



University
of Glasgow

MacPhee, Chantelle L. (2002) *"All the World's a Stage": William Blake and William Shakespeare*. PhD thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/3467/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

“All the World’s a Stage”: William Blake and William Shakespeare

by

Chantelle L. MacPhee

Department of English Literature

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy (Ph.D.) at the University of Glasgow.

SEPTEMBER 2002

©Chantelle L. MacPhee, 2002

THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION

Supervisors

Richard Cronin

Stephen Prickett

Examination Board

Willy Maley

Peter Davidhazy

Seamus Perry

The thesis by

Chantelle L. MacPhee

entitled

“All the world’s a stage”: William Blake and William Shakespeare

is accepted in partial fulfilment of the

requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy



Date: _____

Chair of Examining Board

ABSTRACT

Shakespeare's presence in Blake's poetry has been virtually unrecognized by scholarly criticism except, of course, for Jonathan Bate's groundbreaking work of 1986. Bate has had no major successors, so this thesis is, then, an attempt to close a lacuna, to restore Shakespeare to the place that was recognized by Blake himself, as a major influence on his work.

In my introductory chapter, I offer a brief sketch of the manner in which Shakespeare informed the culture of the later eighteenth century of which Blake was a product. I survey Shakespearean production, staging and acting techniques, and the history of textual reproduction, before turning to an aspect of the Shakespearean tradition of particular importance to Blake, the production of illustrated editions of Shakespeare's work, and the recourse to Shakespearean subject matter of the painters of the later eighteenth century. I end this chapter with an account of Blake's own Shakespearean illustrations.

In Chapter 2, I focus on the earliest of Blake's poems to show a clear Shakespearean influence, the dramatic fragments: "Prologue to King John", *Edward the Third*, and "Prologue to Edward the Fourth". The major model for these early poetic experiments is, of course, the Shakespearean history or chronicle play, but I argue that even in these apprentice works Blake's appropriation of the Shakespearean model is complex. Shakespeare's history plays celebrate the emergence of an England that, as the defeat of the Spanish Armada demonstrated, had emerged as one of Europe's most powerful nation states. The most pressing political context for Blake's dramatic fragments is England's loss of America, its greatest overseas colony. The fragments are addressed, then, not to a confident nation, proud of its newfound position in the world,

but to a nation that had very recently suffered a major blow to its confidence. Already evident, too, in these early fragments is Blake's distrust of the Shakespearean notion, flamboyantly expressed in a play such as *Henry V*, that a nation's greatness might appropriately be measured by its military successes, particularly in war against another state.

In Chapter 3, I focus on *Tiriel*, which of all Blake's narrative poems most clearly shows the influence of a Shakespearean model, *King Lear*. This play, as I argue, was the play by Shakespeare that was to remain most important for Blake throughout his career, but, I suggest, Blake was not simply reflecting in this the new prominence that contemporaries such as Coleridge and Lamb gave to Shakespeare's tragedies over his other plays, nor simply a reflection of a new taste that identified *King Lear* as Shakespeare's greatest play. Rather, Blake was sensitive to the topicality of *King Lear*, a topicality so evident that it was sufficient to discourage any productions of the play in the final decade of the eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth. The story of a mad King and of a nation threatened with anarchy because its ruling families disintegrate into warring factions had an obvious relevance to England in the second half of the reign of George III.

In Chapter 4, I turn to Blake's aborted epic poem, *The French Revolution*. In this poem, as in the earlier dramatic fragments, Shakespeare's history plays provided Blake with important models. But here, I argue, Blake's incorporation of Shakespearean material is more pointed. The outbreak of the French Revolution prompted many British commentators, not least of all Burke, to explain events in France by invoking Shakespearean analogies. It was a habit that culminated, some time after Blake had published the first book of his epic, when the execution of Louis XVI prompted almost

ritual comparisons with the murder of Duncan in *Macbeth*. But long before 1793, Shakespeare had been enrolled by opponents of the Revolution, such as Burke, as a member of the anti-revolutionary faction. In *The French Revolution*, I argue, Blake is engaged in an attempt to release Shakespeare from the control of the Anti-Jacobins, and to show how Shakespeare might be invoked just as readily by the large majority of his countrymen who, in 1790, were sympathetic to events in France. In *The French Revolution* the governor of the Bastille is represented as a Shakespearean tyrant king, after the model of *Macbeth*, and Louis himself becomes a Shakespearean monarch such as Richard II, whose legitimacy cannot in the end compensate for his inability to rule his kingdom with justice and efficiency.

Chapter 5 offers a reading of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* that understands it as an analysis of Shakespeare's rape narratives, *Titus Andronicus* and, more importantly, *The Rape of Lucrece*. This poem, I suggest, marks a new stage in Blake's accommodation of Shakespeare, by embodying Blake's recognition that Shakespeare is important not simply as England's greatest poet but as the poet who, more than any other, had helped to construct the manner in which the English view their world. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, for example, rape is seen as the outcome of a male code that refuses to distinguish between love, possession, and physical dominance. In *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, Blake traces the baleful consequences of such a code at once on a political and sexual level, so that Bromion's rape of Oothoon and her inability to persuade Theotormon that she remains unsullied by the crime that has been committed against her offer Blake a narrative through which he can explore not simply the relations between men and women, but also the disastrous history of George III's refusal to allow the independence of America, the greatest of his colonies.

In my final chapter, I turn to one of the greatest works of Blake's maturity, *Milton*. Critics of the poem have focused, for entirely understandable reasons, on the relation between Blake's poem and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In revealing the traces of Shakespeare's plays in the poem, of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and, more importantly, of *King Lear*, I call attention to aspects of the poem that have not perhaps been sufficiently recognized, and I also examine the final stage in Blake's accommodation of Shakespearean material. At this point, Shakespearean influence can be detected only by the critic who is prepared to become an archaeologist and to probe beneath the surface of the text for scraps of evidence that offer clues to the materials with which Blake constructed his mature epic visions. But the task is worthwhile because it establishes how, in *Milton*, Blake is concerned to re-write not only the work of Milton, England's second greatest poet, but the work of Shakespeare, the greatest English poet of them all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisors, Richard Cronin and Stephen Prickett. Richard, your advice, support and unfailing dedication, despite your inordinately hectic schedule, have enabled me to pursue this dissertation to its completion. You are the epitome of a great supervisor. Stephen, your advice and help in the initial important stages of this dissertation set me on the path with which I have tried to follow, and I hope I have done so.

I would like to thank all the people I have met at Glasgow University, particularly Carol Collins, Antonio Cunei, Michael Heyman, Kwannate Khammuang, Suzie Nien, Ines Opitz, Lynne Robertson, Judith Schachtmann, and Rahele Stoessel for their friendship throughout my time in Glasgow and thereafter. From you, I have learned what wellied means, how to make handmade potato pasta, how to play jazz on the flute, and how to be a great flatmate and friend, when researching and writing the thesis seemed a daunting task indeed. You have made Glasgow a memorable place. Your friendship will always be treasured.

I would like to thank Daniel Fleming for his love, encouragement, kindness and patience the past two years, as I tried to complete what I began three years before, teach full-time, and make him an important part of my life.

I would, most of all, like to thank my family—Robert, Louisa, Daniel and Ian MacPhee—for their unfailing love, support, encouragement and humour that never ceased, despite my trials and tribulations throughout this dissertation.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my sister, Bridgette:

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:

Bring me my Arrows of desire:

Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!

Bring me my Chariot of fire!

(William Blake, *Milton*, Preface).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
DEDICATION	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
KEY TO WORKS CITED	x
LIST OF APPENDICES	xxiv
CHAPTER 1: “All the world’s a stage”: The Dramatic Blake	1
CHAPTER 2: “Give me liberty or give me death!”: “Prologue to King John”, <i>Edward the Third</i> , and “Prologue to Edward the Fourth”	44
CHAPTER 3: “Who is it that can tell me who I am?”: <i>Tiriel</i>	67
CHAPTER 4: <i>Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité: The French Revolution</i>	94
CHAPTER 5: Subjugation to Revolution: <i>Visions of the Daughters of Albion</i>	116
CHAPTER 6: “And as imagination bodies forth / The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen / Turns them to shapes”: <i>Milton</i>	139
CHAPTER 7: “And all the men and women merely players”	172
APPENDICES	175
ENDNOTES	225
WORKS CITED	232

KEY TO BRIEF TITLES CITED

Quotations from Blake are taken from David Erdman, ed., *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*. (New York: Anchor Books, 1988); quotations from Shakespeare from G. Blakemore Evans *et al*, ed., *The Riverside Shakespeare* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974); and quotations from Milton from John T. Shawcross, ed., *The Complete Poetry of John Milton* (New York: Doubleday, 1971). Reference is made to line number and, where appropriate, to the number of act, book or plate.

- Abrams** M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York: Oxford UP, 1953).
- Allman** Eileen Jorge Allman, *Player-King and Adversary: Two Faces of Play in Shakespeare*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1980).
- Analytical Review** *Analytical Review* 12 (March 1792): 302 (an attributed account of the French Revolution).
- Andrews** Allen Andrews, *The King Who Lost America* (London: Jupiter Books Limited, 1976).
- Ashton** Geoffrey Ashton, *Shakespeare and British Art* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1981).
- Bate** Jonathan Bate, ed. *Shakespeare: An Illustrated Stage History* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996).
- Bate, Shakespeare** Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
- Bate, Shakespearean** Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).
- Beer** John Beer, *Blake's Visionary Universe* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1969).
- Behrendt, Moment** Stephen C Behrendt, *The Moment of Explosion: Blake and the Illustration of Milton* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1983).

- Behrendt, "Worst"** Stephen C. Behrendt, "'The Worst Disease': Blake's *Tiriel*." *Colby Library Quarterly* 15 (1979): 175-187.
- Bentley Jr., Blake** G.E. Bentley Jr., *Blake Records* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).
- Bentley Jr., William** G.E. Bentley Jr., *William Blake Tiriel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).
- Billington** Sandra Billington, *Mock Kings in Medieval Society and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
- Bindman** David Bindman, *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution* (London: British Museum Publishers, 1989).
- Bloom** Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997).
- Boase** T.R. Boase, "Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 10 (1947): 83-108.
- Bolton** Betsy Bolton. "'A Garment Dipped in Blood': Ololon and Problems of Gender in Blake's *Milton*" *Studies in Romanticism* 36.1 (1997): 61-101.
- Bowers** A. Robin Bowers, "Emblem and Rape in Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus*." *Studies in Iconography* 10 (1984-1986): 79-96.
- Bronowski** J. Bronowski, *William Blake and the Age of Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965).

- Bryson** Norman Bryson, "Two Narratives of Rape in the Visual Arts: Lucretia and the Sabine Women." *Rape*. Ed. Sylvana Tomaselli and Ray Porter. (London: Basil Blackwell, 1985). 152-177.
- Burnim** Kalman A. Burnim, *David Garrick: Director* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1973).
- Burwick** Frederick Burwick, "Shakespeare and the Romantics." *A Companion to Romanticism* Ed. Duncan Wu. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999). 512-519.
- Cannon-Brookes** Peter Cannon-Brookes, ed. *The Painted Word: British History Painting 1750-1830* (London: Helm, 1991).
- Chayes** Irene H. Chayes, "Between Reynolds and Blake: Eclecticism and Expression in Fuseli's Shakespeare Frescoes." *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities* 85 (1982): 140-168.
- Clark** Anna Clark, *Women's Silence Men's Violence: Sexual Assault in England 1770-1845* (London: Pandora, 1987).
- Clark, David** David L. Clark, "How to do Things with Shakespeare: Illustrative Theory and Practice in Blake's *Pity*." *The Mind in Creation*. Ed. J. Douglas Kneale (Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1992). 106-133.
- Clarke** John Clarke, *The Life and Times of George III* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972).
- Colley** Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1992).
- Conway, "Britain"** Stephen Conway, "Britain and the Revolutionary Crisis, 1763-

- 1791." *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. Vol. 2. *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998). 325-346.
- Conway, *The War*** Stephen Conway, *The War of American Independence 1775-1783* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995).
- Davidson** Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill: The U of North Carolina P, 1941).
- DiSalvo** Jackie DiSalvo, "Blake Encountering Milton: Politics and the Family in *Paradise Lost* and *The Four Zoas*." *Milton and the Line of Vision*. Ed. Joseph Anthony Wittreich (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1975). 143-84.
- Dobson** Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).
- Dramatic Character*** *Dramatic Character Plates for Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays 1775-1776* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969).
- Dundas** Judith Dundas, "Mocking the Mind: The Role of Art in Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 14.1 (Spring 1983): 13-22.
- Ehrstine** John W. Ehrstine, "William Blake's *King Edward the Third*." *Research Studies* 36 (1968): 151-62.
- Emsley** Clive Emsley, "Revolution, War and the Nation State: The British and Foreign Experiences 1789-1801." *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*. Ed. Mark Philip (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

- Erdman, Blake** David Erdman, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1977).
- Esterhammer** Angela Esterhammer, *Creating States: Studies in the Performative Language of John Milton and William Blake* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1994).
- Feitelberg** Doreen Feitelberg, "The Theme of Love and Wooing and the Consequences of Seduction in Shakespeare's Poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece." *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* 7 (1994): 51-60.
- Fox, "The Female"** Susan Fox, "The Female as Metaphor in William Blake's Poetry." *Critical Inquiry* 3 (Spring 1977): 507-519.
- Fox, Poetic Form** Susan Fox, *Poetic Form in Blake's Milton* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976).
- Franklin** Colin Franklin, "Print and Design in Eighteenth-Century Editions of Shakespeare." *The Book Collector* 43.4 (Winter 1994): 517-528.
- Friedman** Winnifred Friedman, *Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976).
- Fuller** David Fuller, "The Translation of Vision: Reading Blake's *Tiriel*." *Durham University Journal* 75.1 (December 1982): 29-36.
- Gleckner** Robert F. Gleckner, "Tiriel and the State of Experience." *The Piper & the Bard* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1959). 131-156.
- Godechot** Jacques Godechot, *The Taking of the Bastille*. Trans. Jean Stewart. (London: Faber and Faber, 1970).

- Goslee** Nancy Moore Goslee, "Slavery and Sexual Character: Questioning the Master Trope in Blake's *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*." *English Literary History* 57.1 (Spring 1990): 101-128.
- Greene** Jack P. Greene, "Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution." *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. Vol. 2. *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998). 208-230.
- Grene** David Grene and Richard Lattimore, eds. *Sophocles I*. Trans. David Grene, Robert Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Wyckoff (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1954).
- Hagstrum,**
"Babylon" Jean Hagstrum, "Babylon Revisited, or the Story of Luvah and Vala." *William Blake*. Ed. David Punter (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996). 36-53.
- Hagstrum,**
William Jean Hagstrum, *William Blake: Poet and Painter* (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1964).
- Halloran** William F. Halloran "The French Revolution: Revelation's New Form." *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*. Ed. David V. Erdman and John E. Grant (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970). 30-56.
- Harris** Arthur John Harris, "Garrick, Colman, and *King Lear*: A Reconsideration." *Shakespeare: The Critical Complex*. Eds. Stephen Orgel and Sean Keilen. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999). 213-222.

- Hart** Jonathan Hart, "Narratorial Strategies in *The Rape of Lucrece*." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 30.1 (Winter 1992): 59-77.
- Hazelton** Nancy Hazelton, *Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century Shakespearean Staging* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987).
- Heffernan, "Blake"** James A.W. Heffernan, "Blake's Oothoon: The Dilemmas of Marginality." *Studies In Romanticism* 30 (Spring 1991): 3-18.
- Heffernan, Representing** James A.W. Heffernan, ed. *Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography and Art* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1992).
- Heppner** Christopher Heppner, *Reading Blake's Designs* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995).
- Hibbert** Christopher Hibbert, *George III: A Personal History* (London: Viking, 1998).
- Hogan** C.B. Hogan, *The London Stage 1660-1800*. Part 5: 1776-1800 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968).
- Johansen** Ib Johansen, "The Fires of Orc: William Blake and the Rhetoric of Revolutionary Discourse." *The Impact of the French Revolution on English Literature*. Ed. Anders Iversen (Aarhus: Aarhus UP, 1990). 43-75.
- Johnson** Mary Lynn Johnson, "Recent Reconstructions of Blake's Milton and *Milton: A Poem*." *Milton and the Romantics* 2 (1976): 1-10.

- Kahn** Coppélia Kahn, "The Rape in Shakespeare's Lucrece." *Shakespeare Studies* 9 (1976): 45-72.
- Kaplan** Marc Kaplan, "Blake's *Milton*: The Metaphysics of Gender." *Nineteenth Century Contexts* 19.2 (1995): 151-178.
- Keith** Jennifer Keith, "The Feet of Salvation in Blake's *Milton*." *Bulletin de la Société d'études Anglo-Américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles* 41 (1995): 51-67.
- Kendall** Alan Kendall, *David Garrick: A Biography* (London: Harrap, 1985).
- Kliman** Bernice W. Kliman, "Samuel Johnson and Tonson's 1745 Shakespeare: Warburton, Anonymity, and the Shakespeare Wars." *Reading Readings*. Ed. Joanna Gondris (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1998). 299-317.
- Lattin** Vernon E. Lattin, "Blake's Thel and Oothoon: Sexual Awakening in the Eighteenth Century." *Literary Criterion* 16.1 (1981): 11-24.
- Lee** Rensselaer W. Lee, "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting." *The ArtBulletin* 22.4 (December 1940): 197-269.
- Lloyd** Alan Lloyd, *The King Who Lost America* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971).
- Lottes** Gunther Lottes, "Radicalism, Revolution, and Political Culture: An Anglo-French Comparison." *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*. Ed. Mark Philip (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

- Lowery** Margaret Ruth Lowery, "Edward the Third." *Windows of the Morning: A Critical Study of William Blake's Poetical Sketches, 1783* (New Haven: Archon Books, 1970).
- Maguire** Nancy Klein Maguire, "Nahum Tate's *King Lear*: 'the king's blest restoration.'" *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*. Ed. Jean I. Marsden (New York: Harvester Whitesheaf, 1991). 29-42.
- Marsden** Jean I. Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation & Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory* (Lexington: The UP of Kentucky, 1995).
- Mee** Jon Mee, *Dangerous Enthusiasm: William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).
- Mellor, Blake's** Anne K. Mellor, *Blake's Human Form Divine* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1974).
- Mellor, Romanticism** Anne Mellor, *Romanticism and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
- Mellor, "Sex"** Anne Mellor, "Sex, Violence, and Slavery." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 58.3 345-370.
- Merchant, "Blake's"** Moelwyn Merchant, "Blake's Shakespeare." *Apollo* 79 (April 1964): 318-25.
- Merchant, Shakespeare** Moelwyn Merchant, *Shakespeare and the Artist* (London: Oxford UP, 1959).

- Miller** Ronald F. Miller, "A *Midsummer Night's Dream*: The Fairies, Bottom and the Mystery of Things." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26.3 (Summer 1975): 254-268.
- Mitchell** W.J.T. Mitchell, *Blake's Composite Art* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978).
- Moody** Jane Moody, "Writing for the Metropolis: Illegitimate Performances of Shakespeare in Early Nineteenth-Century London." *Shakespeare: The Critical Complex*. Eds. Stephen Orgel and Sean Keilen (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999). 223-231.
- Newlyn** Lucy Newlyn, *Paradise Lost and the Romantic Reader* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1993).
- Odell** George C.D. Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*. Vols. 1-2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920).
- O'Gorman** Frank O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political & Social History 1688-1832* (London: Arnold, 1997).
- Ostrom** Hans Ostrom, "Blake's *Tiriel* and the Dramatization of Collapsed Language." *Papers on Language and Literature: A Journal for Scholars and Critics of Language and Literature* 19.2 (Spring 1983): 167-182.
- Parkhurst** Kay Parkhurst and Roger R. Easson, eds. *Milton*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973).
- Paulson, Book** Ronald Paulson, *Book and Painting: Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible* (Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1982).

- Paulson,** Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution (1789-1820)* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983).
- Representations**
- Pedicord** Harry William Pedicord, *The Theatrical Public in the Time of Garrick* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois P, 1954).
- Perkins** David Perkins, ed. *English Romantic Writers* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1967).
- Porter** Roy Porter, "Rape—Does it have a historical meaning?" *Rape*. Ed. Sylvana Tomaselli and Ray Porter (London: Basil Blackwell, 1985). 216-236.
- Price** Jacob M. Price, "The Imperial Economy, 1700-1776." *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. Vol. 2. *The Eighteenth Century*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. 78-104).
- Prickett** Stephen Prickett, *England and the French Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1989).
- The Raigne** *The Raigne of King Edward the Third* (London: Cuthbert Burby, 1596).
- Raine, "Some"** Kathleen Raine, "Some Sources of *Tiriel*." *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 21.1 (November 1957): 1-36.
- Raine, "Tiriel"** Kathleen Raine, "*Tiriel*." *Blake and Tradition*. Vol. 1 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969). 34-68.
- Rajan** Tilottama Rajan, "Engendering the System: *The Book of Thel* and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*." *The Mind in Creation: Essays on English Romantic Literature in Honour of Ross G.*

- Woodman*. Ed. J. Douglas Kneale. Quebec: McGill-Queen's UP, 1992. 74-90.
- Rudé** George Rudé, . *Paris and London in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: The Viking Press, 1970).
- Sandler** Florence Sandler, "The Iconoclastic Enterprise: Blake's Critique of Milton's Religion." *Blake Studies* 5.1 (1972): 13-57.
- Schama, History** Simon Schama, *A History of Britain*. Vol. 2. *The Wars of the British 1603-1776* (New York: Hyperion, 2001).
- Schama, Citizens** Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).
- Seary** Peter Seary, *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
- Shepherd** James F. Shepherd, "British America and the Atlantic Economy." *The Economy of Early America: The Revolutionary Period, 1763-1790*. Eds. Ronald Hoffman, *et.al.* (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1988). 3-44.
- Small** Ian Small, "Introduction." *The French Revolution and British Culture*. Eds. Ceri Crossley and Ian Small (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989).
- Smith** Nichol D. Smith, ed. *Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare*. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).
- Spector** Sheila Spector, "Tiriél as Spenserian Allegory Manqué." *Philological Quarterly* 71.3 (Summer 1992): 313-335.

- Stone Jr.** George Winchester Stone Jr., *David Garrick: A Critical Biography*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1979).
- Storch** Margaret Storch, "The 'Spectrous Fiend' Cast Out: Blake's Crisis at Felpham." *Modern Language Quarterly* 44.2 (June 1983): 115-135.
- Summerfield** H. Summerfield, "Blake's *The French Revolution* and the Bible." *University of Dayton Review* 17.3 (1986): 29-39.
- Thompson** E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963).
- Vaughan** W.H.T. Vaughan, "Shakespeare Compared: Boydell and Retzsch." *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery*. Eds. Walter Pape and Frederick Burwick. (Bottrop: Peter Pomp, 1996). 175-86.
- Waith** Eugene, M. Waith, ed. *Titus Andronicus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
- Walder** Ernest Walder, *Shakespearean Criticism: Textual and Literary from Dryden to the end of the Eighteenth Century* (Kirkgate: Thomas Brear & Co., Limited, 1895).
- Walsh** Walsh, Marcus. *Shakespeare, Milton and eighteenth-century literary editing* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).
- Warner** Warner. *Albion's England. The Renaissance in England*. Ed. Hyder E. Rollins and Herschel Baker (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1954). 10-12.
- Warner** Janet A. Warner, *Blake and the Language of Art* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1984).

