regent’s Park to maintain “sound taste.” On these green meadows was built the Quadrant, whose covered arcade was supported by one hundred and forty cast-iron pillars, a structure that aroused much public indignation because of its expense. The projected columns of Chester Terrace, also to be placed in these green fields, were to be surrounded with the statues of the famous (among them Bacon, Newton, and Locke, Blake’s reasoning Disciples of Abstinence).

James Elmes in *Metropolitan Improvements or London in the Nineteenth Century* (1829, page 20), referring to the “new pillars” abuilding over the green fields of Marylebone, nostalgically recalled “the aerial castles that we formed in our minds”—Visions “which we were fearful would fail as such fragile architecture generally does.” And, in unconscious irony of Blake’s mental Golden Pillars, shining upon the starry sky, Elmes concluded that the “prophetic vision” of the imaginative mind was now “realized” in the corporeal palaces and pillars encroaching upon the meadows.

In 1822 Chateaubriand, speaking of the great changes in London since the time of the French Revolution, noted that “the space of the old meadows filled with herds of cows” had been transformed into “Wide streets, lined with palaces” (quoted in Gordon Mackenzie, *Marylebone* 118). Pillars of Reality were being built over the idyllic fields of Eden, and a writer in the *London Magazine* in May 1822: 418 expostulated: “dear Primrose Hill! ha! faithless pen, canst thou forget its winding slopes, and valley green.”

The *Literary Chronicle* (12 October 1822) praised the fields of Marylebone and “renown’d Primrose Hill” whose “green top” won’t let “cockney bards . . . be still,” and the *Literary Chronicle* (22 March 1823) in speaking further of this “paradise of cockneys,” fearing for the fields threatened by the “rage for building,” concluded that “rurality” was “about to be destroyed.” The *Literary Chronicle* in this issue complains about the “brick-kiln smoke, and the smell of burning charcoal,” and the article asks if this green Paradise is to be “buried amid bricks and smoke?” This author demands “a muse of fire to snatch the evanescent beauties of the delicious garden” and preserve them from destruction.

Blake in articulating his pastoral imagery in "The Mental Traveller" (E 483: 87–92) makes his little Earth of Eden a Heaven of Love, where "Sun & Stars are nearer roll'd," where "many a City" such as Jerusalem "is Built," where is "many a pleasant Shepherds home"—a compassionate Tent of Innocence to abide in. Blake's Paradisiacal atmospheres above St. John's Wood and Primrose Hill find their analogue in Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island*, 1633 (canto 10:1–3), a study comparing the microcosm and the macrocosm, where the tops of hills are imagined as a "canopie" of "violets . . . in blue"—which "seem to make a little azure sky," and "here and there sweet [scarlet] Primroses scattered [as stars] Spangling the blue, [do] fit constellations make." The Primrose is a pentamerous flower, known as the *star flower*, and in Fletcher's text the flaming starry Primroses "set in order" present a "little heav'n on earth": and upon this "earthly heav'n the shepherds play." Blake, like Fletcher, often considered the planets and stars as the *flowers of heaven*.

Jesus and his immortal Bride find further calibration in John Donne's "*The Primrose . . . upon the Hill*," a poem where man seeks the Ideal Bride, where heaven does "distill" a "shoure of raine" upon the center of each Primrose and "grow Manna" (lines 2–4), a dewy *heaven of stars*.<sup>53</sup> Donne's poem (as Blake knew) related to Deuteronomy (32:1–2), wherein God's holy "doctrine shall drop as rain" and his "speech shall distill as the dew [manna], as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass." Donne's jewel-like drops of water on the Primrose in "their infinitie / Make a terrestrial Galaxie [the generative Milky Way] / As small starres do in the skie" (lines 5–7). Milton in *Comus* (670–71) speaks of "the fresh blood [that] grows lively, and returns / Brisk as the April [red] buds in Primrose-season," and, similarly, Blake in *Jerusalem* (77:10–12, E 233) notes that "now the time returns again," where, among these "hills & valleys" "England's green and pleasant bowers" receive "the Lamb of God" and "Jerusalem," his Bride.

On the earthly meadows of Primrose Hill and its environs Blake's Jesus in *Jerusalem* (pl. 27) walked with his heavenly Bride among "golden arches / [which] Shine upon the starry sky," "golden pillars high"—"*pillars high*" previously constructed by Los in *The Four Zoas* (VII.87:6, E 368), where vegetative Los, in "Wonder of labour," "Builed Golgonooza," laboring among "pillars high / And Domes terrific, in the nether heavens," for "beneath / Was opened new heavens & a new Earth," "beneath & within /

53. Henry Hawkins in his emblem book *Parthenia Sacra*, 1633, speaks of the heavens as a "round Machine" set "with starres instead of flowers" (84–85), and he further concludes that "God makes an exact esteeme of a single drop of Deaw, as of all the world beside," for "Before thee (sayeth Salomon) is the whole world as a drop of morning-deaw" (65).

Threefold within the brain within the heart within the loins." In Blake's context a hell is turned into a heaven, and Blake early on in "Contemplation" in *Poetical Sketches* (E 442) determined that although Man is the "slave of each [pulsating] moment" he also is the visionary "lord of eternity." Such is Blake's Vision, where insides and outsides and times and spaces unite into what this remarkable poet called an "Eternal Now."

Wichita, Kansas