- Waugh** Scott L. Waugh, *England in the Reign of Edward III* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).
- Webb** Timothy Webb, "The Romantic Poet and the Stage: A Short, Sad History." *The Romantic Theatre: An International Symposium* (New Jersey: Barnes and Noble, 1986).
- Wells** Stanley Wells, ed. *Shakespeare in the Theatre: An Anthology of Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
- Wilson** Rawdon R. Wilson, "Shakespearean Narrative: *The Rape of Lucrece* Reconsidered." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 28.1 (Winter 1988): 39-59.
- Wittreich** Joseph Anthony Wittreich Jr., *The Romantics on Milton* (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University, 1970).
- Woodcock** George Woodcock, "The Meaning of Revolution in Britain." *The French Revolution and British Culture*. Eds. Ceri Crossley and Ian Small. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989. 1-14.
- Yarrington** Alison Yarrington and Kelvin Everest, eds, *Reflections of Revolution: Images of Romanticism* (London: Routledge, 1993).

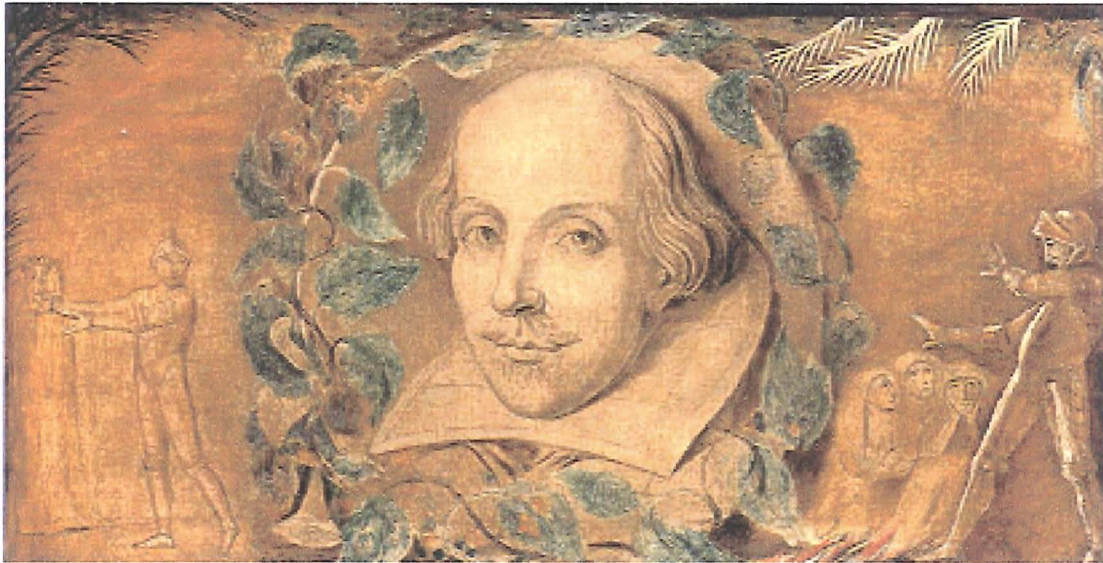
LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:	<i>Roubiliac's statue of Shakespeare</i>	175
APPENDIX 2:	Heart of Oak	176
APPENDIX 3:	William Hogarth, <i>Just View of the British Stage</i>	177
APPENDIX 4:	Frontispieces to Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher	178
APPENDIX 5:	Dramatic Character Plates	179
APPENDIX 6:	Falstaff and Prince Hal	180
APPENDIX 7:	William Blake, <i>Fiery Pegasus</i>	181
APPENDIX 8:	David Garrick and George Ann Bellamy in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	182
APPENDIX 9:	Mary Hoare, <i>Lady Percy watching the sleeping Hotspur</i>	183
APPENDIX 10:	Mary Hoare, <i>Ophelia's Death</i>	184
APPENDIX 11:	William Blake, <i>Lear and Cordelia in Prison</i>	185
APPENDIX 12:	James Barry, <i>King Lear 5.3</i>	186
APPENDIX 13:	Annibale Caracci, <i>Pietà</i>	187
APPENDIX 14:	Michelangelo, <i>St. Peter's Pietà</i>	188
APPENDIX 15:	William Blake, <i>Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing</i>	189
APPENDIX 16:	William Blake, "Nurse's Song", <i>Songs of Innocence</i>	190
APPENDIX 17:	William Blake, <i>The Song of Los</i>	191
APPENDIX 18:	William Blake, <i>Pity</i>	192
APPENDIX 19:	William Blake, <i>The Night of Enitharmon's Joy (Hecate)</i>	193
APPENDIX 20:	<i>Hekataion</i>	194
APPENDIX 21:	The Houses of York and Lancaster	195
APPENDIX 22:	American Liberty Song	196
APPENDIX 23:	Patrick Henry, Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!	197
APPENDIX 24:	William Blake, <i>Tiriel supporting Myratana</i>	199

APPENDIX 25:	William Blake, <i>Har and Heva Bathing</i>	200
APPENDIX 26:	William Blake, <i>Har Blessing Tiriel</i>	201
APPENDIX 27:	William Blake, <i>Tiriel Leaving Har and Heva</i>	202
APPENDIX 28:	William Blake, <i>Tiriel Carried by Ijim</i>	203
APPENDIX 29:	William Blake, <i>Tiriel Denouncing his Four Sons</i>	204
APPENDIX 30:	William Blake, <i>Tiriel Walking with Hela</i>	205
APPENDIX 31:	William Blake, <i>Har and Heva Asleep</i>	206
APPENDIX 32:	William Blake, <i>Tiriel Dead Before Hela</i>	207
APPENDIX 33:	<i>Carceri d'invenzione</i>	208
APPENDIX 34:	Declaration of Independence of the United States of America	209
APPENDIX 35:	Average annual exports to overseas areas	211
APPENDIX 36:	Average annual exports from colonies	212
APPENDIX 37:	Official value of imports from / to Great Britain	213
APPENDIX 38:	William Blake, Frontispiece, <i>Visions of the Daughters of Albion</i>	214
APPENDIX 39:	Henry Fuseli, <i>Silence</i>	215
APPENDIX 40:	Donatello, <i>Entombment of Christ</i>	216
APPENDIX 41:	William Blake, Plate 7, <i>Visions of the Daughters of Albion</i>	217
APPENDIX 42:	William Blake, Plate 6, <i>Visions of the Daughters of Albion</i>	218
APPENDIX 43:	William Blake, Plate 9, <i>Visions of the Daughters of Albion</i>	219
APPENDIX 44:	Susan Fox, Outline of <i>Milton</i>	220
APPENDIX 45:	William Blake, <i>A Portrait of Milton</i>	222
APPENDIX 46:	William Blake, <i>A Portrait of Shakespeare</i>	223
APPENDIX 47:	William Blake, Plate 13, <i>Milton</i>	224

CHAPTER 1

“All the world’s a stage”: The Dramatic Blake



A Portrait of Shakespeare (1800-1803) William Blake¹

Blake says, in an aside to *Sir Jeffery Chaucer and the nine and twenty Pilgrims on their Journey to Canterbury*, “By way of illustration, I instance Shakspeare’s [sic] Witches in Macbeth. Those who dress them for the stage, consider them as wretched old women, and not as Shakspeare [sic] intended, the Goddesses of Destiny” (Bate *Shakespeare and*, 127). This statement seems to contradict Timothy Webb’s statement that “Blake seems to have had no direct interest either in drama or in the theatre” (13) except in *Edward the Third*. In fact, evidence suggests that Blake may have been familiar with the stage. Mr. Shuter, an actor, appears in Bell’s Illustrated edition and in one of Blake’s woodcuts entitled *Falstaff and Prince Hal*. Moreover, perhaps Blake’s knowledge of the theatre stems from his friendship with actor Samuel Foote and the actor and painter Prince Hoare, who attended productions at Drury Lane, though which ones is uncertain (Bate *Shakespeare and*, 127). Blake’s friendship with Prince Hoare is much deeper than Bate suggests. In a letter to William Hayley on April 7, 1804, Blake mentions

his involvement with Prince Hoare and Mr. Phillips.² They are engaged in a proposal in which they request Hayley's assistance, one that shall "be call'd a Defence of Literature against those pests of the press & a bulwark for Genius which shall with your good assistance, Disperse those Rebellious Spirits of Envy & Malignity In Short"³ (746).

Blake's knowledge of the theatre does not end there. In a letter to William Hayley on April 25, 1805, there is a reference to Blake's theatre attendance, in which he refers to William Henry West Betty: "The town is Mad Young Roscius like all Prodigies is the talk of Every Body I have not seen him & perhaps never may. I have no Curiosity to see him as I well know what is within the compass of a boy of 14. & as to Real Acting it is Like Historical Painting No Boys Work." (764). In 1804, at the age of thirteen, William Henry West Betty took the London theatre world by storm. In fact, on opening night that season, the military was called out to maintain order in the streets. He was considered the brightest star of the London stage, despite his success lasting only a year, in roles such as Hamlet and Romeo. Prints, engravings, medals and other memorabilia depicting or associated with Betty were sold in most of the shops. Whether or not Blake saw Betty is irrelevant, because knowledge of his work, his popularity at the time, and Blake's criticism of him suggest that Blake would have at least known about the boy.

Blake's knowledge of the theatre may be a moot point, but his knowledge of Shakespeare is not. Blake tells us, in a letter to John Flaxman on September 12, 1800, "Now my lot in the heavens in this, Milton lov'd me in childhood & shewed me his face. . . . Shakespeare in riper years gave me his hand" (707). Shakespeare's presence had been inescapable in book form, on the stage, and on the subject of illustration; however, his influence on Blake's work, until now, has not been fully investigated, although the

influence of other writers, chief among them Milton, has been very widely discussed. Jonathan Bate identifies a possible reason for this discrepancy: “Perhaps as a result of Bloom’s claim that Milton is the central problem in any theory and history of poetic influence in English, recent critical discussion of Romanticism’s self-consciously problematic relationship with the tradition has concentrated on Milton” (*Shakespeare and*, 2). Nonetheless, Blake’s use of Shakespeare differs widely from his use of Milton.⁴ Blake’s own major prophetic response to Milton, *Milton*, has generated much criticism: autobiographical,⁵ historical,⁶ biblical,⁷ Miltonic,⁸ and theoretical.⁹

Frederick Burwick, for example, summarises Shakespeare’s presence in the Romantic period, particularly the paradoxical nature of Shakespeare’s work: it was too bawdy for the English stage and the plays were not suited for the stage (513). In fact, Coleridge, as Burwick points out, assigns Shakespeare’s work to the closet, where they can be best enjoyed because they appeal to the mind, the imagination, and not the senses. While Burwick’s approach encompasses the Romantics, current critical projects, his included, neglect, particularly, the Shakespearean and dramatic characteristics of Blake’s work. Jonathan Bate’s scholarly contribution in this area is virtually the only material available, but he provides only the foundation for future detailed investigation.¹⁰

Jonathan Bate’s *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* examines the major poets of the Romantic period—Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and Byron—and identifies Shakespearean quotations, allusions and echoes in their work. In the two Blake chapters, Bate summarises Blake’s relationship with Shakespeare as “revisionary,” but notes that the presence of Shakespeare is more elusive in the later prophetic works. He notes how Blake develops Shakespeare’s ideas about the

imagination in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* into his central motif. Unfortunately, Bate's focus is primarily on the earlier works (*Edward III*, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *Tiriel*, *The Book of Thel*). When he turns to *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, he merely identifies analogies and verbal echoes.

In what Jonathan Bate calls his “sequel”, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830*, he builds a historical and cultural studies framework to establish Shakespeare's “constitution” in England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Bate examines the theatre, the Shakespeare Jubilee, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, political discourse, caricature and Shakespeare's appropriation by James Gillray and William Hazlitt. In a third book, *Shakespeare: An Illustrated Stage History*, Bate confines himself to English theatre and concentrates on illustrations of specific plays to show the development of styles of illustration over the centuries in response to historical and cultural changes. These three books, when read in chronological order, establish Shakespeare's prominence in English poetry, history, culture, theatre, and politics from Elizabethan to contemporary England, but none of them provides a detailed critique of Blake's relationship with Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's popularity began rising in the 1660s, when his plays seemed to address newly topical themes. Davenant's *The Tempest* or *The Enchanted Island*, as Michael Dobson notes, alluded to the restored monarchy of Charles II and the dead Charles I—like “the Globe, a victim of the axe during the Interregnum” (38). The monarchy's restoration was followed by the theatre's and then followed a Shakespeare revival, though many of the plays were adapted for the Restoration stage.¹¹ In the late 1670s and early 1680s, for example, many Shakespearean adaptations appeared on

stage—nine between October 1678 and June 1682. Shakespeare's tragedies tended to be re-cast as tragicomedies (Dobson 62). Five of the adaptations remained in theatre repertories for more than 40 years: Edward Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus* or *The Rape of Lavinia* (1678); John Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida* or *Truth Found Too Late* (1679); Thomas Otway's *The History and Fall of Caius Marius* (based on *Romeo and Juliet*) (1679); Nahum Tate's *The History of King Lear* (1681); and Thomas Durfey's *The Injured Princess* (from *Cymbeline*) (1682) (Dobson 62-63).

The Exclusion Crisis may have contributed to this fashion for adaptations.¹² At this time, censors were rigorous in their inspection of plays, anxious to detect any implied political comments. Writers' adaptations were experiments "in politicising and depoliticising the contemporary stage" (Dobson 64). Adaptations of existing plays were less likely to attract the censors' attentions and allowed the adapter to introduce, covertly, topical political issues. In Tate's adaptation of *King Lear*, for example, Bate observes that the prologue alludes to the Popish plot: "the first performance of his *Lear* was contemporaneous with the trial in London of Oliver Plunket, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland, on trumped-up charges of conspiring to land a French army" (*Shakespearean*, 61).¹³

In the 1730s, Shakespeare's prominence increased with Richard Temple's commission for a Temple of British Worthies at Stowe: a Shakespeare bust was constructed on the grounds in 1735—the first "monument to the playwright to celebrate him in a national context" (Dobson 136). This commission initiated a series of Shakespeare statues. The Shakespeare Ladies Club, an organisation devoted to promoting interest in Shakespeare, commissioned a memorial to Shakespeare in Westminster

Abbey. The Dutch sculptor, Peter Scheemakers, made the statue and set it in place on January 29, 1741. Sixteen years later, in 1757, David Garrick, the actor who was to organise the Shakespeare Jubilee in 1769, had a pavilion built at Chiswick to enshrine Roubiliac's statue of Shakespeare for which he posed, and built a temple to Shakespeare on his estate in Hampton (Appendix 1).

Between the 1740s and 1760s, Dobson suggests, a period of rapid mercantile and imperial expansion invoked "new alterations of Shakespeare which prosper, such as Garrick's *Florizel and Perdita* (*The Winter's Tale*), *Catharine and Petruchio* (*The Taming of the Shrew*), and *Cymbeline*" (187). These plays present a "domestic Shakespeare who is at the same time imminently patriotic, identified at once with virtuous family life, vigorous trade, and British glory" (Dobson 187). Garrick was instrumental in aiding the patriotism that would emerge during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). In fact, he appears to have ensured "that even his most drastic adaptations" of Shakespeare's plays "were identified with the national cause" (Dobson 203). Reinforcing his position, Garrick wrote the lyrics to *Heart of Oak*, a patriotic song during the Seven Years' War with France (Appendix 2).¹⁴ The verses reinforce the themes of glory, honour, and freedom while the chorus inspires the English to fight and to conquer their enemy. The lyrics also have Shakespearean echoes of *Henry V*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tempest*, and *King Lear*. The allusions permeate the song and unite the national poet with patriotism, glory, and England.

Garrick's choice of words and allusions to the Bard are appropriate since, between 1747 and 1800, no English writer surpassed Shakespeare's popularity. The two leading playhouses, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, promoted Shakespeare's tragedies.

Of the ten most frequently performed plays, 40-50% were by Shakespeare (Hogan clxxi). In the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear* dominated the stage. Shakespeare's comedies and romances were also popular. *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* were performed almost every year at either Drury Lane or Covent Garden. Perhaps the popularity of Shakespeare on the stage is partly due to the Stage Licensing Act of 1737.¹⁵ To counteract the Act, according to Bate, theatres "resorted to Shakespearean revivals instead of controversial new plays" (*Shakespeare*, 64).

While Garrick managed Drury Lane Theatre, there were 33 successful plays, almost half of which were Shakespearean dramas. Harry Pedicord lists them in the following order of popularity: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*; *Richard III* and *Macbeth*; *King Lear*, *Othello*, and *Cymbeline*; *Henry VIII*; *Henry IV Part 2*; *King John*; *Henry IV Part 1*; *Timon of Athens*; *Coriolanus*; *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Henry V*. The Shakespearean tragedies were presented in "altered versions with the exception of *Othello* and *Coriolanus*, and, in part, *Hamlet*" (137). Despite his use of adaptations, Garrick was steadfast in his attachment to the Shakespeare repertoire—a conviction that lasted for almost 29 years.

Garrick would change the acting style and the stage design, something his predecessor, Colley Cibber, did not. From the death of Betterton in 1710 until Garrick's appearance in the 1741-1742 season, Cibber would maintain Shakespeare's dominance on the stage, but not necessarily with the same magnitude that Garrick would bring to the theatre. Cibber retained certain Shakespeare plays as written, without emendations or adaptations, including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Julius Caesar*, *Henry VIII*, and *1 Henry IV* (Odell

265). During Cibber's management, Shakespeare's popularity on the English stage was staggering, perhaps enough to help finance the theatre on its own merits:

Ten of Shakespeare's works were stock plays during almost the entire thirty-one seasons in debate. Of these, Genest records performances of *Macbeth* for every year except six; of *Hamlet*, for every season except two. *King Lear* missed eight seasons, but *Othello* only two—a remarkable record. *Julius Caesar* was laid aside only once until the season of 1728-29, and then was passed over for seven successive seasons. . . . *The Tempest* was revived for twenty-six of these theatrical years, and *Timon of Athens* for twenty-one. The first part of *Henry IV* was omitted from the bills during only three of the thirty-one seasons (Odell 224).

At a time when Britain is actively engaged in war, it is not surprising that the histories and tragedies dominate the stage. The tragedies act as lessons, even warnings, of what not to do as King or future heir to the throne, portraying the dangers inherent in the position itself and all it connotes. Despite the prevalence of these two genres on the stage, perhaps what is most interesting is the revival of Shakespeare's lesser known plays, mostly comedies, at the patent houses and Goodman's Fields near the end of Cibber's period: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Winter's Tale*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *The Comedy of Errors*. Some of these plays had not been performed for a hundred years, and the comedies seemed to be making a comeback, until Garrick returned and reintroduced the tragedies and histories once more. Perhaps part of the reason for the revival at Goodman's Fields is due to the fact that this theatre had no license and was frequented

primarily by individuals in that neighbourhood (often the poor). Until 1843, as Jane Moody points out, “theatrical legislation permitted only Drury Lane and Covent Garden (the “patent” theatres) to perform Shakespeare within the metropolis” (223). These two theatres were often attended by the wealthy and the royal family. The smaller theatres resorted to rewriting Shakespeare’s plays, renaming them and then performing them to avoid prosecution.

Nonetheless, no dramatic genre would remain sacred to adaptation. In the early eighteenth century, *Richard II* was the victim of Lewis Theobald’s hand and was produced at Lincoln’s Inn Fields on December 10, 1719. Theobald set most of the events in the play at the Tower of London and altered the characters of York, Aumerle, and introduced a Lady Piercy, daughter of Northumberland, with whom Aumerle is in love. The fourth act is altered considerably, so that at the end of the play Bolingbroke is the only remaining character alive.¹⁶ According to Odell, this version lasted a year or two and in 1737-1738, Shakespeare’s play of the same name replaced it at Covent Garden (243).

Richard II was not the only play to experience a revival of sorts. *2 Henry IV* was revived for the first time in seventeen years on December 17, 1720. This play was popular among the crowds, particularly when a good actor played Falstaff. The original cast in 1720 was “very strong, including Booth as the King, Wilks as Prince of Wales, Mills as Falstaff, Colley Cibber as Shallow, and Boman as the Chief Justice. Later, Pistol became a famous characterisation of Theophilus Cibber (Odell 244). During Colley Cibber’s tenure, “improving” Shakespeare, as in any revision process, was considered complete but then began again when David Garrick arrived. Interestingly, none of the altered Shakespeare plays remained in the stage repertoire longer than a few years

because the public demanded Shakespeare's plays, not mutilated versions such as *The Universal Passion* by James Miller, which was performed at Drury Lane on February 28, 1737 but went to its grave soon thereafter.

Cibber's contribution to stage design also differed from what Garrick will do in the mid-eighteenth century. In fact, during Cibber's management at Drury Lane, the stage remained similar in structure to Betterton's—a rather conservative stage (Odell 264). The apron was still the scene of the action:

When the back scene is displayed, the front or “apron”, as in Betterton's day, becomes immediately incorporated into it, though just before it had been supposed to be separated from it by a wall of brick and mortar. . . . The actors, as in the restoration days, continue to remain on the stage while such change is taking place, and pass at once into the new scene as if they had gone through the wall arbitrarily set up and removed at will (Odell 265).

This design enabled scenes to change at will, while the actor remained steadfast in his position on the stage. Time would seem to change rapidly, and events continued around the actors to create this effect.

The balcony and the curtain, used in the Restoration, are still used during Cibber's time. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, the curtain did not fall between acts. Therefore, scenes were never unveiled, but always constructed in front of the audience. The only reference to the curtain in Cibber's era occurs “in the *Lucius* of the very helpful Mrs. Manley, produced at Drury Lane in 1717” (Odell 270). Sometimes, in place of a curtain, “flats closing in”—proscenium doors—were referred to, which

seemed to act as curtains (Odell 272). They were placed on the stage to cover the opening between the proscenium and the orchestra pit so that actors could walk without their backs to the audience. When the apron was eventually reduced in size, the curtain would be used in place of the proscenium doors (Odell 273).

A drawing attributed to Hogarth entitled *A Just View of the British Stage* perhaps best depicts the stage of Cibber's time period (Appendix 3). Odell describes the scene: "the faces of Comedy and Tragedy plastered over with bills announcing pantomimes, with Johnson's ghost rising in anger, and with Wilks, Cibber, and Booth manipulating the wires and machinery of pantomimic art. The drawing is valuable as showing an unmistakable stage-set of a room with back flats and side-wings—the conventional setting of the day; possibly it represents the very stage of Drury Lane Theatre" (317). The angularity and linearity of the picture and the design of the proscenium arch place the action much more in the background, where doors can shut off the audience when the scene concludes. The picture, ironically, draws the audience into the picture space, but we are ever aware of the possibility of being shut out from it. If there is doubt as to the authenticity of the stage, a quick glance at Beaumont and Fletcher's *Frontispieces to plays*, done in 1711, supports Hogarth's depiction (Appendix 4).

As with any stage, lighting was a problem because candles were placed in hoops or rings, which hung above the stage. Overhead rays would descend upon the actors, but the wax would also descend on the actors and their costumes in plain view of the audience. The introduction of footlights around 1735, of course, repositioned the light, even making it more flexible for scenes. During the best years of Cibber's time, 1709-1733, there was custom stage setting, which included "stock scenery, stock properties,

stock costumes” (Odell 291). Much like the Westerns of the twentieth century, costumes dictated roles, but instead of the black connotes the “bad guy” and white the “hero”, Odell tells us that “the heroines sported larger and larger panniers and hoops, with trains carried by pages. Both sexes wore the enormous headdress, masses of puffed and frizzled hair, crowned with feathers and jewels, in the case of women; with a hat or helmet and a gigantic plume of feathers, in the case of men” (319). The Garrick age is rich in pictures of such makeup. The hero was usually distinguishable onstage: “The gigantic plume of the hero is almost unbelievable in altitude and absurd inappropriateness. With it went the high-heeled buskins” (Odell 320).

While Cibber’s management and renown for acting *Richard II* returned Shakespeare to the stage in virtually unaltered form at the patent theatres, Garrick’s legendary debut as Richard III at Goodman’s Fields Theatre on October 19, 1741 solidified Shakespeare’s presence on the English stage and Garrick’s place in Shakespearean roles. Garrick’s supreme achievement was in the role of King Lear. Kalman Burnim notes that “throughout Garrick’s entire career, so very high was his reputation in the part that when a performance of the play was announced, the mobs often filled the theatre several hours before curtain time” (141). Garrick gave his first performance of Lear on March 11, 1742 and his last thirty-four years later on June 8, 1776. The play “was the fourth most popular tragedy at Drury Lane between 1741-1747, playing 101 times (twice the number of productions between 1702 and 1740), with 83 of these performances during Garrick’s management” (Burnim 143). Although Garrick retained Tate’s ending, the popularity of the Shakespeare editions available to the public and the number of reprints suggest that the audience would have known the original play.

Other plays written were much closer to the original Shakespeare text. Hamlet, for example, was Garrick's most popular role and, although the text was slightly adapted, it was Shakespeare's play. There were 152 performances at Drury Lane Theatre between 1741 and 1776 (more than any other tragedy) (Burnim 152). Garrick performed Hamlet for the first time in Dublin on August 12, 1742 and the last on May 30, 1776 at Drury Lane Theatre. Garrick also performed Macbeth 96 times and the play became the third most popular in the repertory during his career (Burnim 103). His version of this Scottish play was almost identical to Shakespeare's except for the deletion of 269 lines of text.

David Garrick, however, was not just an actor. He was also a talented theatre manager. He became a partner with James Lacy in the purchase of Drury Lane Theatre. According to Kalman Burnim, Drury Lane employed 70-100 performers (actors, singers, dancers, musicians), a staff of house servants (scene painters, scene shifters, lampmen, candlemen, treasurer and his staff, prompter and his pages and scribes, billstickers, coal men, fruit men, a housekeeper and his staff) totalling between 40-75 people. When Lacy and Garrick bought the theatre, its credit was nil and "its prestige was at its lowest ebb in fifteen years, but under them, there was almost immediate financial prosperity" (4). Perhaps some of this prosperity is due to the hectic theatre schedule. A general pattern emerged in Drury Lane under the direction of Garrick. The Drury Lane season began in the middle of September and, by the second week of October there were six performances weekly. In late November or early December, a new play would open or there would be a revival of a long-unproduced play. January and February was deemed the height of the season and mid-February was reserved for emendations to plays. In late May or early June, the season closed. In the summer, Garrick would send the Drury Lane

actors a list of parts, which he expected them to have prepared for the coming season (Burnim 6-8).

The theatre-going public in the eighteenth century numbered 11,874 weekly patrons, approximately 1.7% of the London population (Burnim 9). Garrick's dedication to his profession was phenomenal. A theatrical season would be packed with plays. A typical evening's bill included a full-length five-act mainpiece, a pantomime or three-act farce (sometimes both) as an afterpiece, and specialty masquerade dances, songs or pageants between acts for relaxation. Garrick's tenure at Drury Lane totalled 6,416 performances of 224 different mainpieces and 5,820 performances of 209 different afterpieces. The number of mainpieces comprised 81 tragedies, 116 comedies, and 27 miscellaneous-type productions. Drury Lane's 1750-51 season saw 2,688 farce performances, 1,501 pantomime performances, and 991 various musical performances (Burnim 11). Garrick wrote two of the most popular farces, *Lethe* and *The Lying Valet*; two of the most popular comedies, *A Peep Behind the Curtain* and *The Irish Widow*; the most popular musical pageant, *The Jubilee*; and the third most popular pantomime, *Harlequin's Invasion*. Each season, Drury Lane presented an average of sixteen different tragedies, thirty different comedies, and twenty-five different afterpieces. Irrespective of the time and effort as a manager, when Garrick eventually retired at the age of 59, he was still unrivaled in his portrayal of Benedict and Hamlet.

Garrick was able not only to fill the theatre, but he also made alterations to Drury Lane that would improve the actor's space. He made his first major alteration to Drury Lane in 1762. Garrick literally drove the spectators from their seats on the stage, but he substantially increased the capacity of the theatre itself. Thirteen years later, in 1775, the

theatre was radically transformed again. Old side boxes were replaced with new ones, the ceiling was raised twelve feet, new passages were installed to the upper and lower boxes, and there was a more spacious entrance (Burnim 64). After the alterations in 1747, the theatre could hold 1,268 spectators, but after 1762, the theatre could house 2,206 spectators.

Much like his predecessor, David Garrick rarely used the curtain, but instead opted for shutters behind the proscenium, which were closed or opened to hide or reveal elaborate décor. During Garrick's management of Drury Lane, however, the audience desired more realistic scenery than previously. In response to their desires, Garrick used gates and arches in the backscene. As revealed in promptbooks and printed texts, Drury Lane's focal point of the action was gradually moving the stage space backwards. Instead of the action in the apron area, the action was occurring beyond the proscenium arch (Burnim 101), which is also evident in paintings of the period, to be discussed later.

Besides stage alterations, Garrick's nurturing of Bardolatry in its many forms continued with his organisation of the Shakespeare Jubilee. The word *jubilee*, originally associated with the church in the Middle Ages, "involved whole communities and states. A Shakespeare Jubilee [therefore] might underscore, as in no other way it could, the national cultural heritage of the best in English drama and honor England's top dramatist" (Stone Jr. 577), perhaps Garrick's primary reason for labelling his event a *jubilee*. Set in Stratford-upon-Avon, the festival was to last three days and to involve the dedication of a new town hall to Shakespeare. Garrick's plans included a Shakespeare statue, on the base of which were inscribed the following lines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
 Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
 And as imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to aery nothing
 A local habitation and a name (5.1.12-17).

Blake seems to pick up the importance of these lines in *Milton* and they will assume greater dominance (see Chapter 6), but these lines, which focus on the poet's craft also have an ironic relationship with the Shakespeare Jubilee itself. On the main day of the event, Thursday September 7, 1769, the rain led to the cancellation of various events. Thursday "was supposed to begin with a pageant of characters from Shakespeare's plays, dressed appropriately," the only part of the Jubilee "that involved any representation of the characters or indeed virtually anything from the plays themselves, and even then the players were not to act" (Kendall 136).

Despite the inattention to Shakespeare's plays in a jubilee designed to promote the author and his work, other Jubilees followed in later years. Garrick established the communal characteristic of his Jubilee by involving the entire community of Stratford in its preparations. The actor's fame for depicting Shakespearean characters, his adoration of the Bard, the Jubilee itself, and the box office receipts ensured that Shakespeare effaced all other English dramatists in the two principal outlets for drama: the theatre and the publishing house.

Eighteenth century editors focused upon emendation and interpretation and ignored the circumstances regarding transmission. As early as 1709, Nicholas Rowe

produced a six-volume edition that was the first complete Shakespeare edition after the folios and the first to attempt an authoritative biography of Shakespeare, which became the standard throughout the eighteenth century (Boase 86). Publishers referred to this work as a “library edition . . . for home reading, each play illustrated by an engraving (Franklin 1).¹⁷ This form remained until the twenty-one volume variorum edition in 1821. Rowe is not the first editor, since Heminge and Condell, in 1623, produced the first collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays. They decided which words to print and which plays to include, but Rowe’s edition became the structural model for subsequent editions with its lists of *dramatis personae*, act and scene divisions, modernised spelling and illustrated with engravings.

Colin Franklin’s observations of Rowe’s 1709 edition reveals three basic characteristics: a thick band of printer’s flowers or a rectangular ornament appears above the opening of each play, a simple triangular arrangement or vignette is used on each title page (conventional treatment), and Rowe’s edition is the first manual text, first to present a biography of the poet, and the first edition in octavo (9). Moreover, Rowe’s edition lacks notes, what becomes standard in later editions of the century, and he corrects many of the typographical and other errors. His edition, unfortunately, was based upon the 1685 Fourth Folio—the most corrupt of the texts available. Rowe’s subsequent focus upon it would hinder future editions—Pope’s, Theobald’s, Hanmer’s, Warburton’s, and Johnson’s—because these men would use Rowe’s edition as the foundation for their own. Nonetheless, Rowe’s work initiated many more editions—Pope’s, Theobald’s, Hanmer’s, Warburton’s, Johnson’s, Steevens’s, Reed’s, and Malone’s—that would incorporate Rowe’s biography.

After Rowe's death, Tonson, Rowe's publisher, requested Alexander Pope's editing services. Pope's edition was the first, modern unillustrated edition of Shakespeare's work and the first royal quarto Shakespeare. Pope's edition modified Elizabethan English for an eighteenth-century audience: "What was barbarous in [Shakespeare's] language needed refinement, what was obscure needed clarification" (Walsh 130-31). Pope relied on the fitness or suitability of a word or phrase to justify a change, a strategy reliant upon his own taste. As Franklin notes, Pope "relegated to footnote italic such passages as he found too coarse to be truly Shakespearean" (91) because they may diminish Shakespeare's reputation. Pope's approach, of course, has been bitterly attacked because Pope's justification for his changes was rather juvenile. As an editor, he should not have worried about Shakespeare's reputation. He corrected typographical and pagination errors and altered words, but he performed the latter for the wrong reasons.

Lewis Theobald, the "first modern editor of Shakespeare" (Walsh 149), used the historical method as the foundation for his edition and developed a more academic approach as a result. For him, any editor should "be well vers'd in the History and Manners of his Author's Age" (Smith 78-79). In his first edition in 1733, Theobald provided footnotes for the reader. In his second edition in 1740, he included a preface, notes, and a series of illustrations—one for each play. Any changes to the texts were based upon an analysis of parallel passages from the Folios and Quartos. Theobald believed Shakespeare adhered to historical detail when warranted and thereby believed the editor had three duties: emendation, explanation, and analysis of both the successes

and deficiencies of the text (Franklin 78). Historical details could be altered if appropriate. Pope would have placed this kind of material in a footnote.

According to Peter Seary, the difference between Pope and Theobald is the latter's desire to produce "what Shakespeare had written" and the importance "of Elizabethan and Jacobean English usage" (68). Theobald's edition perhaps initiates the study of Shakespearean grammar and thereby produces a text that is not only historically accurate but a modern semantic approach as well.

The popularity of the Shakespeare editions between 1709 and 1771 is marked by the number of reprints. Hanmer's edition, for example, was printed in 1744 and reprinted seven times: 1745, 1747, 1748, 1751, 1760, 1761 and 1771. Hanmer's 1744 edition was a quarto edition in six volumes and used a glossary, located at the end of the volume. Known as the "Oxford edition", this work was subsidized by Hanmer, who lived in retirement from his position as Speaker of the House of Commons.¹⁸ In his edition, Hanmer printed Rowe's *Life*, his own preface and Pope's and a few footnotes. He would produce a 1745 octavo edition in six volumes as a reply to Oxford's breach of copyright, and in 1747 another edition emerged without the advertisement of 1745. But perhaps his best edition, certainly the best in the eighteenth century, appeared in 1771. According to Franklin's observations of this work, the "1744 impression was enlarged and the original price raised. Warburton and others contributed notes to an extended glossary at the end of the sixth volume" (31). Artistically, the 1771 edition was the best produced to date, since no new set of Shakespeare illustrations was made for thirty years.

In 1756, Johnson would produce what would become the first Variorum edition. It included previous comments so that the reader could judge for himself what was being

said and done about each prior edition. In 1765, Johnson produced eight volumes that appeared twice in the same year. He reproduced the prefaces of Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton after his own preface. Moreover, he added his general reflections after each play. By 1773, Johnson teamed with Steevens to produce a ten volume or “second Variorum” edition. Thirty-three publishers appeared on the titlepage. Much like Johnson’s 1756 edition, there were no illustrations, but the appendix included many footnotes. In 1778, a second edition was published with Steevens in which preliminary essays, lists, and other extraneous material were added and consumed 346 pages. Fifteen years later, Johnson and Steevens produced a fifteen-volume “variorum” but what would become the first variorum would not be labeled so until 1803.

Perhaps the most influential editor of the eighteenth century, Malone helped provide the *Cambridge Shakespeare* that exists today. His first edition was ten volumes but bound as eleven. The *Prolegomena*, a term he fashioned to include previous discourse and introductory observations, as defined in Johnson’s *Dictionary*, extended to about 825 pages. Of these, 45 were emendations and additions, and 150 pages were appendix. Volume ten included Shakespeare’s poems and was the first serious edition of the complete works since Nicolas Rowe’s nine-volume duodecimos from 1714. Moreover, Malone provided the first Glossarial Index. His alphabetical index was expanded in the 1803 Variorum edition. As Walder indicates, Malone “defended the Quartos but also investigated relations between the Folios. He restored countless passages from the First Folio” (133). Malone’s contribution to literary scholarship does not cease there. His edition, the Variorum edition of 1823, is still commonly used today. In it, Malone attempted to form a “Chronological Order of Shakspeare’s plays” (Walder 133). Malone’s

Life of William Shakespeare, a new addition to the Prolegomena for 1821, which began the second volume, includes a few lines of narrative followed by three pages of footnotes on the spelling of Shakespeare's name. Of the three Prolegomena volumes in 1821, totaling approximately 1900 pages, Malone's three essays occupy 900 pages.

There were many editions produced in the eighteenth century, but some do not warrant as much attention because they are not at the forefront of the development of this genre or literary scholarship. The *Stratford Shakespeare*, published in 1768, for example, was nine duodecimo volumes, produced at the suggestion of David Garrick, and would be for sale at the Stratford Jubilee of 1769. The overall success, however, of the unillustrated editions was complemented by the success of the illustrated editions.

All original eighteenth century editions of the plays, except Rowe's and Hanmer's, appeared without illustration in their first publication but often had portraits. Franklin points out that "no attempt to illustrate scenes from the plays was thought appropriate for Pope, Theobald (1733), Warburton, Johnson or successive editions from Steevens, Capell, and Malone" (198). Instead, editions appeared with etchings or a portrait. Hanmer's illustrations to his 1744 edition were done by Francis Hayman, who would later be commissioned by Alexander Boydell for the Shakespeare Gallery.

Bell's edition of the British Poets in 1782 was comprised of 109 small slim volumes. Edward Edwards designed most of them. Plates from Bell's 1773-1774 volumes were issued separately and were popular at the time. "Publish'd for Bells Edition of Shakespeare," Franklin tells us, "a set of engravings dated 1776 offered another innovation, showing particular actors in Shakespearean parts" (208). No new edition however emerged until nine years later. The first illustrated edition was produced by Bell

who announced: “We have earnestly consulted correctness, neatness, ornament, utility and cheapness of price” (Boase 93). The caricature-like representations of actors in the role of Shakespearean characters and the text’s modest price targeted a middle-class audience. The work perhaps best illustrates the actor’s use of gesture in his depiction of a Shakespeare character. This tradition dominated the stage and acting manuals of the eighteenth century, so Blake’s knowledge of the language of gesture may have derived from the theatre.¹⁹ More importantly, Henry James Richter, who may have worked for Bellamy and Roberts producing eight octavo volumes in 1791 that imitated Bell’s, was an intimate friend of William Blake. If Blake was not familiar with Bell’s edition, perhaps he knew Bellamy and Roberts’. In Bell’s second edition published from 1785-1787, the actor Mr. Shuter is depicted as Falstaff (Appendix 5), which is of interest because he also appears in Blake’s woodcut as part of a group of seven character heads, which include Falstaff and Prince Hal (Appendix 6).

The Picturesque Beauties of Shakespeare, with forty plates by Smirke and Stothard, published from 1781-86, had similar illustrations to Bell’s edition. Four plates accompanied each play in the edition. These plates “issued as plates alone, and also with accompanying texts, ... were perhaps the first Shakespeare illustrations to be seen as an alternative rather than as an adjunct to the text” (Cannon-Brookes 41). Other illustrated editions included the *Rivington Shakespeare*, with illustrations by Fuseli, published in 1805 (Appendix 7).²⁰ But there were only seven complete illustrated editions of Shakespeare prior to the establishment of Alexander Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery. In the late 1830s, two lavishly illustrated editions appeared—Charles Knight’s *Pictorial Edition* 1838-43 and Robert Tyas’s three-volume edition illustrated by Kenny Meadows

1840-43. Peter Cannon-Brookes notes that both editions were re-printed “several times before 1850 with their illustrations reappearing in editions published as far apart as New York, Leipzig, Paris, Philadelphia” (41).

Blake’s knowledge of other painters’ depictions of Shakespearean scenes is indisputable, especially those artists employed by Boydell for his Shakespeare Gallery. Smirke and Stothard not only completed plates for the 1783 edition of the *Picturesque Beauties of Shakespeare*, but also contributed to the Shakespeare Gallery. Blake also knew George Romney who provided paintings for the Gallery, evident from a letter to William Hayley dated May 4, 1804, in which Blake describes Romney’s picture of *Lear and Cordelia*: it “is about five feet by four, and exquisite for expression; it is most pathetic; the heads of Lear and Cordelia can never be surpassed, and Kent and the other attendant are admirable; the picture is very highly finished” (748). Blake also knew Boydell and, in the same letter to William Hayley, writes that Boydell “has promised to get the number and prices of all Romney’s prints as you desired. He sent a Catalogue of all his Collection, and a Scheme of his Lottery” (748). Blake also was friendly with one of the major contributors to the Gallery—Henry Fuseli—and was familiar with Fuseli’s Shakespeare illustrations, engraving some of them for Rivington’s edition of Shakespeare in 1805.²¹

Webb argues that “although the best illustrations of the Boydell Gallery provided visual interpretations or translations which were imaginatively inventive in their own right, the overall effect was to shift attention from the word to the picture” (36), but there is little evidence to support this. Shakespeare’s plays dominated the stage, the publishing market and the painting world and continued to do so—long after the Gallery was sold in

a lottery because of financial difficulties. The widespread popularity of Shakespeare editions, with or without illustrations, and individual paintings of Shakespeare's plays suggest that the public had an equal taste for text and illustrations. Blake's own practice is, of course, the best evidence of the close and complementary relationship between word and image.

In the eighteenth century, painters developed various techniques for translating stage events into pictorial images. Theatrical productions even focused upon the visual aspects of the stage. Garrick and de Louthembourg manipulated the stage lighting²² so that the 'scene' part of the stage was now lit. Actors were able to move back into the set, into the picture frame rather than in front of it, thereby "eliminating side audiences and leaving only [a] frontal view for spectators" (Hazelton 24).²³ In Benjamin Wilson's *David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy in 'Romeo and Juliet' ca. 1753* (Appendix 8), Wilson manipulates the stage frame by exchanging the curtains for a cave, the opening of which reveals the scene. In works such as *Lady Percy watching the sleeping Hotspur ca. 1781* and *Ophelia's Death ca. 1781* by Mary Hoare, a bedroom or landscape scene is used as a kind of curtain from which figures step forward into the picture space. In the former work, based on *I Henry IV* 2.3.47-50 (Appendix 9), she diverges from the play by representing the event as it took place rather than as it is recalled:

In thy faint slumbers I by thee have watch'd,
 And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars,
 Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed,
 Cry "Courage! To the field!"

Hoare depicts Hotspur in a corpse-like position. This stance foreshadows Hotspur's death on the battlefield when Hal kills him. The entire pictorial incident is confined within drapery that forms a stage. The curtains' placement suggests that they will close when the scene ends.

In *Ophelia's Death* (Appendix 10), the scene and action depicted is from 4.7.166-75 of *Hamlet*:

There is a willow grows askant the brook,
 That shows his hoary leaves in the glassy stream,
 Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cull-cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
 There on the pendant boughs her crownnet weeds
 Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
 When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook.

This scene occurs offstage in Shakespeare's text and is recounted to us by the Queen as if she were a passive voyeur of the incident. Mary Hoare uses light to concentrate upon Ophelia. The artist implies, through the highlighted right leg, that this step is her last before she falls into the brook. She appears outstretched and is reaching for the garlands mentioned in Gertrude's speech. The action of falling into the brook is implied rather than represented, and the scene focuses upon Ophelia's movements before she plunges to her watery grave. The pastoral world is background to the implied action.

Whether or not Blake knew Mary Hoare's work is unknown, but he was at least an acquaintance of her cousin Prince Hoare, the actor and painter. Moreover, the focus upon Shakespeare as a source of inspiration for painters was not unexpected in the eighteenth century, since he dominated so much of the period and the English painter had virtually no one to turn to for inspiration. The English author most certainly did: Geoffrey Chaucer, John Milton, William Shakespeare. Perhaps Ronald Paulson best captures the problem for the English artist:

What Shakespeare represented at this time was an absence of paradigms, a freedom from rules and close classical imitation—in every way the opposite of French literature and painting, and so of the norms held up by the Restoration and early eighteenth century to its writers. He was a terribly ambiguous figure, tempting but dangerous in crucial ways. He represented English literature, as opposed to Latinate, Frenchified, Italianized literature—something as pure, provincial, and politically significant as the English Bible and the English countryside (Paulson *Book*, 25).

In fact, Shakespeare provided artists with everything they needed at the appropriate time for such depictions: “the privileged status of history painting, still the top of the academic ladder in art; the turning to English national heroes and subjects; and the doing so through the wide dissemination of engravings” (Paulson *Book*, 26).

The eighteenth century artist's search for inspiration seems to develop into *ut pictura poesis*.²⁴ While Horace established the term, it seems to re-emerge in the eighteenth century in Britain, and Shakespeare helps contribute to it. Blake appears to be

one artist who aids in the elevation of painting to poetry by his use of the composite arts in his own *corpus*. Even Blake's poems "that remain unillustrated are, in texture and ordering, fully pictorialist—graphically imagined and scenically arranged," says Jean Hagstrum (*William*, 9). Blake's *French Revolution* embraces this format, depicting the *ancien régime* "in one grotesquely and visually conceived emblem after another: a den named Horror contains a man whose soul is a serpent; a tower named Darkness conceals a man wearing an iron mask; in a tower named Bloody" (Hagstrum *William*, 10).²⁵ Although not illustrated, this work develops imagery that can easily be transferred to paper or copper plate because the language fulfils the role of the artist's brush. In fact, Blake's own illustrations of Milton, Gray, Young and Blair are translations of their poetry into his picture, reinforcing the connection between the sister arts.

Blake's union of the two art forms reveals an interesting pattern: emphasis of the contours of the human figure, a two-dimensional design, and linearity (Mellor *Blake's*, 102). This style labels Blake as "one of the proponents of romantic classicism," Mellor says, "an idiom heavily based on outlines, flat planes, attenuated figures, clinging draperies, and nonillusionistic settings" (*Blake's*, 103). This style shifts, in his later work: "Large, elongated, precisely outlined figures float through flattened, unperspectived spaces; illusionistic settings, colour and modeling are absent; linear rhythms completely control Blake's compositions" (Mellor *Blake's*, 104). Blake is indebted to Michelangelo for this style:

Stylistically, Blake was primarily influenced by Michelangelo's use of a sharp, incisive contour or outline in both his painting and his sculpture. . . . Thus, all of Michelangelo's art demonstrated to Blake the necessity of a

clear, sharp outline. Secondly, Michelangelo's art provided Blake with a subject: the heroic or ideal human figure, modelled in gigantic proportions and with accentuated muscular definition, preferably in the nude. . . .

Thirdly, Blake followed Michelangelo's late art in placing these ideal, heroic figures in nonillusionistic spaces. . . . The result is that the whole scene seems to be floating in a dream world (Mellor *Blake's*, 128-129).²⁶

An example of Blake's indebtedness to Michelangelo occurs in an early work: *King Lear and Cordelia*. Blake's fascination with Shakespeare, moreover, can be seen in his over twenty drawings for which Shakespeare "provided either the subject or the suggestion" (Merchant *Shakespeare*, 81). These drawings indicate that Blake handles Shakespeare's themes with simplicity in structure but symbolic and metaphorical complexity as the result. Moelwyn Merchant describes these illustrations in the following manner: "Some of these may properly be called illustration; the early designs resemble the 'Historical Inventions' of his 1809 *Descriptive Catalogue*; others render one facet of a Shakespearian character; still more take a poetic image, isolate it from a dramatic context and work out its visual content with allegorical precision" (*Shakespeare*, 81).

Blake's drawings and prints of Shakespeare plays span sixteen years. During this time, Blake interpreted plays such as *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *King Lear*.²⁷ G.E. Bentley Jr. tells us that Blake also did drawings for a Shakespeare edition. Six (1806, 1809, and n.d.) of the thirty-seven drawings that ornamented a reprint of Thomas's Shakespeare Folio of 1632 were by Blake (*Blake Records*, 166). The important task is to trace how Blake progressed from a direct representation of Shakespearean drama to more allusive appropriations of Shakespearean themes, images, and language

within the quite different medium of the prophetic book. Blake's approach to Shakespeare "underwent radical transformation in the years between *King Edward the Third*, with its servile imitation, and *Jerusalem*, with its subtle allusiveness" (Bate *Shakespeare and*, 119). Ronald Paulson notes that artists yoked "Shakespeare with the English portrait tradition, the one genre in which it was felt English artists excelled" (*Book*, 32). Blake never produced mere portraits, as did Reynolds and his contemporaries, because, for him, such a genre was synonymous with copying. For Blake, Sir Joshua Reynolds and his companions were "Cunning Hired Knaves" (601) because they were proponents of imitation. Blake despised portraiture and believes that Reynolds "thinks to turn me into a Portrait Painter as he did Poor Romney, but this he nor all the devils in hell will never do" (725).

Blake's various Shakespeare illustrations, much like his written work, develop from what appears to be a simple depiction of a scene, such as *King Lear and Cordelia*, to a much more allusive, symbolic rendition of a scene in such paintings as *Pity*. In the later Shakespeare illustrations, Blake chooses to represent not the dramatic action so much as Shakespeare's dramatic language, and particularly his metaphors. In these paintings the vehicle of the metaphor is freed from the tenor, so that Blake offers a picture not of a dramatic scene but of Shakespeare's creative imagination itself. For Blake, "This World is all One continued Vision of Fancy or Imagination" (702). In the Shakespeare paintings, Blake's method enables him to address the "Imagination" and create visual symbols that are pregnant with meaning by virtue of entering into a dynamic, dialectical relationship with the poetic texts that they illustrate.

In the painting *King Lear and Cordelia* ca. 1778-80 (Appendix 11), however, Blake quite straightforwardly depicts a scene that transpires offstage in Shakespeare's play. Moelwyn Merchant notes that this painting depicts Nahum Tate's version "in which Cordelia's imprisonment with her father was elaborated in a scene on stage; ... since this and similar handlings of *Lear* ousted Shakespeare's play from the stage until its revival by Macready in 1837, it was a scene which Blake could have seen" ("Blake's Shakespeare", 319). Blake's depiction, interestingly, seems to parody, rather closely, Thomas Davies' discussion of David Garrick's performance as King Lear. Garrick seems to have acted Tate's version of the play early in his career, but by 1773, the text published by John Bell reveals a restored version (Harris 213). In Shakespeare's play, the scene occurs offstage but Davies discusses it as something the audience actually perceives: "Mrs. Cibber, the most pathetic of all actresses, was the only Cordelia of excellence. The discovery of Lear, in prison, sleeping with his head on her lap, his hand closed in hers, whose expressive look spoke more than the most eloquent language, raised the most sympathising emotions" (Wells, 23). Blake's lack of a detailed background contrasts with the two colourful figures in the foreground. Blake constructs this scene without the aid of Shakespeare's text. He effaces the guards and focuses upon the symbolic nature of the scene—the pathos of the situation, the impending deaths of Lear and Cordelia.

Blake captures the intense melancholy Lear feels as he contemplates his and Cordelia's imminent deaths—a scene relative only to Shakespeare since Tate's text has a happy ending. James Barry, whose work was part of the Shakespeare Gallery and with whom Blake was familiar, accurately depicts Shakespeare's conclusion (Appendix 12).

Barry “seeks a graphic equivalent of Shakespeare’s blank verse by giving Lear and the dead Cordelia the monumental forms of High Renaissance history painting, and using the general composition of a Pietà. Although the figures have been moved around a bit, he seems to have in mind the Caracci Pietà” (Paulson *Book*, 26-27) (Appendix 13). Cordelia, according to Paulson, is Christ and Lear is Mary—“an echo that seeks to evoke something of the pathos in Shakespeare’s scene” (*Book*, 27). James Barry may have borrowed the pietà idea from Blake, since Blake’s *King Lear and Cordelia* predates Barry’s *King Lear*. Moreover, Barry seems to borrow from Blake in his engraving of Lear’s hair for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery. Lear’s hair “is blown to one side as is Urizen-God’s in the frontispiece to *Europe*. Barry’s powerful drawing of Sin, Death, and Satan anticipates Blake’s. Barry’s *Job*, in which the patriarch is reproved by his friends, one of whom points an accusing finger, has help from Blake’s superior scene” (Hagstrum *William*, 64-65).

In *King Lear and Cordelia*, Blake visually combines elements from Tate’s and Shakespeare’s plays and captures the pathos in each drama through a transposition of the pietà formation as well. Here, Blake seems to connect with James Barry and the painters Paulson refers to as “those that sought a level of decorum equivalent to their bardolatry in the high style of Italian art” and not those artists who “emphasised Shakespeare’s unique Englishness” (*Book*, 28). The pietà subject is not novel; rather, it is a northern Italian idea linked with German and French devotional themes of the Suffering Christ popular since medieval times in the North. Perhaps the most famous and poignant artistic display of the pietà, with which Blake would have been familiar, is Michelangelo’s St. Peter’s Pietà

(Appendix 14), since Michelangelo's influence is easily ascertained in Blake's *The Last Judgement*.

Blake uses the pietà form in a different medium and transforms the three-dimensional sculpture into a two-dimensional, linear portrait. The spectator cannot physically move around the picture space, yet Blake constructs the two walls and positions King Lear in a manner that pushes the boundary of the wall to the right. This bodily extension elongates the picture space and symbolises all Lear has done in the play. The extension highlights the linearity of the composition through the almost 90 degree stance of Cordelia to the wall, the angular positioning of the two bodies in relation to one another, and the angle of Lear's body, which complements the walls behind him. Symbolically, Blake seems to unite the composition with the play's thematic elements. Lear experienced severe myopia to the ramifications of his decision to divide the kingdom and what it connotes for England. He was blinded by his elder daughters' false confessions of their love for him, and thereby ignored Kent's advice, disinherited Cordelia, and banished Kent. Lear's leg extension appears to challenge perspectival convention as much as the former king defied the natural order of things.

If Blake witnessed Tate's version of *King Lear*, or was familiar with the stage at all, he would have known that the background (the wall) could not be placed at a 90° angle, as the spectators would have been unable to witness the scene. By depicting an event that occurs offstage in Shakespeare's play, Blake emphasises the tragic reunion of Lear and Cordelia in the pietà arrangement. Lear's mental battle and his inability to differentiate between fact and fiction with his daughters is the result of severe myopia. Blake's depiction of the final scene before Cordelia's death reinforces the ailment—

Lear's place in the picture space defies artistic perspectival convention, yet it conforms to the conventions demanded by the problem of theatrical perspective. Initially, the scene, and not the figures' gaze, lures the spectator into the picture space. Thereafter, a visual and verbal exchange ensues in which Blake adapts the pietà idea. In Blake's painting, Lear in his insanity becomes the child (4.6) and Cordelia the mother. Cordelia figuratively nurtures her father to health (4.7). The stark background scene visually unites it with many of the settings in Shakespeare's play. Blake's simple, direct draughtsmanship seems to reinforce the intense emotional appeal that the picture makes.

The diagonal strap of Michelangelo's St. Peter's Pietà is transformed into a type of shawl that swirls around Cordelia's right hip while also encompassing both figures. The rounded edges throughout the picture space, the circular-like formations of the clothing on the floor, and Lear's extension of his left leg beyond the angled room move the spectator's gaze from Cordelia to Lear to the stark background scene. For Blake, Lear is a contradiction whose desires and subsequent actions do not cohere. Cordelia remains steadfast in her love for her father. The mother figure of this pietà scene, Cordelia accepts her father's decision at the opening of the play, yet returns amidst turmoil and the danger inherent in it, to care for her father (4.7). At the opening of the play, Lear is a King who possesses all the title connotes, but by its end he is reduced to the passive figure Blake paints.

In *Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing* ca. 1786 (Appendix 15), Blake depicts the final scene of the play after the mortals have left the stage. Oberon, Titania and their train of fairies will perform a dance to bless the marriage beds of the various couples. In Shakespeare's play, the setting is Theseus's palace; however, Blake depicts

the scene outdoors in nature. Titania, Oberon and Puck are placed on the left of the picture space. The King and Queen of the Fairies watch their train dance while Puck looks at Oberon. Blake depicts the “glimmering light” of Oberon’s opening statement as stars in the heavens:

Through the house give glimmering light
By the dead and drowsy fire,
Every elf and fairy sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier (5.1.391-94).

Oberon and Titania, as King and Queen of the fairy world, live in nature and have power over it. Every episode that occurs in the fairy world has a complement in the mortal one.

The dance portion of the illustration, while it occupies the majority of the picture space, occupies only two lines of dialogue and a stage direction in Shakespeare’s text: Hand in hand, with fairy grace, / Will we sing, and bless this place. / [*Song and dance.*] (5.1.399-400). Blake’s dance expresses harmony, vitality and innocence, themes that emerge from the dancing figures in *The Nurse’s Song* (Innocence) (Appendix 16). In both illustrations, the central figures are placed in a position secondary to the dance and the dancers are in complementary stances that indicate action. Contrary to Shakespeare’s play in which Titania utters the above lines, but the dancing fairies say nothing, Blake’s children respond to the nurse’s plea to “come home” (5). The sounds of children playing connotes joy and peace for the nurse. The fairy dance does likewise only both emotional responses are metaphors for the newly married couples. The dance, in “Nurse’s Song,” however, is performed in daylight until “the light fades away” (13). In Blake’s portrayal of the event from Shakespeare’s play, Blake retains the evening setting of the play and all

it connotes—the sinister and positive aspects of their character and their effect on the mortal world.

Blake's *Oberon and Titania on a Lily* ca. 1790-1793 (Appendix 17) parodies the structure of the earlier painting. As in *Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing*, the King and Queen are given secondary importance. The lily, a symbol of purity, dominates the picture space. While Oberon is much more colourful than Titania, she appears more unified with the natural world, almost consumed by it. In the play, her attendants' names and her sleeping quarters are associated with nature. Oberon is responsible for the upheaval in both the natural and real world, because he dares to use the love potion as a means of attaining a child. Blake's placement of Oberon's body—partly within and without the flower—complements the position he occupies in both worlds. When compared to its predecessor, the King and Queen occupy similar passive positions, only in the earlier work, the fairies are active.

Moelwyn Merchant, in his article "Blake's Shakespeare" interprets the scene within the regal and pastoral context of the play. The painting is a "striking exercise in scale: the grace of the lily design containing the tiny, yet majestic figures of the fairy rulers. Titania has the innocent grace of posture with which Blake drew Eve asleep in his *Paradise Lost*; Oberon, bearded, crowned and sceptred, has an alert, mature regality" (320). Blake's decision here depicts the power of nature in all its regal splendour, and Titania's vulnerability and purity in her passive state—while she sleeps. She is the mere recipient of Oberon's jealousy for the changeling boy and is not the catalyst for the impending upheaval in both worlds. Oberon looks out of the picture space, towards the spectator, and by doing so, he almost draws us into the natural world that he controls.

Blake focuses upon nature—its grandeur, power, strength and beauty—thereby emphasizing the symbol and minimizing the context.

Blake's *Pity* ca. 1795, uses a somewhat similar elusive, symbolic technique (Appendix 18). Christopher Heppner argues, "Blake's design illustrates Macbeth's words, or more precisely the vehicles of his images. Blake focuses on both the explicit and latent personifications in Shakespeare's language, while ignoring completely the immediate dramatic situation in which the words are spoken" (118).²⁸ However, the illustration suggests a relation to the play as a whole, not just the lines to which they specifically refer. The painting illustrates lines 1.7.21-25 of *Macbeth*:

And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.

In this work, Blake represents the vehicle of the metaphor and not the tenor, the new-born babe bestriding the blast rather than pity. These lines are spoken by Macbeth in soliloquy prior to Duncan's murder. Duncan is quite unaware of Macbeth's plan. In Blake's picture, the horses appear to have their eyes closed to the events that will happen; they are not sightless.²⁹ Blake seems to interpret the text visually. For him, the people that surround Duncan and Macbeth, including Banquo, are figuratively blind to Macbeth's "Vaulting ambition" (1.7.27). This scene symbolically captures the blindness motif and transforms it into the subject of his painting.

The picture space is divided into two sections. In the upper section, one face glances downward at the prostrate female figure while the other figure's back faces the spectator. The horses in the background of this part of the scene complement the figure's stance. The horse's face is partially concealed and the human figure's arms are outstretched in a cruciform position that symbolises the figurative crucifixion Duncan, an innocent victim, will suffer. The cruciform position of the little child and its adult complement, in the background of the picture space, are a possible allusion to the crucifixion and all it connotes. The subject of the metaphor—Pity—is symbolically represented in the little child. The visual image “retains the almost paradoxical quality of the verbal image. It also participates in what is a frequent form of ambiguity in allegorical imagery, the fusing together of the cause of an emotion and the quality of the aroused emotion itself to create a single, and often self-contradictory image” (Heppner 115). Pity “Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye, / That tears shall drown the wind (1.7.24-25). The horrid deed is the impending murder of Duncan. The human forms in the picture symbolically represent various actions and emotions throughout *Macbeth*: Duncan's murder, Macbeth's blindness to his lust for power and all it entails, Macbeth's guilt (sees the ghost of Banquo), Lady Macbeth's guilt (sleepwalks and tries to remove the figurative blood on her hands).

The prostrate figure at the bottom of the picture space lies with her hands clasped with a woeful facial expression. Blake places her in a position that suggests she is the mother of the “naked new-borne Babe” mentioned in the text and alludes subtly to the attempted murder of Fleance and the murder of Macduff's son. The entire scene is immersed in deep, dark colours that create an eerie atmosphere. Ironically, Blake does

not use the atmosphere to depict the “horrid deed” of Shakespeare’s text; rather, he effaces this moment because the event has not yet occurred. Instead, he uses his figures and the setting to transport the spectator through the play upon the backs of the “couriers of the air” (1.7.23).

Blake’s *Hecate* (Appendix 19) was painted at the same time as *Pity* ca. 1795. Nothing identifies this work as an illustration of Shakespeare; however, Blake’s *Hecate*³⁰ seems to carry resonances that derive from memories of Shakespeare. Heppner argues that the title, which “can be traced no further back than Rossetti” (Heppner 120), does not necessarily imply that the main female figure is Hecate. He believes she is a witch because, as Hecate, she does not correspond to traditional iconography (Appendix 20). He knows “of no triple figure handled in the way in which Blake handles the three figures in this print” (Heppner 121). The painting is an illustration of Shakespeare, but nevertheless it seems to echo passages from several plays.

The three women in the picture symbolise the tripartite nature of the goddess Hecate who combined aspects of the moon, earth and underworld with power over the sky, earth and sea. She was also associated with witchcraft, magic and the supernatural. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Puck alludes to Hecate in a speech in the play that articulates the world of the fairies in its most disturbing aspect: fairies as exponents of a sinister and threatening supernatural power rather than as pretty, comical figures:

Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide.

And we fairies, that do run
 By the triple Hecat's team
 From the presence of the sun,
 Following darkness like a dream,
 Now are frolic. (5.1.379-85).

When the supernatural figures abuse their power, disorder and chaos ensues.

The painting becomes more complex when the two other allusions are considered from *King Lear* and *Hamlet*. Shakespeare refers to Hecate in Act one, scene one of *King Lear* when Lear is cursing his daughters:

For by the sacred radiance of the sun,
 The [mysteries] of Hecat and the night;
 By all the operation of the orbs,
 From whom we do exist and cease to be;
 Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
 Propinquity and property of blood,
 And as a stranger to my heart and me
 Hold thee from this for ever (1.1.109-16).

Lear's oath is unholy, a denial of his own fatherhood, and hence an oath made to a demonic power. In *Hamlet*, the reference to Hamlet occurs when Lucianus pours poison in the King's ear in the play within the play:

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,
 [Confederate] season, else no creature seeing,
 Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice [infected],

Thy natural magic and dire property

On wholesome life usurps immediately (3.2.254-59).

As in *Lear*, Hecate here is demonic. The poison is a ghastly witches' brew, and the lines insist strongly on Hecate's triple form. In both plays, Hecate is associated with a diabolic inversion of the natural order—Lear unfathering himself in *King Lear*, and in *Hamlet*, the murder of a brother by a brother.

In *Macbeth*, the witches are closely associated with Hecate. She appears while the three weird sisters brew their cauldron of "hell-broth":

Fillet of a fenny snake,

In the cauldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,

Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,

For a charm of pow'rful trouble,

Like a hell-broth boil and bubble (4.1.12-19).

In Blake's painting, the owl and the bat look directly beyond the picture frame to lure the audience into the work. Nonetheless, the tripartite nature of Hecate is maintained in the illustration's structure—the witches; the bat, owl, and snake; and the donkey—and the three bodies, as in the repeated "thrice" in the *Hamlet* passage. The bat and the owl have perhaps strayed in from *Macbeth* and possibly indicate how the various resonances from Shakespeare help to establish the powerful ambivalence of Blake's picture, most

forcefully seen in the juxtaposition of the sinister snake, bat and owl with the ass and the demonic Hecate.

The symbolism of the snake, his association with Hecate, and his placement between her and the ass not only emphasises the demonic aspect of the work, but also creates an interesting paradox. Both evil—Hecate—and innocence—the ass—exist in the same picture space, and the snake creates a dialogue with them. The ass is a type of innocence since he was present at Bethlehem and was the animal on which Christ chose to ride in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. However, the hair on an ass's back forms a cross that corresponds to Blake's placement of him on the spectator's left (a sinister placement). A paradox thereby ensues, one that is mirrored in the book to which Hecate points. The painting's juxtaposition of good and evil suggests that the book may also be either holy or evil, but there is no evidence to indicate which.

In the eighteenth century, poets and painters turned to Shakespeare for inspiration, magnifying and confirming his importance in English literature, as if it was not already established. His name alone, and anything Shakespearean, signified either "a specific stage representation of a play or those powerful Shakespearean words—so powerful that they can only be approached through the graphic forms of the most highly-respected continental painting" (Paulson *Book*, 29). Besides his stage and painting dominance, Shakespeare also occupied the publishing house, but his impact on English art "consisted of a general feeling, some assumptions, and a frame of mind rather than specifically visual structures—or verbal for that matter. Herein lies the contradiction between the need for representing a stage performance and imitating High Renaissance painters like Michelangelo and Raphael" (Paulson *Book*, 29). Blake, however, accomplishes this

difficult task in his Shakespeare paintings of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. From Hogarth, to Blake and Turner, English painters address the problems in painting itself and, as Ronald Paulson says, in pictura-poesis painting (*Book*, 35). Blake, in his juxtaposition of the verbal and visual elements of his work, explores the discrepancy between word and image, not necessarily to unify them into a single message, but to invert, contradict, even challenge each other, and unveil the covert symbolism and, by extension, the commentary to which he alludes.

The five pictures that I have discussed reveal such a developing pattern in Blake's response to Shakespeare, from direct representation to indirect allusion. In *King Lear and Cordelia*, Blake refers directly to the text, painting a scene that occurs offstage while still commenting upon the main themes in the text. In *Oberon and Titania on a Lily*, Blake relegates the context to the background and foregrounds the symbol and all it connotes for the context. In *Oberon, Titania, and Puck with Fairies Dancing*, the painting clearly derives from the text, but Blake focuses more on dancing figures that are only briefly noted in the play. In *Pity*, Blake provides little evidence, except for the title's inclusion of a line from *Macbeth*, that this work represents a scene from the play. Instead, the painting is a powerful representation of the creative power of Shakespeare's imagination as revealed in a single metaphor. Blake's *Hecate* is even more elusive. It does not appear, at first glance, to be an illustration of Shakespeare at all, but might be informed by Blake's memory of Shakespeare's plays, namely *King Lear*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. This development, from a direct to an indirect approach, is evident in Blake's poems too. The direct Shakespearean allusions in Blake's earlier works—*King Edward the Third* and *Tiriel*³¹--become more covert in the later poems such as *Milton*³² and their function

becomes more ambiguous. I shall trace this development in the proceeding chapters of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

“Give me liberty or give me death!”: “Prologue to King John”, *Edward the Third* and “Prologue to Edward the Fourth”

*Edward III crossing the Somme, Benjamin West*³³

In 1760, George III was crowned King. His reign encompassed two major wars: The American Revolution (1776-83) and the French Revolution, Napoleonic Wars and the Battle of Waterloo (1789-1820). These events fuelled Blake’s creative imagination, as is evident from poems such as *America*, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and *The French Revolution*. However, at the very beginning of Blake’s poetic career, he wrote a number of dramatic fragments modelled on Shakespeare’s history plays that already saw him responding to international politics. They remain Blake’s only direct experiments in the dramatic genre and they are clearly modelled on Shakespeare’s history plays. Shakespeare’s most celebrated chronicle plays, the first and second tetralogy, constitute a complete presentation of English history from the reign of Richard II to the accession of Henry VII (Appendix 21). Two other chronicle plays, *Henry VIII*, and, more important for Blake, *King John*, seem separate from this series. Shakespeare’s history plays are

unified by their interest in kingship and in war. For Shakespeare, war is the arena in which kingship is most powerfully displayed. Blake's fragments share the theme of Shakespeare's chronicles, but they represent Blake paradoxically as at once Shakespeare's predecessor and successor. He is Shakespeare's successor in that he leans on Shakespeare's dramatic material in his history plays, but his predecessor in that he dramatises periods of English history that precede the reign of Richard II. Blake's representation of history in all three of the fragments is directed however by his response to contemporary events.

In the "Prologue to King John", for example, Blake seems to refer both to Shakespeare's play and to contemporary historical events. The speaker in Blake's Prologue outlines his story in a prosaic twenty-five lines that are spoken primarily in the present tense. The present perfect tense indicates that an action is being performed—Justice has "heaved a sword" aimed directly at "Albion's breast"—in response to Albion's sins. The opening lines seem to allude to the American war. As David Erdman notes, affidavits were sent from America and circulated in Britain to support the patriot account of the War. George Washington's cover letter with one set of the affidavits expresses sentiments supported on both sides of the Atlantic:

'Unhappy it is . . . to reflect that a Brother's
Sword has been sheathed in a Brother's breast,
and that the once happy and peaceful plains
of America are either to be drenched with
blood or Inhabited by Slaves. Sad alternative.
But can a virtuous Man hesitate in his Choice?'

(*Blake: Prophet*, 15).

Compare in particular the warning delivered in Blake's Prologue that "Brother in brother's blood must bathe, rivers of death!" The allusions to the patriot account are pertinent since Blake focuses upon the personifications of Patriot and Tyranny. In the eighteenth century, the term *Patriot* connoted someone who "heartily wisheth the public prosperity, and doth also study and endeavour to promote it" (*OED* 559), but the term also had a narrower, more partisan reference. The patriots were the political group who opposed Lord North and George III's prosecution of the war against the American colonists. Justice's sword remains airborne for most of Blake's prologue, while Patriot rises and a narrative ensues that defines history as a conflict between the Tyrant and the Patriot. We are told that Patriot often rises when Tyranny "hath stain'd fair Albion's breast with her own children's gore" (3-4). The father-child image here corresponds with the printing in London print shops of what Erdman calls "comic history painting[s]" (6) such as *The State Blacksmiths forging fetters for the Americans* (1776), *Poor Old England endeavouring [with a scourge] to reclaim her Wicked American Children* (1777), and *The Horse America, throwing his Master* (1779). Moreover, as Erdman notes, the Patriot press in London published graphic illustrations of scenes from the Boston Massacre of 1770. When news of Lexington and Concord reached London in May, "it was the patriot version, signed by Arthur Lee, that first filled the papers: that Major Pitcairne had fired the first shot to force unwilling English troops to shed fraternal blood" (*Blake: Prophet*, 15).

In his play, Blake uses purple to symbolise the monarchy and then transfers the monarch's power to the Patriot, who "hath stretch'd his purple arm" (17). Early in the

Prologue, the citizenry react to the Patriot as if in the process of kneeling or succumbing: “Round his majestic feet deep thunders roll; each heart does tremble, and each knee grows slack” (4-5). Even the “stars of heaven” tremble and the trumpet, the “roaring voice of war, ..., calls to battle!” (6). Blake, at the end of the Prologue, suggests that the monarchy’s dominance will be “humbled.” Patriot does not speak—he is humbled as Tyranny will be—yet what he signifies is evident in the adjectives and expletives used in the narrative. The widowed virgins, aged fathers, sucking infant, weeping mother, husbandman, and aged senators must merely await Tyranny’s Fate. The sword wound and the blood spilt, because of Albion’s sins, are replaced by images of peace, the citizenry and the exultation associated with it. Already in the fragment, Blake advocates war against tyranny, and celebrates, in opposition to the idea that a nation is glorified by its military achievements, the notion that a nation is glorious insofar as it secures peace and prosperity for its citizens.

The war theme emerges also in Blake’s *Edward the Third*. Written in 1783, a year after George III lost the American colonies, Blake’s play invokes English nationalism at a low point in contemporary English history. The American War, as a war between brothers, suggested parallels in the reigns of John and Edward IV. We might suppose that the outreach of war with France in 1778 “suggested to Blake—as it did to his contemporaries—the wars of Edward III” (Erdman *Blake: Prophet*, 66). Blake’s *Edward the Third*,³⁴ like Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, appears to celebrate England’s power. Between 1330 and 1370, Edward “achieved some of the greatest military victories of the middle ages” (Waugh 3) and established England as a dominant military force. King Edward and Edward Baliol defeated David II of Scotland and drove David into exile in 1333. Edward

was the monarch during the first phase of the Hundred Years' war, the naval battle of Sluys (1340), which gave England control of the Channel, and battles at Crécy (1346) and Calais (1347), which established English supremacy on land. Edward and the Black Prince also defeated the French cavalry at Poitiers (1356) and captured the French King John. England's great victory at Crécy was the only battle to challenge, in British eyes, the magnitude of Henry V's victory at Agincourt.

Foreign wars were possible under Edward III because there was "harmony between the monarch and nobility" (Waugh 4). Edward was an astute leader and politician who understood his people. There was "cooperation and trust between the king, the landed elite, and the church" (Waugh 4). That trust enabled Edward to "extract more from his subjects than any other medieval king. He was able to field armies for extended periods. He delegated extensive authority to the highest aristocrats and greatest churchmen. He consulted regularly with gentry, merchants, and burgesses" (Waugh 4). Edward the Black Prince, like his father, established himself as a heroic figure through his military prowess. He conducted successful raids, particularly across southern France from Gascony to the Mediterranean, "reaping plunder and ransoms and leaving a trail of destruction in his wake. Known as a *chevauchée*,³⁵ it became England's preferred form of military campaigning" (Waugh 17).

Between 1689 and 1815, Britain and France fought each other seven times: 1689-97, 1702-13, 1743-48, 1756-63, 1778-83, 1793-1802, and 1803-15. France's proximity to Britain, its larger population, greater land mass, and more powerful army made her a formidable enemy, but Britain was just as fierce an opponent. Britain's military power, prior to 1783, was impressive since "virtually every single war fought since the Act of

Union [1707] had gone badly at some stage, but before 1783 none had ended in defeat. Nor would any major war in which Britain was involved after this date end in defeat” (Colley 148). It was, Colley argues, in the eighteenth century, and as a direct product of the war against France that dominated the period, that English nationalism achieved its modern form.

The Seven Years War (1756-63), for example, established Britain as a world power. Britain defeated France in the war for Canada. Britain also won Grenada, Dominica and Tobago, and, in Africa, she reinforced her position as the dominant power over the slave trade with the acquisition of Senegal. British success in the Seven Years War seemed to unify Great Britain in the period before the impending troubles in the American colonies. The Scottish even displayed their loyalty to Great Britain by joining the British armed services in the 1760s (O’Gorman 199). By 1778, however, Britain’s power was waning. She withdrew from Philadelphia and Rhode Island. The English Channel had to be protected from a France-Spain invasion—threatened in 1778 and attempted, without success, in 1779. In 1779, France was confining British movement in South Carolina and Georgia and, by 1783, Britain had lost the American colonies. This war atmosphere that dominated eighteenth century Britain helped unify the country against its French neighbour.

Her military successes throughout this period may perhaps explain the popularity of Shakespeare’s *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV*, and *Henry V*. Between 1747 and 1800, these plays were among the most performed (Hogan cclxxvi-cclxxvii). In these plays, Shakespeare uses history to celebrate an idea of nationhood, which is centred on an idea of kingship. These dramas, when read in succession, detail the metamorphosis of a young

“unthrifty” Prince into a people’s King who will defeat France and unite the two kingdoms under British rule after the Battle of Agincourt. Blake’s *Edward the Third* draws on nationhood as a dominant theme because of Edward’s military successes abroad, and Shakespeare’s second tetralogy reinforces the theme. Between 1747 and 1800, Britain’s active military endeavours also give point to Blake’s attempts to revive the Shakespearean chronicle play.

Jonathan Bate recognises that the “chief influence on *King Edward the Third* is *Henry V*” (*Shakespeare and*, 134), but focuses primarily on the rhythm and metre. For Bate, the “balancing of phrases, the use of enjambment and the occasional substitution of anapaest for iamb suggest that Blake had been studying the metre of *Henry V* in some detail” (*Shakespeare and*, 134). The similarities are not surprising since Blake’s Battle at Crécy and Shakespeare’s Battle at Agincourt serve the same purpose. In Blake’s drama, Edward justifies the impending war to his nobles and his son. In Shakespeare’s play, Henry V’s reasons for engaging in war against France are outlined by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He tells Henry he has

true titles to some certain dukedoms,
And generally to the crown and seat of France,
Deriv’d from Edward, his great-grandfather
(*Henry V* 1.1.87-89).

Edward III and Henry V fight for the same French crown using the same argument: the matriarchal line of descent.

Lowery makes a similar observation regarding Blake’s source: “for the general theme of his play, and for the principal outline of character and event, Blake took

Shakespeare's *King Henry V* most directly as his model" (117). Perhaps Blake uses this play because of what Henry V symbolises: English nationalism, military strength and the unification of the French and English thrones. Lowery believes that the opening lines of *King Edward the Third* parallel 4.1.306-309 of *Henry V* when the king addresses God (113), but she merely glosses this section without explaining the significance of the comparison. In this speech, Henry utters four lines that echo lines Blake gives to Edward. In the rest of the soliloquy, Henry attempts to distinguish his own legitimate title to the throne from his father's kingship, which is contaminated by his guilt as a usurper. Edward utters no such sentiments in his opening speech. His focus is on war, replete with an image of a soldier and the weaponry required for battle. He never invokes God.

A more comprehensive parallel exists between the opening scene of Blake's play and Shakespeare's Prologue. Initially, Blake seems to support corporeal war and focuses predominantly on the glory of war and all the word evokes:

And these fair youths, the flow'r of England,
 Vent'ring their lives in my most righteous cause,
 O sheathe their hearts with triple steel, that they
 May emulate their fathers' virtues.
 And thou, my son, be strong; thou fightest for a crown
 That death can never ravish from thy brow,
 A crown of glory: (1.17-23).

For the King, fighting connotes glory and fame, and he persuades those around him to fight heroically in support of his "righteous cause" (1.18). Edward III boosts morale among his troops by stating that, if successful, they will receive financial rewards. Blake

has historical authority for the suggestion. When Edward's navy approached a massive French fleet at Sluys, for example, Edward said, "those who fought well would have not only God's blessing but whatever they were able to lay their hands on as well" (Waugh 128). After the Battle at Crécy, the English "cut down their captives, despoiled the fallen, and cast lots to divide the spoils" (Waugh 128).

In the opening speech, Blake repeatedly suggests that England enjoys a military superiority over France because England, unlike France, is a land of Liberty: free men fight better than men ruled by an absolute monarch. Liberty is the "charter'd right of Englishmen, / Won by our fathers in many a glorious field" (1.9-10). It is the argument that the British had traditionally used in explanation of their military success against the French, but at the time Blake was writing, the line serves most powerfully to explain not why Britain beat France, but why Britain lost the war in America. Satiric prints in Britain, which were the "graphic editorials of the day" were pro-America and represented America as the "land of liberty and virtue, England as that of corruption and slavery, and King George as a cruel and obstinate tyrant" (Erdman *Blake: Prophet*, 6). Blake depicts King Edward III "in his relationship to other characters" as an early sketch of the "Blakean tyrant" (Ehrstine 152) and, ironically, the freedom that Blake celebrates is a freedom conferred by tyranny. Edward's men are "Each clad in glory according to his sphere" (1.34). The men, however,

that wander from our native seats,
 And beam forth lustre on a darkling world,
 Grow larger as we advance! And some perhaps
 The most obscure at home, that scarce were seen

To twinkle in their sphere, may so advance,
 That the astonish'd world, with upturn'd eyes,
 . . . Stand only for to gaze upon their splendor! (1.35-41).

The lines seem simply to suggest that heroism in war secured social advancement, but the lines also seem to allude to the transplantation of British settlers to America who later fight for independence from Britain. America was the land of the free and the land of opportunity for many who ventured across the Atlantic. Later in the speech the allusions to the American Revolution become more transparent. Brittany, like America, was fighting, at the time of Edward III and thereafter, to retain its independence amid the French and British rivalry. Brittany was not formally incorporated into France until 1532, when Henry VIII was on the English throne. But at the time that Edward speaks, Brittany was “not yet sown with destruction” and the “fiery whirlwind of swift war / Has not yet swept its desolating wing” (1.46-47) over the country.

In Shakespeare's Prologue to *Henry V*, Shakespeare despairs of adequately representing on stage the magnificence of war. The narrator asks us to use our imagination to compensate for the impossibility of adequately staging the Battle of Agincourt. The audience is invited to become an active participant in the celebration of an English victory. Blake seems to echo Shakespeare's Prologue in his Prologue, intended for *Edward the Fourth*, when he prays for “a voice like thunder” (1). The republican underpinnings are stated more clearly in Blake's “Prologue”. The lines are a coherent denunciation of war. The personified dichotomy between Patriot and Tyranny in the “Prologue to King John” and *Edward the Third* becomes a single voice protesting tyranny in “Edward the Fourth” (2). The similarity between Shakespeare's and Blake's

Prologue is ironic. Whereas Shakespeare prays for the means adequately to represent war in all its glory, Blake prays for a voice “To drown the throat of war!” (2).

Near the end of the Prologue, however, this query becomes a threefold emphatic, pathos-ridden quest for an answer. Ironically, Blake tells us, the tyrants responsible are the “Kings and Nobles of the Land” (15), heaven’s Ministers. In Shakespeare’s Prologue to *Henry V*, however, these Kings and Nobles are perceived as “two mighty monarchies” (20) exhibiting regal splendour. The narrator perceives the stage as an “unworthy scaffold” (10) because the impending battle is “So great an object” (11). Blake completely inverts Shakespeare’s rhetoric by praying for “a voice like thunder, and a tongue / To drown the throat of war” (1-2) rather than adequately reproach it.

In scene two of *King Edward the Third* national glory is redefined as constituted not by military glory but by the happiness and prosperity of the nation’s citizens. The King’s son, Clarence, promotes peace and prosperity as the appropriate national ideal. Clarence represents this task—that “England shall dwell in peace” (2.7)—as a heavy burden, and he seeks the counsel of the Lords. Ironically, a year after Crécy and during the siege of Calais, Lionel called a Parliament for the Common Peace and Wealth of the Kingdom. It focused on war. In this meeting he unveiled French plans to invade England. This dramatic change shows how Blake modifies fourteenth-century events to align them with the eighteenth century. He uses Shakespeare and his dramatic conception of history, his own dramatic conception of English history, and covertly juxtaposes it all within a contemporary framework to produce an allegory about war and peace, the Tyrant and Patriot that he introduces in *King John*.

In this scene Blake contrasts two national ideals, the first associated with Lord North, the King and the war party, and the second associated with the political opposition. The first, like Blake's Edward III, holds that national glory is achieved by military victory. The opposing ideal, voiced by the Bishop, holds that England's true glory lies in the success of its commerce. Clarence, the King's son, believes that the two ideals are complementary rather than contradictory. In particular, he represents his father as at once toiling "in his wars" in France, and smiling benevolently at the peaceful commercial prosperity of London. So, Clarence believes that the London merchants, led by the Lord Mayor, can be persuaded to finance the English navy in attacking the "small ships of war" that threaten British commerce. Again, the scene has contemporary resonance, for the London merchants may have supported the French wars of the eighteenth century but were deeply opposed to the American war, seeing it as a threat to Britain's commercial prosperity.

Queen Phillipa seems clearly to align Lionel with Shakespeare's Prince Hal. She accuses him of neglecting business in favour of his "own pleasures" and of "giddiness." But again the similarity serves only to underline the difference. Hal is an actor who deliberately masks his true nature and associates himself with Falstaff and everything the tavern scene connotes so that he can "transform" himself into the prince his father wishes him to be when it is appropriate for him to do so. Lionel does not feign his response. Convinced by the Bishop, he holds to the belief that commerce should be first and foremost on the king's agenda and not a foreign war.

When Britain won the Seven Years War, she had to defend and administer a vast area across the Atlantic. Britain imposed various measures on the American colonies,

including the Sugar and Stamp Acts, to try and generate money for Britain, but British merchants actually lost money. The American colonies responded to these Acts by imposing a trade embargo on Britain. Between 1775 and 1778, imports on overseas trade with America fell by 26%, exports by greater than 18% and re-exports by 35%. The loss of the American market was compounded by the difficulty of trade with Europe: “Once France and Spain entered the war, many European markets also closed [to Britain], or at least became less accessible, exacerbating problems caused by the outbreak of hostilities with America” (Conway *The War*, 191). A major factor was the American, French and Spanish capture of an estimated 3,386 British merchant vessels in the war.

In Blake’s poem, Dagworth acknowledges the Black Prince’s prowess in battle and believes the Prince, unlike his father, is not afraid of conflict but his father is. Dagworth’s utterances echo those spoken by King Henry in *Henry V* as the troops prepare for the Battle of Agincourt. Henry, under the guise of Harry Le Roy, tells Bates, Williams, and Court

when he [King Henry] sees reason of fears, as we do, his
 fears, out of doubt, be of the same relish as ours are;
 yet in reason, no man should possess him with
 any appearance of fear, lest he, by showing it, should
 dishearten his army (4.1.108-12).

Dagworth suggests that Edward has failed in concealing his fear, and that as a consequence, his fears have infected his army.

In these scenes, Blake allows Dagworth to assume many of the functions that Shakespeare allots to Henry V, thereby establishing him as the ideal embodiment of kingship. King Edward arrives and tries to rally his troops for battle:

when English courage fails,
Down goes our right to France;
But we are conquerors every where; nothing
Can stand our soldiers; each man is worthy
Of a triumph. Such an army of heroes
Ne'er shouted to the Heav'ns, nor shook the field (3.71-75).

His insistence that the English are conquerors has, of course, for Blake, been rendered ironic by the defeats in America.

Dagworth's apprehension is countered by the King's attempt to convince him to stay and fight. Edward makes Dagworth his messenger to the English people. He wants Dagworth to return to England so he can detail English success on the battlefield and thereby inspire the people to join him in his war against France. Edward says he cannot be afraid of Philip because he has the support of his people, but it is Dagworth rather than the king himself who imitates Shakespeare's Henry V by walking among his troops.

The remainder of the scene focuses upon a discussion between Chandos and the Black Prince. The Black Prince possesses similar characteristics to Shakespeare's Prince Hal but lacks the insight Hal possesses early in *1 Henry IV* and his experience amongst the people he will rule. Blake's Prince can identify his weakness: "the noise of war" (3.232). His weakness is Hotspur's. Both men react before they think. What Chandos says of the Black Prince might be said also of Hotspur: "your heat / Is the effect of youth"

(3.245-46). As Margaret Lowery notes, Hotspur and the Black Prince possess the “same manner of confronting danger, similar zest for action, similar boldness” (119). Both men love war. For the Black Prince, war stirs his blood

like a springtide,
 . . . to overflow all bounds
 Of moderation; while Reason, in his
 Frail bark, can see no shore or bound for vast
 Ambition (3.234-38).

But Shakespeare uses Hotspur only to indicate how, in Hal, Hotspur’s admirable but reckless heroic qualities can be reconciled with prudence, and that it is Hal’s possession of both qualities that mark him as the ideal king. Blake’s Black Prince suggests how his own youthful fiery nature might submit to be disciplined by the prudence of age only as a preliminary to rejecting any such compromise. In the end, his commitment, like Hotspur’s, is to an entirely individual notion of glory. He wants to “cut a path into the heaven of glory / Leaving a track of light for men to wonder at” (3.274-75). Again, Blake’s concern is to deconstruct the complex qualities that Shakespeare identifies as co-existing in Hal, and that make him an ideal king.

This theme is reinforced in scenes four and five when Dagworth assumes Henry V’s role as the voice of inspiration for the troops. He and William open scene four discussing ambition. Dagworth says, “Ambition is the growth of every clime” (4.2). Ironically, the King requests Chandos’s assistance in pruning the Prince’s “ambitious tendrils” (3.213). These same vines are now, in France “finer than any we have in England” (4.6). The oak trees, so fine in England, are identified with ambition, which

Dagworth defines as “the desire or passion that one man / Has to get before another, in any pursuit after glory” (4.14-15). It is a definition that implies the absurdity of attempting to found ideas of national unity on ambition and its pursuit. Blake seems to suggest that what England once possessed and used to her advantage in battles against France has now been lost to America. The eagle replaces the oak by scene six. The trees, so fine in England, become “strewn upon the shore, / Spoil’ d of their verdure” (6.31-32).

William then asks, “I should be glad to know if it was not ambition that brought over our King to France to fight for his right?” (4.21-22). When Dagworth answers in the affirmative, William proceeds, “if ambition is a sin, we are all guilty in coming with him, and in fighting for him” (4.25-26). This conditional sentence suggests that no subject can surrender his moral responsibility for his own actions to another person even if that person is his sovereign. Dagworth merely responds that “guilt, being an act of the mind,” suggests that “none are guilty but those whose minds are prompted by that same ambition” (4.29). No man is accountable for his actions if he lacks the ambition that impels the King. The argument is transparently sophistical.

Dagwood’s reasoning is immediately challenged by the appearance of Sir Walter Manny. He tells Dagworth that he has “been weeping / Over the men that are to die to-day” because he believes that “this breathing flesh must lie and rot, / Cover’ d with silence and forgetfulness” (5.4-5). Dagworth’s response mirrors that of Edward III and Henry V in his orations to their troops. Instead of Manny’s bleak depiction of death, Dagworth affiliates death with

heavenly fields,

Where songs of triumph, palms of victory,

Where peace, and joy, and love, and calm content,
 Sit singing in the azure clouds (5.28-31).

Although blood will stream across the fields, the men's blood will cleanse the land of her darkness. Dagworth's speech has the same effect as Henry V's orations before Agincourt. Walter Manny is ready to fight "Till England blow the trump of victory, / Or I lay stretch'd upon the field of death!" (5.65-66). Dagworth's speech, however, unlike Henry V's, exposes the pagan, unchristian basis of any suggestion that "heavenly fields" are won by those who die in battle. In place of a Christian Heaven, he offers something suspiciously like a pagan Valhalla.

In *Henry V*, Henry, disguised and among his troops, tells them, "Methinks I could not die any where so contented as in the King's company, his cause being just and his quarrel honorable" (4.1.126-28). William's response to Dagwood addresses the moral responsibility of the king to his subjects. For Williams,

if the cause be not good, the King himself
 hath a heavy reckoning to make, when all those
 legs, and arms, and heads, chopp'd off in a battle,
 shall join together at the latter day and cry all, 'We
 died at such a place'—some swearing, some crying
 for a surgeon, some upon their wives left poor
 behind them, some upon the debts they owe,
 some upon their children rawly left (4.1.134-41).

For Shakespeare, the moral responsibility of the common soldier ends with his duty of obedience to his king. Henry accepts that the King enlists men who may have a

blemished past. Their engagement in the war does not absolve them of their past sins, but if they die in battle, the King is not responsible. Henry states, “Every subject’s / duty is the King’s, but every subject’s soul is his own” (4.1.176-77). They may escape the King’s laws, but if God decides to punish them, “War is his beadle, war is his vengeance” (4.1.169). Williams agrees that “’Tis certain, every man that dies ill, the ill / upon his own head, the King is not to answer for it” (4.1.186-87). Shakespeare absolves the King of moral responsibility. Blake does not. In *Henry V*, moral responsibility is transferred from the King to his subjects. Blake suggests that no such transfer is possible. Once Ambition permeates society, it encompasses everything, but “grows most in lands most cultivated” (4.4). Its primary victim is England.

In the final scene of *Edward the Third*, a minstrel sings a song that underlines the theme of war. The soldiers are “exhorted to go out and work as fierce slaughter upon the French as did their own Trojan ancestors upon the early giants of Albion” (Erdman *Blake: Prophet*, 69). The song deploys the myth that Britain was founded by the Trojan Brutus just as Rome was founded by the Trojan Aeneas. Warner briefly addresses this myth at the end of his second book of *Albion’s England* in 1586. Here, Warner outlines Brutus’s pedigree and then proceeds to narrate the story of Brutus’s arrival in Britain.³⁶

In Blake’s poem, the minstrel narrates the first six stanzas. In the first stanza, the narrator addresses the “sons of Trojan Brutus” (6.1) and praises their voices as the “thunder of the field” that has an effect even on the natural world—the “Rolling dark clouds” (6.3)—even “muffling” the sun. This song is Blake’s “bridge back to the eighteenth century” because his song about the French and the English “is as appropriate to the modern as to the medieval theme of conquest” (Erdman *Blake: Prophet*, 72). Blake

unites the brutality of the past with that of the present. Joshua Barnes, in his *History of Edward III*, summarises how Edward III's armies raped, murdered and robbed. His "Generals were little better than brigands" and the "sacking of towns" was Edward's main achievement in France (Erdman *Blake: Prophet*, 65).

Ironically, the minstrel's song is thematically similar to John Dickinson's *American Liberty Song* composed in 1768, reprinted in many newspapers, and one of the most popular songs of the day (Davidson 190). Dickinson was a famous lawyer, Governor of Delaware and Pennsylvania and one of the leaders of the American Revolution. His song lyrically mentions "slavery or freedom, sufferings of first settlers in defense of liberty, penalties of submission, necessity for union and rewards of victory" (Davidson 190) (Appendix 22). The liberty mentioned in Dickinson's song is embodied in the eagle, which connotes, in scene three, fear and submission, but metamorphoses into Liberty in scene six. In scene three, the eagle connotes Dagwood's fear of battle and desire to retreat to England. For him, the eagle "doth gaze upon the sun" (3.116) but feared "the small fire" (3.117). The eagle could be "undone by flight" and "tame submit" (3.121-22). By scene six, the eagle is personified and stretches "her mighty spear o'er distant lands" (6.58) while, ironically, she also "covereth / 'Fair Albion's shore, and all her families'" (6.60).

In his opening speech, Edward III tells us that Liberty is "the charter'd right of Englishmen, / Won by our fathers in many a glorious field" (1.9-10). John Ehrstine states that "liberty cannot be 'charter'd,' for that would be a contradiction in terms; witness "London" in the *Songs of Experience* where the streets and flowing waters of the Thames are 'charter'd'" (155). The *OED* defines "charter'd" as "privileged: licensed" (295) and

cites Blake's "London" as an example. In this poem, Blake uses the term ironically to establish a dichotomy between what the term connotes and what it actually signifies for him in the poem. In *Edward the Third*, Blake uses "charter'd" in a similar manner. Ehrstine is much too simple in the use of the word "chartered." All Englishmen of Blake's period dated their liberty from the great charter, Magna Carta. But by the time Blake uses the word in "London" it had become contaminated—most obviously by the great "charter'd" companies that controlled the economic life of London.

In its association with Liberty, the eagle also becomes a paradox in the minstrel's song. On June 20, 1782 the inhabitants of the newly independent United States adopted the eagle as their national emblem. Eagles traditionally appear on coats-of-arms as emblems of power, but they also rob ospreys and eat carrion. Liberty—the eagle—at the close of the song shall

stand upon the cliffs of Albion,
 'Casting her blue eyes over the green ocean;
 'Or, tow'ring, stand upon the roaring waves (6.55-57).

Blake's Liberty does not look at Albion, but abroad, at America.

Throughout the song, the minstrel weaves allusions that summarise the dominant theme in *Edward the Third* and Shakespeare's *Henry V*. The minstrel's lyric, like Henry V's speech, outlines the results of defeating the enemy. Henry tells his soldiers that victory ensures that their

names,
 Familiar in his mouth as household words, . . .
 Be in their [people's] flowing cups freshly rememb' red.

This story shall the good man teach his son (4.3.51-52,55-56).

Any man who does not fight, “Shall think themselves accurs’d they were not here; / And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks” (4.3.65-66). In a similar manner, Brutus’s narrative in the song appeals to the ego of the soldiers who prepare to fight:

plenty shall bring forth,

‘Cities shall sing, and vales in rich array

Shall laugh, whose fruitful laps bend down with fullness (6.46-48).

These same soldiers will be remembered for their victory through the construction of monuments: “Their towers shall be built upon the rocks, / Their daughters shall sing, surrounded with shining spears!” (6.53-54). In *Henry V*, the soldiers are fighting for honour, but in *Edward the Third* the soldiers fight for “Liberty” (6.55). In Blake’s drama, Liberty’s glance is no longer myopic. She, that once was invoked to “Energie ... soldiers . . . / Blaze in each countenance, and fire the battle” (1.11-12) for Britain is now, ironically, “Stretching her mighty spear o’er distant lands” (6.58). The spear, an idle trophy “of the vanquisher” (1.5) becomes, across the ocean, a symbol of freedom from “the vanquisher” in the newly independent United States of America.

The legendary Brutus, who founded Albion, tamed the land and her inhabitants and built a mighty empire by force. For Blake, Brutus, like Edward III, is a tyrant. Brutus obtained liberty for Britain through war and begins the contamination of Britain with the warrior, militaristic ideal—one that permeates Edward III’s dialogue and Blake’s Britain. Brutus embodies what Edward III argues throughout the play. Throughout the song, Blake combines contradictory ideals. The minstrel uses Brutus to inspire Edward’s men. He refers to their ancestors and their heroism, but this heroism is dipped in blood. Brutus,

ironically, is inspired to speak by the bloodshed he witnesses. For Brutus, the future is embodied in “Our sons” and the empire they will inherit. The economic and emotional rewards of such an inheritance, however, can be achieved only through war. Liberty is also achieved through war and bloodshed in Edward’s eyes. Blake uses Brutus, a paradoxical figure, in the final scene, to suggest that the tyrant has surrendered to militaristic and unchristian notions of virtue, and is defeated as a result. The national ideals of military prowess, imperial rule, national prosperity, and freedom that Blake identifies cannot co-exist between the mother and her colony. Britain cannot shackle America and expect her to remain a passive colony. Patrick Henry, in a speech given on March 23, 1775, addresses these sentiments:

If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts is all that is left us!

(<http://libertyonline>) (Appendix 23).

Shakespeare, like the minstrel, insists that the ideals are complementary, but Blake, through his allusion to Brutus, suggests they are contradictory.

In all three dramatic fragments, war and peace are placed within an allegory that alludes to Shakespeare’s chronicle plays, England’s past victories against France and

England's contemporary loss of the American colonies. Shakespeare promotes war and its glory while Blake reacts against it using characters that seem based on Shakespeare's models. For Blake, Kings are tyrants who ask their citizens to fight for their country and for liberty when in fact they are being asked to fight in support of the "ambition" of their rulers. Ambition is personified and debated in *Edward the Third*, but the debate remains unresolved. In Shakespeare's chronicles, the glory of war and the prizes it provides its soldiers inspire men to fight. Blake seems to imitate him; however, the contemporary historical context undermines his rhetoric. Blake covertly alludes to the American Revolution and Britain's loss of her thirteen colonies. Britain's military glory, particularly under Edward III and Henry V, displayed in her victories against her French neighbour, is lost to a colony thousands of miles to the west whose citizens triumph precisely, Blake suggests, because they are an army of free men fighting against the army of a tyrant.

Chapter 3

“Who is it that can tell me who I am?”: *Tiriel*



King Lear 5.3 ca. 1786-88, James Barry³⁷

In 1791, Blake composed *Tiriel*, perhaps his earliest “illuminated narrative”³⁸ and one “he never meant to publish” (Bentley Jr. *William*, 26). The poem, a poetic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *King Lear*,³⁹ addresses issues that correspond to contemporary historical events. Both *King Lear* and *Tiriel* map the progression of a king from sanity to madness and death. In *Tiriel*, Blake moves from dramatic factual history, as depicted in Shakespeare’s chronicle plays, to mythological history, as depicted in Shakespeare’s English tragedy. He shifts from the holistic unity of the histories to division in *King Lear*. Blake’s allusions to Shakespeare’s mad king pointedly remind us of George III, who displayed signs of mental instability in 1788. Ironically, George III read *King Lear* and commented that he was “thankful that he was ‘better off’, since he had neither a Regan nor a Goneril but three Cordelias” (Hibbert 287). The division depicted in Blake’s poem and Shakespeare’s play, amidst a contemporary setting, becomes a poetic warning of the consequences of division—geographic and/or mental. For Blake, *King Lear* and the

American Revolution were tragic symbols of the consequences of rifts. Dramatically and historically, brothers battled brothers. Kings fought family members. By depicting schism and its consequences, Blake suggests that the opposite, unity, is strength. Without it, a country is vulnerable to Revolution and civil war. Shakespeare provides the characters and Blake places them within a contemporary context. England's monarchy, ironically, complements Shakespeare's and Blake's literary portrayals, while events in France help reinforce them.

Throughout 1788 and 1789 the British newspapers published information on both George III's mental health and the impending Revolution. Pamphlets also were published that detailed examples of the King's madness. Philip Withers, in a pamphlet entitled *A History of the Royal Malady*, outlines an incident in the summer of 1789 in which the King's madness is publicly evident. Apparently, the King approached an oak tree, bowed, seized one of its lower branches, and shook it. The King also conversed with the tree presuming it to be the King of Prussia (Clarke 136). The monarch's madness seems to become more pronounced at this time as stories abound. He often declared himself in love with Lady Pembroke (an elder woman) and wanted the institution of marriage abolished. He also issued orders to people who did not exist. Dr. Francis Willis was eventually summoned to diagnose the King's illness and help restore him. Dr. Willis diagnoses madness and requests that the king be removed to Kew where he can better treat him.⁴⁰

George's questionable mental health and Shakespeare's *Lear* provide an adequate foundation from which Blake constructs his poem. Within this framework Blake also establishes a relationship between text and image that was to characterise much of his

work. Tiriël dominates the narrative, but in the illustrations, Tiriël often is effaced from the scene; Heva and Mnetha in the narrative are “aged,” but they are depicted as “beautiful young women with clear foreheads, smooth necks” (Bentley Jr. *William*, 20). The discrepancies between the word and image in Blake’s poem constitute a kind of narrative. The text emphasises the physical degeneracy of Tiriël and the “intellectual degeneracy of Har” (Bentley Jr. *William*, 20). The designs emphasise Tiriël’s separation from his family, Har’s Eden-like existence in the Valley of Har, and Har and Heva’s child-like innocence. The Valley of Har symbolises Har and Heva’s peaceful existence, because they are metaphorically blind to the world beyond. Moreover, Tiriël’s place in these illustrations (Appendix 24-26), between the Valley of Har and Heva’s tent, underlines the incompleteness of Tiriël’s journey.

Tiriël’s absence from the first and last Har and Heva illustrations (Appendix 25 and Appendix 31) emphasises his final separation from them, at least in the closing designs. Mnetha queries, “Why shouldest thou conceal thyself from those of thine own flesh” (2.42). Tiriël responds,

I am not of this region . . .

I am an aged wanderer once father of a race

Far in the north. but they were wicked & were all destroyd

And I their father sent an outcast (2.43-46).

Tiriël’s position as an “outcast” is emphasised in both media. The narrative emphasises the palace; the designs accentuate the Valley of Har. Their juxtaposition reveals that Tiriël is an alien, an “outcast” in either place. He severs his relationship with his children when he curses them and he lies to Mnetha about his parents. The designs, then, visually

repeat the chain of events outlined in the text that have led Tiriël to his current predicament.

While the visual and verbal dialectic is Blakean, the textual allusions are complex. They have roots in Greek tragedy. Kathleen Raine notes that Oedipus is a prototype for Blake's Tiriël ("Tiriël", 36), but Oedipus for Blake is inevitably refracted through Shakespeare's *Lear*. Oedipus may, like Tiriël, be "the banished tyrant of Thebes who from the edge of the grave curses his sons and calls down ruin upon his kingdom" (Raine "Tiriël", 36). Shakespeare's banished tyrant, *Lear*, is a more intimate presence in Blake's poem.

Blake's plot, however, differs from that of *King Lear* in two crucial ways: the addition of a third generation and the removal of the subplot. We might even suggest that in *Tiriël* the place of the second plot is taken by the illustrations, which mirror and contrast with the text in much the same way that the *Lear* and Gloucester plots mirror and contrast with each other. Blake's introduction of a third generation emphasises the disastrous chain reaction that the first generation initiates. Mnetha, Har and Heva, the first generation, begin a process that will destroy two succeeding generations; Tiriël, Myratana, Zazel and Ijim, the second generation, are deposed or enslaved; Tiriël's and Zazel's offspring, the third generation, rebel and are cursed or enslaved. In each generation, the children are designed to repeat the pattern that has been established by their parents. For Blake, each successor to the throne fails because each child asserts his power in the same manner as his predecessor—he becomes a tyrant. When a tyrant suppresses his own children, the children respond by usurping him. Blake, here, seems to reinforce the message he covertly addressed in the "Prologue to King John", *Edward the*

Third, and “The Prologue to Edward the Fourth”—he advocates war against tyranny. A tyrant who surrenders to the militaristic and unchristian notions of virtue is defeated, as George III was in America; however, in *Tiriel*, Blake suggests that war has now metamorphosed into a mental battle in which the tyrant and his family must die because the parent created what the children now reinforce—the shackles that enslave them all. The deposed parents become children themselves ruled by their progeny. For the fetters to be broken, everyone must either remain in a state of innocence, oblivious to the outside world, insane or die.

Shakespeare’s double plot universalises Blake’s theme, the visiting of the sins of the fathers upon their children and the inversion of the natural order. *Tiriel* is metaphorically and physically blind, like Lear and Gloucester. Gloucester’s metaphorical and literal blindness is evidenced most dramatically when he fails to see through Edgar’s disguise as Tom o’ Bedlam, Edmund’s feigned concern for his brother, and Edgar’s disguise as a guide. *Tiriel*, then, becomes a complex amalgamation of Lear, Gloucester, Edgar and Edmund, whose actions and reactions are blended into his main character. Hence, in its entirety “*Tiriel*, like King Lear, concerns the abuse of power and the self-destruction which it entails” (Bentley Jr. *William*, 12), and he becomes what the visual and verbal media are—a paradox. In Shakespeare’s work the reader begins, to some degree, *in medias res* because Lear’s decision to divide his kingdom has been decided upon prior to the opening of the play and a map has been prepared. His decision to divide the kingdom is the catalyst, which precipitates all the events of the play.⁴¹

Blake opens his poem when *Tiriel*, already deposed, returns to the castle with his dying wife (Appendix 24). In the illustration, *Tiriel* and Myratana are located to the left

of the picture space—separate from their children. The middle pillar, located also in the centre of the picture, divides the scene. The scene depicted is *in medias res* since an action has occurred in the narrative prior to this one. In the text, immediately upon his sons' arrival, Tiriell utters derogatory remarks to his sons: "come you accurs'd sons. / . . . Come forth sons of the Curse come forth" (1.7,9). Tiriell's curses merely qualify what the father thinks of his sons. The "Curse" that began with Tiriell's deposition of his own father—a tyrant—continues with his own sons and creates what Tiriell labels the "Accursed race of Tiriell" (1.6).

Tiriell's eldest son retaliates against such a vehement speech by redefining what the word *curse* connotes. The son says that his father's "blessing was a cruel curse"; therefore, "His curse may be a blessing" (1.16). Tiriell's sons believe that they were "slaves till we rebeld" (1.16). Tiriell's sons are free from their father's shackles; however, they, as their father before them, also enslave. David Fuller makes this observation: "The enforced restraint that he had found unendurable when young Tiriell has sought to enforce when old, and so driven his sons into a rebellion in which they simply repeat their father's response to his father" (33). The sons say,

Thou has refused our charity thou hast refusd our food
 Thou hast refusd our clothes our beds our houses for thy dwelling
 . . . Was it not you enslavd the sons of Zazel & they have cursd
 And now you feel it. Dig a grave & let us bury our mother (1.36-37,40-

41).

The son's speech is everything Tiriell's is not. Hans Ostrom makes this clear when he says that Heuxos's speech "plays off Tiriell's curse, it uses the very image of the tyrant

to good effect, its rhetoric is consistent, its rhythm, by comparison, is controlled, and it concludes with a flourish of epigrammatic elegance” (170). The sons choose simply to ignore Tiriell’s curses and “offer him sanctuary, but since his pride cannot allow him to accept it he is ‘forced’ to wander” (Gleckner 148) along an indeterminate path. Gleckner suggests that if Tiriell were to accept his son’s offer, he would be surrendering his authority (149). When Tiriell was king, he enslaved his family. Now that the situation is reversed, he refuses his sons’ offer of food, clothing and a dwelling because he would be beholden to them. Instead, like Lear, Tiriell enters a pastoral environment to begin a journey that will inevitably destroy him. The oppressed individual rebels against the tyrant to seek freedom, and he achieves it but, as a former tyrant, he must die for enslaving others.

Goneril and Regan utter a series of epigrammatic speeches to their father. They mention his weak, old state to suggest that he needs guidance because of his newfound state. Goneril insists that her father dismiss his entourage. Lear, outraged, says Goneril is,

a bile,
 A plague-sore, or embossed carbuncle,
 In my corrupted blood (2.4.223-25).

Regan, likewise, supports Goneril’s position. For Regan, Lear is

old,
 Nature in you stands on the very verge
 Of his confine. You should be rul’d and led
 By some discretion that discerns your state
 Better than you yourself (2.4.146-50).

To counteract Lear's spiteful utterances about Goneril, Regan simply responds, "O the blest gods! So / Will you wish on me, when the rash mood is on" (2.4.168-69). When Lear discovers that Regan also refuses to look after her father's entourage, and provide him with "raiment bed and food" (2.4.156), his response is still more violent: "No, you unnatural hags, / I will have such revenges on you both" (2.4.278-79). Shakespeare then unites this submissive pose with nature, old age, and a humbleness somewhat different from the physical act. He asks nature to spew forth her "horrible pleasure," for Lear is nature's "slave, / A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man" (3.2.19-20). The image is complete. His anger subsides. His rhetoric infers that he will succumb to nature and all it will vent upon him because his language no longer possesses the force or the energy it did at the beginning of the scene. His utterance realises Gloucester's virus in 1.2.: "Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd 'twixt son and father" (1.2.106-9). Like Tiriell, Lear's rhetoric lacks the "epigrammatic elegance" of his daughters, and his withdrawal into the tempest achieves their purpose. He leaves their homes.

The freedom Lear seeks from his two eldest daughters comes at a price—his sanity. Regan and Goneril try to oppress him. Lear responds by entering into nature amidst a tempest, which signifies the physical and mental battle Lear will experience in this environment. The parent is reduced to a child, dependent on his parents for food, shelter and clothing. No longer willing to remain the object of his daughters' tyrannous behaviour, Lear rebels regardless of the consequences. Lear began the inverted spiral when he disinherited Cordelia because she refused to verbalise her love for him. His

childlike reaction—his anger, clouded vision and thereby subsequent dismissal of Cordelia—began his disintegration towards childhood. The inversion of the natural order began early in the play and is only resolved when Cordelia “invades” England as Queen of France and nurtures her father to mental health. The Fool foreshadows Lear’s reaction in Act one, scene four when Lear says, “I would learn that, for by the marks of sovereignty, / Knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters” (233-234). The Fool replies, “Which they will make an obedient father” (1.4.235).

In 1789, these themes and the dangers inherent in achieving them dominated French society and was depicted in British newspapers. On July 14, 1789 the Bastille fell in a battle in which the proletariat defeat the nobles. The Bastille myth, prior to its fall, developed from various paintings and the narrative ensued from them. Giambattista Piranesi’s painting of the prison was “an immense Gothic castle of darkness and secrecy, a place into which men would disappear without warning and never again see the light of day until their bones were disinterred by revolutionary excavators” (Schama *Citizens*, 389) (Appendix 33). When it fell, the Bastille was reconfigured. Simon Schama notes that the “myth of the Bastille that had been propagated was reinforcing ideas that the men who would be set free would be patriarchs, men who had grown old, immured by the tyranny that had forgotten their incarcerator” (*Citizens*, 407). The reality was very different: there were seven prisoners of whom four were forgers tried in due process, two were lunatics and one was the Comte de Solages, confined at his family’s request for libertinism. The Bastille “became a national and international symbol of liberated humanity” (Schama *Citizens*, 409). Pierre-François Palloy, the man who organised the demolition of the prison, also was able “to reconstruct a myth which, packaged, marketed

and distributed, was made available to audiences and customers throughout the length and breadth of the country” (Schama *Citizens*, 409).

Camille Desmoulins, in *La France Libérée*, wrote the following a few days after the fall of the Bastille:

‘Listen, listen to Paris and Lyon, Rouen and Bourdeaux, Calais and Marseille. From one end of the country to the other the same, universal cry is heard ... everyone wants to be free’ (Schama *Citizens*, 380).

Desmoulins comments that “‘Yes, yes, it is I who call my brothers to freedom; I would die rather than submit to servitude;” (Schama *Citizens*, 382). This desire for freedom is echoed in *The Times London* on July 23, 1789:

The last news from Paris informs us, that the King, called on by the National Assembly to dismiss his new Ministers, who the Members declared did not enjoy their confidence, has been obliged to accede to their wishes; and, in consequence, M. Necker returned back to Versailles on Saturday last, amidst the acclamations of the people. . . . If we may judge from what has lately passed in Paris, what might not we have seen in London and the counties, had the present Administration been forced out at the time of the King’s malady. The wary thought makes us almost shudder!”

In Blake’s poem, Tiriell seeks revenge because his sons depose him and possess all the power he once had. He wishes to avenge his deposition. Edmund, like Tiriell’s

sons, desires power because of the way he has been treated by his father. Edmund plots to usurp the place of his legitimate brother as Gloucester's heir:

Why brand they us
 With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base? . . .
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund . . .
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
 Shall [top] th' legitimate (1.2.9-10, 15-16, 19-21).

After usurping the place of his brother, Edgar continues to usurp, too, the place of his father. When he tells Regan and Goneril about his father's aid to Lear and the King of France's arrival in England, Edmund is automatically bequeathed the title "Earl of Gloucester" (3.5.17-18, 21-25). Edmund, in a soliloquy, tells us that "The younger rises when the old doth fall" (3.3.25). Both Edmund and Tiriell's sons depose their fathers actively and thereby achieve the ambition that Edmund ascribes to Edgar. As Edmund tells his father, "I have heard him [Edgar] oft maintain it to be fit that, sons at perfect age and fathers declin'd, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue" (1.2.71-74).

Tiriell's nature emerges when he curses his sons literally and then physically. Like Edmund, Tiriell constructs a false narrative when he meets his parents. Edmund does so to gain the property and the title his father has, but Tiriell does because he sees his parents in a state for which he is responsible. Tiriell tells Mnetha, upon their first meeting, that

I am not of this region. . . .

I am an aged wanderer once father of a race

Far in the north. but they were wicked & were all destroyd

And I their father sent an outcast. I have told you all

Ask me no more I pray for grief hath seald my precious sight (2.43-47).

Both men's narratives are constructed for multiple reasons. Edmund and Tiriell seek sympathy for their cause and achieve it in different ways. Stephen Behrendt suggests that Tiriell's lies are "motivated by a selfish desire to save face and avoid acknowledging the reality of his own failures" (179); whereas, Edmund's deceit is motivated by a selfish desire to gain power. Gloucester responds to Edmund's feigned speech in a way that parallels Tiriell's derogatory remarks to his sons: "O villain, villain! his very opinion in the letter. Abhorred villain! unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!" (1.2.75-77). Although Gloucester does not call his son *cursed* or *accursed*, he curses him.

George III's relationship with his sons ironically complements Lear's and Tiriell's predicaments. Prior to the King's removal to Kew, the Prince of Wales was widely known for his philandering: he supposedly seduced one of the Queen's maids at the age of sixteen, fell in love with one of his sisters' attendants, had a passionate affair with an actress, spent extravagant amounts of money on clothes and friends; and was engaged in heavy drinking. Decorum was highly regarded by the King, but the Prince of Wales publicly displayed his disobedience, deliberately missing levees and church services. His blatant disregard for his position and his strained relationship with his father created an interesting situation when the King's mental health became public knowledge. Almost immediately, the Prince assumed charge of everything. He

took control at Windsor and refused to allow many of his father's friends into the Castle. He seized George's private papers, jewels and money and, when the Queen objected, the Duke of York said, "Madam, I believe you are as much deranged as the King." ... Gamblers at Brooks's Club changed the name of the card usually called 'The King' to 'The Lunatic'; in the same room, the Duke of York mimicked his father in his madness (Clarke 145).

The behaviour of the two sons at this time created a more interesting political dilemma. George III's illness bolstered confidence in the opposition party because the Prince of Wales supported Richard Sheridan against the current leader—Pitt. Fox declared that the Prince of Wales had the "right to assume the reins of Government and exercise the power of sovereignty as he would have had if the King had under-gone a natural and perfect demise" (Hibbert 272). As Hibbert clearly points out, the Prince "had a *claim* to the regency, but hardly an *inherent right*. To assert such a right, Pitt argued, amounted to an unwarranted interference with parliamentary privilege. It was almost treason to the constitution of the country" (273). If Fox's speech had not been condemned outside the Commons, Pitt could simply have been removed "without any fear of retribution" (Clarke 145). As David Erdman summarises, in England, "the royal grasp had suddenly failed, but there seemed nothing for the people to do but wait and see, while politicians struggled to name the next king or drive their rivals from the bedside of the ailing one" (*Blake: Prophet*, 131). In 1789, George III recovered and the Prince of Wales and Duke of York had to justify their behaviour during his illness. They flattered their

father and wrote “letters of affection, reverence and duty” (Clarke 149). They claimed they behaved in the manner they did to “protect their father” (Clarke 149).

While the English King was incapacitated and the Prince of Wales was trying to assume control, the sovereign of France was being challenged and the division amongst the three levels in the National Assembly would result in the fall of the Bastille and Revolution. In 1789, the new “National Assembly” was formed and, on Mirabeau’s motion, declared “all present taxes should be ... null and void unless authorized by that body” (Schama *Citizens*, 356). Mirabeau’s declaration was a direct challenge to the King. Louis XVI’s reign, when it began, signified a new era, but by 1789, the tide was shifting. On June 17, 1779, *The Times London* printed the following statement:

The following intelligence may be depended on as authentic; it was brought on Monday evening by one of the King’s Messengers from the Duke of Dorset, at Paris. We have for some time past announced the divisions which subsist among the three bodies of the representatives of the people, and they are every day growing more and more alarming. They are now arrived to an open schism, and it is feared that nothing short of the Royal interference, assisted by the military, can quell them.

On July 13, 1779, one day prior to the Fall of the Bastille, *The Times London* issued the following statement: “Tranquility appears to be re-established in France, but many people seem to doubt whether it may not be of that kind, which frequently precedes [*sic*] the most violent hurricanes.”

The nature imagery here is also present in both *Lear* and *Tiriel*. Each main character leaves the vicinity of his home to begin a pastoral journey. When Lear enters the natural scene, he invokes the four primary elements of nature to become enraged:

Blow, ... and crack your cheeks! rage, blow!

You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout

Till you have drench'd our steeples, [drown'd] the cocks!

You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,

Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,

Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,

Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world!

Crack nature's moulds, all germains spill at once (3.2.1-8).

This emphatic speech reveals that his magisterial power over individuals dissipates into mere commands to nature because his title, respect and everything they connote is gone. Lear retaliates the only way he can, spurred on by revenge for the way he has been treated. The imagery and language that precede this speech foreshadow his downfall. He, after all, seeks refuge in nature and then, in a kingly rhetoric, commands nature. He addresses various naturally occurring phenomena, such as hurricanes and thunder, and demands that they wreak havoc upon everyone and everything. Lear does not justify his actions; rather, the speech clearly demonstrates that he retains kingly characteristics. Lear has not yet accepted the fact that he misjudged Goneril, Regan and, especially, Cordelia. He succumbs to madness and relinquishes his former power completely before he realises and accepts what he has done.

Blake seems to have a parallel nature episode in plate five. Like Lear, Tiriell invokes the primary elements but he questions nature. Tiriell says,

where does the thunder sleep

Where doth he hide his terrible head & his swift & fiery daughters

Where do they shroud their fiery wings & the terrors of their hair

Earth thus I stamp thy bosom rouse the earthquake from his den

To raise his dark & burning visage thro the cleaving ground . . .

He ceast the heavy clouds confusd rolld round the lofty towers

Discharging their enormous voices. at the fathers curse (5.1-5, 14-15).

Tiriell addresses his speech to his sons and daughters not the world, as Lear does, so the speech does not entail widespread destruction. He also does not ask or command nature to inflict her anger on him, which infers that Tiriell does not regret his mistakes. Tiriell is metaphorically and literally blind and seems to lack the confidence that Lear displays in his speech. He also justifies his actions in a series of infinitive phrases when he asks the earth to "rouse the earthquake." Tiriell's speech simply lacks the power of Lear's. Blake reinforces this weakening state with language when he refers to Tiriell's words as "the fathers curse" (15) and not the king's or former king's.

The dark background setting in the illustration (Appendix 29) creates an eerie atmosphere, which complements the text. The drawing reinforces Tiriell's role as an individual rather than a king. Although Tiriell occupies centre stage, his son wears the crown. Moreover, his arms are extended to his sons, as if he is pleading or preparing to embrace his children to the right of the picture space. Tiriell and Lear are motivated by revenge, but the former is simply unable to exude the energy in Blake's visual and verbal

portrayal of him that Lear does verbally. Nature's vengeance will be a "horrible pleasure", but as a slave, must and shall be endured quietly. Tiriell quietly submits to his sons, as they did to him once before, when he delivers his wife's body at their request.

What Lear asks in 1.4.230 and the Fool answers immediately afterwards comes to fruition in Shakespeare's play: "Lear: "Who is it that can tell me who I am?" Fool: "Lear's shadow".” Lear is no longer a king and all that title entails; rather, he is a slave without power, subject to the demands of his daughters and nature's wrath. He has become a shadow of his former self, simply a physical outline that resembles Lear in body but lacks definition, substance, status. Edgar reiterates Lear's new form when he assumes the role of Tom o' Bedlam. All he changes is his outward appearance:

My face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hairs in knots,
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds and persecutions of the sky (2.3.9-12).

Edgar's justification for assuming another identity is simply "Edgar I nothing am" (2.3.21), and the same could be said about Lear.

The mad Lear, like Tom o' Bedlam, behaves like a child amidst nature yet Lear retains the appearance of an old man. He acknowledges to Gloucester that he is "every inch a king!" (4.6.107) yet he has relinquished everything the title connotes. In his madness, he says,

When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
Adultery?

Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No. (4.6.108-111).

His madness reveals a wish to regain lost power, and when he feels he is in danger of being captured, he proclaims,

I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom

... Come, come, I am a king,

Masters, know you that? (4.6.198-200).

These lines reveal a childlike wish to be recognised as someone he is no longer. He wishes to die bravely, like a king, yet he questions whether or not the gentleman and attendants acknowledge him as such.

The slave and shadow images emerge several times in Blake's text. When Tiriell leaves the castle with no place to go, the narrator describes the scene as "darkling o'er the mountains sought his pathless way" (1.51). The narrator's statement and the pastoral context within which it is placed automatically reminds one of the lines Gloucester utters when Regan says, "Go thrust him [Gloucester] out at gates, and let him smell / His way to Dover" (3.7.93-94). After he is thrown out, an old man accompanying Gloucester says, "You cannot see your way" to which Gloucester replies, "I have no way, and therefore want no eyes" and adds, "I stumbled when I saw" (4.1.17-19). Tiriell similarly wanders through a pastoral setting that appears to be a shadow of itself. This image is evident in the adjectives used to describe the scene: "to him both day & night were dark/ The sun he felt but the bright moon was now a useless globe" (2.1-2).

Moreover, the narrator, using a simile, tells us that Har and Heva are "as the shadow of Har" (2.7). Tiriell does not recognise, or wish to recognise, that Har and Heva are his aged parents. We are prepared for Tiriell's reaction by Blake's insertion of

drawing number 2 (Appendix 25) to which there is no corresponding dialogue. This illustration captures the state of innocence through the senses. Har and Heva have been in the state of experience but now live in a state of innocence. The picture foreshadows an emotional response. Har and Heva appear young. Har's face is not weathered by age and neither is Heva's body, as if age does not affect them in their Eden-like existence. Their focus upon one another reinforces the fact that they initiated a chain reaction yet are oblivious to its effects on succeeding generations, even after Tiriël's visit. They remain absorbed in themselves and blind to their actions—a response Tiriël parodies in every way except his journey leads to death.

Throughout the poem the main characters are not their true selves. They are slaves who refuse to acknowledge their past mistakes and accept responsibility for them. As David Fuller tells us, "Har's reaction to rebellion is a sterile retreat into innocence based on ignorance" (33). Blind Tiriël, with only a staff for his guide, journeys to a literal and figurative pastoral retreat.⁴² When he meets Mnetha, Tiriël discards his staff "the kind companion of my travel" (2.27), kneels down, and says that he is "A wanderer. I beg for food" (2.26). This statement parodies Lear's to Regan in 2.4.155-156.

The drawing (Appendix 26) mirrors the action described in the text and, when Tiriël disposes of his staff, Blake visually and verbally implies that Tiriël will succumb to the pastoral setting and, like his parents, retreat from the outside world oblivious to the situation he has caused. But the staff's return to him upon his departure (Appendix 27) implies that his journey is incomplete. Prior to his departure, Har and Heva invite Tiriël to listen to Har sing in a cage. The cage, like so much in both works, possesses both literal and figurative meanings. Within the cages, man is like an animal, trapped and

ready to attack anything or anyone who approaches. Blake's cage transforms man into an animal who will "not go ... till thou hast seen our singing birds / And heard Har sing in the great cage" (3.20-21). The singing birds are the viewed objects while the individual, the object of the preposition, sings in a confined space. While both are objects, Blake places Har in the same position Tiriell's sons occupied in the latter's speech in plate one. Their parallel placement removes any ambiguity from Tiriell's character. Tiriell's actions towards his father placed his father in his current position. Now, Tiriell wants to place his sons in a similar one. The result has been withdrawal for Har, rebellion for Tiriell's sons and revenge for Tiriell. Kathleen Raine believes that Har's cage "in which the old man sings was suggested to Blake by Lear's" utterance to Cordelia ("Some Sources", 16):

Come let's away to prison:

We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage;

...So we'll live

And pray, and sing, and tell old tales (5.3.8-11).

Shakespeare's cage metamorphoses man into an animal content with his confinement.

Blake's animal-human inversion seems appropriate since people occupy the pastoral world no longer the individuals they were; rather, they transform into animals that initiate a spiralling, destructive force. Raine believes that Blake uses the caged image as a means of "implicitly rejecting Lear's hoped-for happiness as a fool's paradise" ("Some Sources", 16). Perhaps the fool's paradise to which she refers emerges as the play concludes. Lear seems to hope that Cordelia may be alive: "Look on her! Look her lips,/ Look there, look there!" (5.3.311-312). This optimism, just before he dies, enables him to die somewhat hopeful, though mistaken, that his actions have not destroyed the "poor

fool" (5.3.306) Cordelia. Lear and Cordelia are shadows. The youngest daughter, like Lear at the opening of the play, appears content to surrender her title and everything associated with it to live in prison. She never utters a word to suggest the contrary. The events slowly close the circle. Lear and Cordelia make similar errors. Lear divides his kingdom with the aid of a pen and a map so that he can resign his throne and everything the word *king* connotes. Cordelia also resigns her throne and everything the word *queen* connotes but she does so quietly, forced by Edmund. Like Lear, Cordelia's downfall is aided by the pen.

The caged image also has contemporary historical significance. Under Dr. Willis's treatment, George III was confined. Clarke tells us that

Willis compared his methods with the insane to the way in which wild horses are 'broken in.' Lectures, threats and the strait-jacket played a large part in his treatment. If the King refused food or was restless, his legs were tied to the bed and a band strapped across his chest. Later Willis introduced a special chair to restrain his patient: with bitter irony George called it his 'Coronation Chair.' If the King objected to anything, his mouth was gagged; he was denied the use of a knife and fork (138).

Insanity was viewed as possession by the devil and the only way to remove him was to torment the patient. Madness, believed to signify sin, required punishment. The King of England is treated like an animal. The moment he rebels, he is confined. Lear endures a complete mental, physical and emotional sentence that ends in his death. Har's presence in the cage signifies his punishment for his sins, but he is unaware, in his childlike state,

what the cage connotes. Tiriell leaves the Valley of Har because his journey has only just begun. Har and Heva's reality is not Tiriell's.

Both picture and text indicate that Tiriell re-enters the world while Har and Heva remain at the tent's door. When he unwillingly returns to the castle he chooses to use his youngest daughter as his literal eyes—a choice that allows Tiriell to return to the vales of Har and shift “the responsibility for his behaviour to another, in this case to Har” (Behrendt “The Worst”, 176). Tiriell, physically blind, fails to see beyond his physical impairment—to see metaphorically. Lear physically sees but is metaphorically blind. Both men lack insight. Lear's myopia at the beginning of the play dissipates into darkness until he recognises his blunder and retrieves the lost daughter. By contrast, Tiriell's physical blindness is permanent. Blake suggests, then, that physical blindness cannot aid someone in need of intellectual vision—insight.

The slave and shadow images and the blindness metaphor appear later in Blake's text but develop from Ijim. The narrator identifies the man as Tiriell's brother. When the reader is introduced to him, the narrator says that the “blind man heard his brothers voice & kneeld down on his knee” (4.10). Tiriell says,

O brother Ijim if it is thy voice that speaks to me
Smite not thy brother Tiriell tho weary of his life
My sons have smitten me already (4.11-13).

These lines echo those spoken by Gloucester, upon hearing the mad Lear: “The trick of that voice I do well remember; Is't not the King?” (4.6.106-107). Lear's response is “Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son / Was kinder to his father than my daughters” (4.6.114-115). Tiriell recognises Ijim orally in the same manner that

Gloucester recognises Lear. The difference emerges when Ijim does not recognise Tiriell, whereas, Lear recognises Gloucester almost immediately.

Ijim refuses to accept what he sees—that the man before him is his brother. Ijim simply believes, despite evidence to the contrary, that Tiriell is an impostor and immediately says, "Ay now thou art discovered I will use thee like a slave" (4.24). Like Lear early in the play, Tiriell succumbs quietly to his new role. The latter individual simply does not wish "to reply / He knew twas vain" (4.25-26). His resignation foreshadows and reinforces the main theme of Blake's poem; however, Blake seems to make the Shakespearean reference more obscure. Gloucester is the one who fails to recognise Edgar as Tom o' Bedlam when they first meet in the cave during the tempest. Gloucester says, "What are you there? Your names?" (3.4.127) and later in that scene, "What, hath your Grace no better company?" (3.4.141). More importantly, Gloucester, in Edgar's presence, says

I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late. I lov'd him, friend,
No father his son dearer (3.4.166-169).

Ijim's refusal to acknowledge his brother's appearance leads Tiriell on a return journey from whence the story began: "over hills thro woody dales / Blind to the pleasures of the sight & deaf to warbling birds" (4.27-28). This pastoral journey seems appropriate if, according to Sheila Spector,⁴³ the name *Ijim* etymologically means "'wild beasts of the islands' and 'to settle, to take up one's habitation'" (324). Blake visually stresses the animal-like characteristics of Ijim (Appendix 28) and Tiriell's dilapidated

state as he stretches forth an arm. Ijim's strength is recognised and revered by the new king—he is bowing to Ijim. The verbal and visual scenes certainly remind one of the setting in which Edgar leads Gloucester towards what the latter individual believes is his death. This excursion returns Tiriell to the place where he was overthrown, and will commence a series of tragic events that will lead to his death.

In Shakespeare's play, Edgar's journey with Gloucester becomes the scene that unites the plot and subplot of act four, scene six. The result will also be a series of tragic events. Edgar and Gloucester's journey is a feigned pastoral one. He tells his father,

Come on, sir, here's the place; stand still.

How fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!

The crows and choughs that wing the midway air

Show scarce so gross as beetles (4.6.10-14).

Like the cursed Hela who leads her father "thro mountains & thro frighted vales" (7.1) to where "wild beasts resort / Hoping to end her woes" (7.16) (Appendix 30) so does Edgar. In Blake's corresponding design, the mountains and vales form the background, while they appear to be entering the Valley of Har. In Shakespeare's play, Edgar reveals his love but through his actions; whereas, in Blake's poem Hela recognizes why she has been chosen as her father's guide. Hela obeys her father's command and leads him to the vales where Har and Heva dwell. She believes she was "born thy slave who askd thee to save me from death-- / Twas for thy self thou cruel man because thou wantest eyes" (6.13-14). Both characters—Edgar and Hela—lead their father to a place where they will die.

Tiriel curses his daughter during this journey because she "Laughs at affection glories in rebellion. scoffs at Love" (6.18). As his anger intensifies he says, "Laugh serpent youngest venomous reptile of the flesh of Tiriel / Laugh. for thy father Tiriel shall give the[e] cause to laugh" (6.32-33). Tiriel is much more vindictive than Lear because his guide cannot be trusted. Lear curses his elder daughters in much the same manner. He attacks their reproductive ability and venomously attacks them. Hela, for Blake, is a conflation of Goneril and Regan's disdain for their father, while Cordelia's also helps her father, but she forgives Lear whereas Hela cannot. Tiriel instantly reacts to Hela's belittlement rather than thinking about who the instigator may be and how the problem can be best circumvented.

When Lear awakens from his insane state in the company of Cordelia he says,

Do not laugh at me,
For (as I am a man) I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia (4.7.67-69).

His utterance appears to be a wishful plea for respect as a man and not a king. This change in Lear implies that he has acknowledged his past deeds and accepted responsibility for them. Cordelia honours him and forgives him. Lear calls his daughter a "lady" which, when juxtaposed with his earlier utterance about Goneril, makes clear that Lear understands his mistake and foreshadows his wish or plea that Cordelia is not dead as the play concludes. Unlike Lear or Gloucester, Tiriel does not acknowledge his error and will die "without understanding that he alone must accept the responsibility for his degeneration" (Behrendt "The Worst", 177). Although Edgar deliberately leads his father astray—"Give me your hand. You are now within a foot / Of th' extreme verge"

(4.6.24-25)—his intentions are honourable when compared to Edmund's earlier in the play. While Edgar unites the plot and subplot events, Edmund's deceit is the catalyst that initially severs the two.

When the central male figure dies in both works, he does so within a stage direction or short sentence. Kent wishes Lear's heart would "Break, heart, I prithee break!" (5.3.314); whereas, Tiriell "ceast outstretched at Har & Hevas feet in awful death" (8.29) unable, even before death, to accept responsibility for his error. Their deaths are told simply as if they are expected and contradict the fighting spirit portrayed in each respective work. Tiriell seems resigned to submission at the feet of his parents while Lear appears to die falsely hopeful his daughter is still alive. Har wishes for what Lear and Gloucester acknowledge and Tiriell does not: "I wish thine eyes may see thy folly" (3.15). By dying at the feet of his parents, Tiriell returns to the people he deposed. In the final design, however (Appendix 32), Tiriell dies at the feet of Hela and not his parents, a more direct allusion to Shakespeare's play only Tiriell dies and Hela remains alive, mad.

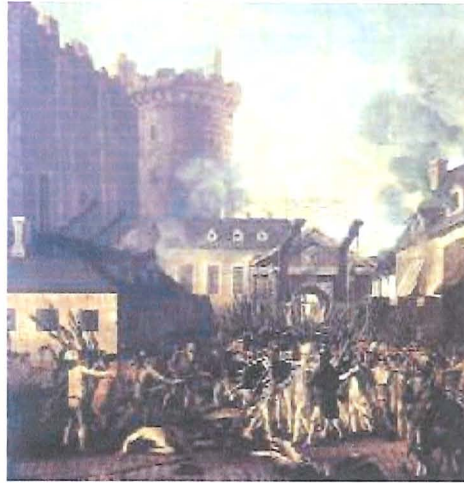
Lear's dying words suggest that despite the fact that he recognises his error, he cannot accept Cordelia's death. He knows that she has "no breath at all" and she will "come no more" (5.3.308), yet he constructs a feigned hope that she may be alive: "Look on her! Look her lips,/ Look there, look there!" (5.3.311-312). He dies uttering words which suggest optimism in the same manner he divided his kingdom—with the wish of hearing the cherished love of Cordelia surpass her sisters only to be tragically mistaken. Lear's exclamation enables him to die unrealistically content that his decision did not destroy the "poor fool" (5.3.306) Cordelia. Tiriell's death, verbally at his parents and visually at his daughter's, is an interesting paradox, but Tiriell is, after all, a parent who

becomes a child and the natural inversion in the poem is reinforced in verbal and visual media. Verbally, Tiriell may be deposed, but he desires the power he once had and all it connotes. Visually, he is absent from most of the illustrations and is a child dependent on his daughter to guide him.

In *Tiriell*, Blake turns for the first time to *King Lear*, the Shakespearean play that was to remain the most important to him throughout his career. But on the evidence of *Tiriell* it would seem that the play first appealed to him because it allowed him discreetly to address urgent topical issues. The story of a mad King and of a nation threatened with anarchy because its ruling families disintegrate into warring factions has an obvious topical reference to Britain in 1789, a relevance so obvious that once George III's madness had become public *King Lear* disappeared from the English stage. *Tiriell* was never published by Blake. He was no doubt aware of the limitations of the poem as an early experiment in illuminated printing, but he may also have recognised that the poem might have been thought to carry a still more dangerous topical message. In *King Lear*, Britain is saved from destruction at the hands of a royal family who have lost all human restraint by a benevolent invasion from France. It was a dangerous precedent to invoke after the fall of the Bastille, and it was to become still more dangerous in the following years, after the execution of the French king, the British declaration of war on France, and the invasion scare that followed Napoleon's announcement of his intention to invade Britain.

CHAPTER 4

Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité: The French Revolution



The Storming of the Bastille, July 14, 1789⁴⁴

The French Revolution, a fragment written in 1791, addresses the revolutionary theme Blake will explore further in *A Song of Liberty, America, and Europe*. One possible reason for *The French Revolution*'s incompleteness is the political climate of the day. In February 1791, Joseph Johnson published the first volume of Paine's *The Rights of Man* but cautiously declined to print the second.⁴⁵ When Paine turned to Jordan, both author and printer were indicted. After 1791 government censorship was imposed with rapidly increasing strictness on writing sympathetic to the French Revolution. Johnson published the first book of Blake's poem in 1791, but the increasingly repressive monitoring of publications may explain why Blake never completed his work.

The fragment attracted no attention when it was first published and has not attracted a great deal since. Modern commentaries on the poem may be divided into two broad categories: historical and prophetic. In *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, David Erdman annotates the poem by comparing its events with the historical events that they adumbrate, and the response to those events of English radicals.⁴⁶ He concludes that the

Assembly is portrayed as more decisive and powerful than it was at the time.⁴⁷ For Erdman, Blake's poem works to collapse the differences between the French revolutionary ideal and English parliamentary government, and in doing so it echoes one important aspect of the English interpretation of events in France. However, Erdman's approach risks eliding the distinction between fact and fiction, or between journalism and poetry.

Jon Mee modifies Erdman's approach in his discussion of *The Book of Urizen*. He understands the absence of history and politics from this work as signifying "either a retreat from the political domain or some kind of shadowing of history by an allegorical mythopoesis" (2). According to Mee, Erdman is an allegorist who believes his task is to "seek out the encoded politics of Blake's rhetoric" (3). Mee's approach is more literary. In particular, he highlights Blake's use of the Bible and his attempt to release the Bible from its role as a text that served to reinforce "the maintenance of the social order" (2). In *The French Revolution*, according to him, Blake shared a common project with other lower-class radicals who sought to construct their own voice, by using the rhetorical resources available to them and, in particular, Biblical rhetoric.⁴⁸ My own approach extends Mee's by calling attention to another rhetorical resource that Blake utilises in *The French Revolution*, the rhetoric of Shakespeare's plays.

I am indebted to William Halloran for pointing out the dramatic character of Blake's poem. He offers a reading of *The French Revolution* as an apocalyptic text based upon the *Book of Revelation*.⁴⁹ For him, the poem is a visual and dramatic prophecy that imposes the narrative and dramatic features of the epic upon contemporary events and "presents those events as prophetic of a regenerate world" (31). Halloran identifies these

characteristics as displacement, juxtaposition, repetition, “movement within a tri-part division of space, and manipulation of time to imply timelessness” (33-34). But Halloran also points out that Blake’s poem has a dramatic structure. His division of the poem into seven scenes exposes a dramatic structure that underlies the poem’s narrative.

The Shakespearean allusions in Blake’s poem, both direct and indirect, liberate Blake’s text from hermetic symbolic methodology. They function to place the poem within the rhetorical discourse that by 1791 worked to define English responses to kingship more powerfully than any other, the discourse, that is, of Shakespeare’s plays. Hence the importance of the dramatic structure that Halloran excavates. As Halloran points out, *The French Revolution* may be divided into scenes as follows: the Louvre, scene one, lines 1-15; the Bastille, scene two, lines 16-54; the Commons, scene three, lines 54-58; the Louvre, scene four, lines 59-254; the Commons, scene five, lines 255-69; the Army, scene six, lines 270-92; and the Louvre, scene seven, lines 293-306. My own account of the poem retains Halloran’s sevenfold division. For Halloran, the number seven functions as the structural principle of the poem and exposes its dependence on *The Book of Revelation*. For me, the dramatic structure is of first importance, because its presence sanctions my argument that Blake’s representation of Louis and of the forces that threaten him are mediated for the English reader by a sequence of implicit allusions to a discourse about kingship that has its origin in Shakespeare.

At its outset, the French Revolution reminded Britain of her Glorious Revolution of 1689. “From the English point of view,” according to Paulson, “the first phase [of the French Revolution], from 1788 to 1792, was in general one of approval celebrating the fall of despotism and the rise of a constitutional monarchy” (*Representations*, 37). The

Fall of the Bastille was celebrated as the defeat of a system of absolute monarchy that the British had secured a century earlier, freeing the French to establish the Parliamentary government exercised under a constitutional monarchy that had, it could be represented, since 1689, secured England's freedom. French history, it was believed, was repeating a process through which English history had already passed. Burke assaults this view so violently in his *Reflections*, and his was a violence directly proportionate to the currency of the view that he was attacking. Blake, Erdman suggests, articulates in *The French Revolution*, the more conventional English response. The Fall of the Bastille is represented as symbolising the overthrow of tyrannical absolutism, and the proceedings of the National Assembly are dignified so that it might appear to be the legitimate child of the Mother of Parliaments, the British. Blake's use of the Shakespearean discourse that I shall explore in this chapter might be thought to function similarly. Its purpose, it might be argued, is again to anglicize French history by suggesting that it was available to be understood within the terms of the discourse that more powerfully than any other shaped English notions of kingship and right government.

But even in 1789 the notion that the French people were asserting their right to the same constitutional liberty that the English had enjoyed for a century was precarious. Britain's most recent military defeat, for example, by the American colonists, was represented not simply by the Americans, but by many British commentators, including Blake and Burke, as a successful resistance to the tyrannical and unconstitutional pretensions of the British government. More generally, the contrast between a British people secure in the freedoms and a French people at the mercy of a tyrannical and arbitrary ruler was difficult to sustain. France had an absolute monarch, and Britain a

constitutional monarch, perhaps, but George III was widely believed to look jealously at the untrammelled power exercised by his neighbour king. Nor could the virtues of Parliamentary government be complacently maintained by the citizens of a nation whose Parliament was effectively controlled by the patronage of a handful of powerful aristocrats. It may be true that in eighteenth-century Britain, decision-making powers were more widely dispersed than they were in France (Emsley 113), but such differences are, after all, relative.

In France there had been widespread popular unrest throughout the century. Food riots became commonplace because wages remained relatively fixed, while prices rose. Between 1726-1741 and 1771-1789, wages in France increased only 22%, while prices rose 65%. This dilemma would become more marked in the final three years of the old régime. Bread, the main staple, cost more than 50% of the working man's budget (Rudé 18). But in Britain, too, there were riots, and, as in France, riots could assume a political character, as evidenced most recently in the Gordon Riots. In some aspects of life an observer at the end of the eighteenth century might well have been more impressed by the similarities rather than the differences of London and Paris. In Paris, there were 7000 police and soldiers including a reserve force of 5000-6000 Gardes Françaises and Suisses (Rudé 56). In the 1770s, London had a combined force of 1000 peace officers and 3000 watchmen and patrolmen, supported by several thousand troops, who could lend their support to subdue civil disturbances if required.

Ian Small argues that "the course of the Revolution in British eyes was always determined by human agency and seen in terms of criminality and error" (xiv). History, in this view of things, becomes a morality play, the forces of good against the forces of

evil. Hence, the horrors of the Bastille, or, a few years later, the execution of the King and of Marie Antoinette, might each be represented as pure expressions of the evil of a tyrannical ruler or of an inhumanly savage revolutionary government. Blake's use of Shakespeare might seem to license exactly this kind of historical understanding. In *Richard III*, Shakespeare had after all offered one of the two most powerful examples of how a savage dynastic squabble might be transformed into an ennobling narrative in which the forces of evil are ousted by the forces of good, and the second example is also by Shakespeare, *Macbeth*. My purpose in this chapter, then, is not simply to point out those moments in Blake's poem in which he seems to present events in France mediated through Shakespeare, but to question what the effects of this mediation might be.

It is best to begin with the one direct allusion to Shakespeare in the poem. The Abbe de Seyes demands in the name of the National Assembly and the people of France that the National Guard be withdrawn from Paris and the Bastille overthrown. He is answered by the Duke of Burgundy:

blood ran down the ancient pillars, ...
 the Duke of Burgundy, delivers the King's command.
 Seest thou yonder dark castle, that moated around, keeps this city of Paris
 in
 awe.
 Go command yonder tower saying, Bastile depart, and take thy shadowy
 course.
 Overstep the dark river, thou terrible tower, and get thee up into the
 country

ten miles.

And thou black southern prison, move along the dusky road to Versailles;

there

Frown on the gardens, and if it obey and depart, then the King will
disband

This war-breathing army; but if it refuse, let the Nation's Assembly thence
learn,

That this army of terrors, that prison of horrors, are the bands of the
murmuring kingdom (246-54).

The allusion has often enough been identified, but little has been made of it.

Erdman, for example, describes these lines simply as “a . . . dramatic sarcasm, suggested perhaps by Macduff's Birnam Wood Maneuver and designed to set the stage for the drama of July 14” (*Blake: Prophet*, 171). But in 1791 allusions to *Macbeth* were heavily weighted with political resonance. As Jonathan Bate points out, from 1760 to 1830, perhaps no Shakespeare tragedy was more important politically than *Macbeth* (*Shakespearean*, 88), and the outbreak of the French Revolution served only to underline its preeminence. In the 1790s, verbal and visual allusions to the play are marked by the “repeated use of threefold repetition”, the significance of which “derives not only from the threefold figurations in *Macbeth*, traditional to witchcraft, but also from the fact that threes were central to the iconography of the French Revolution, with its tricolour, its *liberté, égalité, fraternité* and its triple symbols of liberty cap, liberty tree, and citizen's pike” (Bate *Shakespearean*, 90). Various artists, including Gillray in a famous print, drew on *Macbeth* to sharpen their commentary on the politics of the day. William Dent helped

establish a model for other caricaturists in his *Revolution Anniversary* or *Patriotic Incantations* in July 1791. Using *Macbeth* as his model, he associates the witches and the cauldron scene with contemporary political figures: Fox, Sheridan, Priestley, Dr. Joseph Towers. In Dent's work, the radicals prepare an infernal broth, which they will drink at the second anniversary of the fall of the Bastille.⁵⁰ (Bate *Shakespearean*, 89).

Blake was himself to borrow this iconography in his design of *Hecate*. From one point of view, then, it is entirely unsurprising that Blake should allude to *Macbeth* in his poem. But that is to ignore a fact to which Jonathan Bate calls attention. The practice of drawing parallels between *Macbeth* and events in France was common not amongst those like Blake, who sympathised with the Revolution, but amongst their most violent opponents. As Jonathan Bate makes clear, in the 1790s *Macbeth* was invoked almost always by those individuals who wished to portray the events in France as demonic.⁵¹ As Bate points out, the practice had its origin in the first and greatest of all the anti-Revolutionary tracts, Burke's *Reflections*:

‘History will record, that on the morning of the 6th October, 1789, the King and Queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled, melancholy repose’ (Bate *Shakespearean*, 88).

This allusion, when coupled with Macbeth's "balm of hurt minds" (2.2.36), couches sleeplessness with regicide, Duncan's assassination with Louis' in 1793. In effect, the allusion becomes a prophecy in Blake's poem and functions in much the same manner as Macbeth's witches.

The execution of Louis in 1793 was widely understood in England as a striking confirmation of Burke's prophetic power, and it gave fresh impetus to parallels between the dead King and the murdered Duncan, his "silver skin lac'd with his golden blood" (2.3.112). *Macbeth*, in its representation of a legitimate King murdered by a man driven to crime by his ambition, and the moral trajectory of the play's hero, tracing the path by which a man, once noble, could degenerate into a panic-stricken, indiscriminately murderous savage, was to provide the most serviceable lens through which English spectators watched events in France unfold as the execution of Louis was followed by the Revolutionary Terror. But already in 1791, as Burke's invocation of the play demonstrates, it was a play that has been appropriated by Blake's political enemies, and hence, on the face of it, an inappropriate play for Blake to allude to.

Blake's tactic is, of course, not difficult to explain. *Macbeth* was by 1791 simply too important a text, too strong a lens through which to view contemporary politics, to be left in the hands of his political opponents. But any invocation of the play was fraught with difficulties. Most obviously, *Macbeth* is a play about the evils of tyrannical rule, not about the evils of absolute rule, a moral that would scarcely have commended itself to James VI and I, who seems to have been very much in Shakespeare's mind when he wrote it. Indeed *Macbeth* pays homage to the sacredness of legitimate kingship, in the person of Duncan, and ends with a strong image of the virtue of benevolent kingship in the person of Malcolm. Indeed the speech by Malcolm that closes the play has a particular but not wholly appropriate resonance:

What's more to do,

Which would be planted newly with the time,

As calling home our exil'd friends abroad

That fled the snares of watchful tyranny (5.9.30-33).

Necker's dismissal, and his retreat into exile is a key moment in Blake's poem, but it is far from his purpose to suggest that a change of heart on the part of the King, and the recall of Necker might redeem Louis' rule.

Blake's solution is ingenious. Put briefly, he transfers the distinctive characteristics of Shakespeare's Macbeth from the King to one of his officers, from Louis to the Governor of the Bastille, Bernard-René de Launay. This device relies heavily on the symbolic value that had been attached to the Bastille throughout the eighteenth century, a character most apparent, perhaps, in the legend of the man in the iron mask. The legend rather than the reality made the prison the first target of the revolutionaries in 1789, and the fall of the Bastille served only to intensify the sinister glamour attached to the prison.⁵² The Bastille was composed of eight round towers: *Tour du Coin, de la Chapelle, du Puits, de la Bertaudière, du Trésor, de la Comté, and de la Liberté*. In *The French Revolution*, Blake reconstructs the historical landmark by reducing the number of towers, converting some into dens, and renaming them. Blake's erasure of the Liberty tower, then, is especially significant. Historically, the Liberty Tower "contained those prisoners who were free to walk about the courtyards of the prison" (Godechot 90). However, Blake omits it, so that the prison can become a complete and compact embodiment of the nation as a whole, which is definitively characterised by its failure to allow liberty to its citizens.

Blake re-names the towers and dens: Darkness, Bloody, Order, God, Horror, Religion, and Destiny. Each is represented as sunk in a state of darkness and decay as a

means of figuring the physical and mental degeneration that pervades all levels of French society. The same tactic is at work in Blake's representation of the Bastille's prisoners. Blake would almost certainly have known the somewhat humdrum reality that was revealed when the Bastille fell on July 14, 1789, securing the liberation of only seven prisoners. The conditions in which prisoners were kept did not correspond to the legend of the prison's horrors in earlier times. But for Blake, as for most of his contemporaries, the legend of the Bastille was far more important than in its reality, and in its legend, the prison becomes the embodiment of the nation, and its prisoners the true representatives of the people of France in their suffering under a despotic ruler. As one might expect of Blake, foremost amongst these prisoners is the writer, condemned for his composition of a prophetic work. He lies in chains, a serpent "coil'd round in his heart, hid from the light" (28). There is the woman who refused to be "whore to the Minister" (37), and is now bound to a bed of straw and whore to the "seven diseases of the earth" (36). The strong man has been maimed, "His feet and hands cut off, and his eyes blinded" (44). All of these figures are representative, and between them they represent all the people of France. This allows Blake to establish the governor of the prison, Bernard-René de Launay as, in some sense, the nation's true monarch, the man in whom the imaginative reality of Louis' kingship is fully revealed.

Ironically, de Launay had himself actually been born in the Bastille, but when he was made governor of the prison, he came to represent "the entire integrity of royal authority in Paris" (Schama *Citizens*, 399). Forced to defend the Bastille and its contents—250 barrels of powder—with little manpower and food and no water supply, the Governor had a difficult task. He negotiated with two delegates, but refused their

demand that he surrender the prison's guns and stock of powder, on the grounds that he was unable to do so without the King's express warrant. Rumors contributed to the people's unrest. They believed the army was approaching to crush the Paris uprising. His unwillingness to comply with the delegates' demands quickly heightened the situation. The assault on the Bastille began, and after the prison fell, its unfortunate Governor was killed.

After the storming of the Bastille, the people took the governor and the commandant of the prison to be executed publicly. They were beheaded, their heads placed on tent poles and carried to the Palais Royal through the streets of Paris (Paulson *Representations*, 42). The end of Macbeth—his head placed on a pike and displayed—was reproduced:

Then yield thee, coward,
 And live to be the show and gaze o' the time!
 We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
 Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
 "Here may you see the tyrant" (5.8.23-26).

It is perhaps the crucial coincidence that prompted Blake to transfer to the Governor of the Bastille the distinctive characteristics of Shakespeare's tyrant king.

The effects of the device are far-reaching. For one thing, it enabled Blake to overcome the limitation in the British understanding of the Revolution that, as Ian Small notes, insisted on understanding all events as "determined by human agency" and explicable "in terms of criminality" (xiv). The Governor of the Bastille is demonic and tyrannical not by virtue of his personality but by virtue of his office. Evil is located not in

an individual but in the institutions of a state governed by an arbitrary and absolute ruler, by a King who had the power to incarcerate anyone in the Bastille indefinitely with a “*lettre de cachet*” (Bindman 36). It had another crucial advantage. It freed Blake from the difficult task of attempting to locate Macbeth-like qualities in the mild, ineffectual, hapless character of Louis XVI. In his representation of Louis, Blake turns to a quite different kind of Shakespearean monarch, the type represented by Shakespeare’s Henry VI, and still more crucially by his Richard II. Like Richard II, Louis is a weak king, at the mercy of events, trusting bad advisers and dismissing his one trustworthy adviser, Necker.

Several critics, amongst them Eileen Allman, have drawn attention to the importance in Shakespeare’s history plays of the figure of the player-king. For Allman, “the Player-King, in his generic form, is the complete player—actor, producer, and poet-playwright” (5). The player-king creates his own role, acts it out and controls the scene. Unfortunately, this power is rarely maintained: “he is instead created, seemingly self-created, within the drama by an educational process performed before the audience. Because he is a character who can lead his society—both within and outside his formal drama—toward communal harmony, his two audiences must share his learning experience (5). In this definition the supreme Shakespearean instance of the Player-King is Henry V, whose education into the role is traced in the two parts of *Henry IV*. The dark version of the type is Richard III, who has supreme theatrical skills, but finds, because he misuses them, that in the end they desert him. For Shakespeare, then, kingship is a kind of performance, and the best King is the supreme performer. It was a notion that to an actor-dramatist such as Shakespeare would have been entirely congenial.

Related to, but in contrast with, the Player-King is a character that Sandra Billington has named the 'mock king'. The mock king may be someone engaged in acting a king or a real king who simply cannot fulfil that role adequately (Billington 87). Hal and Falstaff are mock kings when they each in turn assume the character of Henry IV. But it is the second type that is significant to my argument, the king who is unable to act out the role of kingship that his birth has given him, and the supreme Shakespearean example of this type is Richard II. Much like the player-king, the mock king creates himself from established patterns, which Billington limits in her study to the winter and spring festivals. But he finds himself unable to give the performance that is demanded of him. Ironically, in Act one, scene one, Richard tells Mowbray and Bolingbroke that kings "were not born to sue but to command" (Billington 196), but Richard, though he has been born to command, is unable to do so. He fails to resolve the conflict between Mowbray and Bolingbroke, authorizes the trial by combat that the two men demand, and then intervenes to prevent the conflict from taking place. His judgement is that both men be exiled, Bolingbroke for ten years and Mowbray for life, but he has scarcely announced his judgement before he reduces the sentence on Bolingbroke from ten years to six. These decisions lead him to a still more dangerous one—the seizure of Gaunt's property upon Gaunt's death. Throughout the early acts of the play, Richard flaunts the trappings of kingship, but fails to display its substance: he commands the rhetoric of kingship but never succeeds in translating the rhetoric into action, with the result that in him kingship becomes a shadow of itself. He remains at the mercy of untrustworthy advisers and of his own capricious whims.

Blake draws on Shakespeare's Richard II for his representation of Louis. Louis's exile of Necker, obedient to the advice of the Duke of Burgundy, is represented in a manner that recalls not only Richard II's exile of Bolingbroke, but his vindictive treatment of his one trustworthy adviser, John of Gaunt:

Necker rise, leave the kingdom, thy life is surrounded with snares;
 We have call'd an Assembly, but not to destroy; we have given gifts, not to
 the weak;
 I hear rushing of muskets, and bright'ning of swords, and visages redd'ning
 with war,
 Frowning and looking up from brooding villages and every dark'ning city;
 Ancient wonders frown over the kingdom, and cries of women and babes
 are heard,
 And tempests of doubt roll around me, and fierce sorrows, because of the
 Nobles of France;
 Depart, answer not, for the tempest must fall, as in years that are passed
 away. . . .
 Dropping a tear the old man his place left, and when he was gone out
 He set his face toward Geneva to flee, and the women and children of the
 city
 Kneel'd round him and kissed his garments and wept; he stood a short
 space in the street,
 Then fled; and the whole city knew he was fled to Geneva, and the
 Senate heard it (109-115, 121-124).

Richard II is first usurped and then killed by Bolingbroke, who, in Sandra Billington's terms, is neither a 'Player-King', not a 'mock-king', but simply a 'false king', since his reign lacks legitimacy. But he is the king who will be succeeded by his son, Henry V, represented by Shakespeare as the supreme exemplar of English kingship.

Richard II is so important a model for Blake, surely, because the play comes close to allowing the possibility that the right of kings is not innate but earned, and that Richard II has forfeited his right to rule by his inadequacy to the task. Indeed, Richard II fulfils himself not in his reign but in his deposition. He proves in the end the most ironical of all Shakespeare's versions of the Player-King, because the one role that he can play perfectly is the role of the deposed King. *Richard II*, then, offered Blake more than a means to characterise Louis. It offered him a means to represent the overthrow of a legitimate King as possessed of its own, quite different kind of legitimacy, and offered him the possibility, had he continued the poem, as representing Louis' deposition as the event that at last allowed the King the one role that he was adequate to perform.

In Act two, scene one, Richard queries what he will eventually do: "Can sick men play so nicely with their names?" (84). Richard will "play" with his identity throughout the drama just as he will play with Henry when he must surrender the crown. Prior to his deposition, Richard displays his reliance upon others. He requests his followers to leave him because "time hath set a blot upon my pride" (3.2.80-81). Aumerle responds, "Remember who you are" (3.2.82). Thereafter, when Richard is deposed, his query into his identity begins, and his acting assumes a power that he lacks as king. His first query begins,

Am I not king?

Awake, thou coward majesty, thou sleepest!

Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?

Arm, arm my name! (3.2.83-86).

Richard establishes a synecdoche that defines him. Richard possesses the title *King*, but that is all. He attempts to personify *majesty* but it sleeps, much as Louis's does in *The French Revolution*. Richard will act and, as York tells us, look like a king (3.3.68), but only when he is king no longer.

In Act 4, scene 1, Richard finally becomes the consummate actor in public in the midst of Henry and his supporters. His queries in 3.3.144-175 are prompted by his relinquishing the throne to Henry. His responses display a willingness to relinquish the title *King* in exchange for a new role, as the usurped ruler. By 4.1, Richard possesses the power to sway emotion. When Richard enters the scene, he captures our sympathy because he metaphorically and literally effaces himself from the scene. Richard will now act out Henry's usurpation publicly: "Give me the crown. Here, cousin, seize the crown" (4.1.182). His verbal utterance publicly announces what Henry has done and provides the audience with a visual depiction of what has transpired. As Eileen Allman recognises, Richard "has extended his personal paralysis as king outward to his community in the form of a repressive tyranny over action" (22). He will be replaced by someone more capable of action.

Richard publicly surrenders his throne and even announces to his audience, both within the play and without, that he is going to "undo myself" (4.1.203). He publicly dissects himself, removes the symbols of kingship, and surrenders them to Henry. All Richard maintains is his birth name. He relinquishes the first three attributes—his crown,

his sceptre and his pride—and then he emphasises the personal nature of the act. He denies his existence as king in a public arena. In Blake's poem, Louis's sceptre lacks regal power and is now "too heavy for mortal grasp" (4)—symbolic of his enfeebled state. The first time that Blake introduces the reader to the king, the character is described as "Sick, sick: the Prince on his couch" (2). The sceptre, the regal symbol of power Blake designates as a type of powerful wand, is "too heavy for mortal grasp" (4) It can no longer "be swayed by visible hand, nor in cruelty bruise the mild flourishing mountains" (5).

The king no longer possesses the necessary strength to rule. Instead, Louis XVI's soul is preoccupied with dreams and, troubled, he resorts to "leaning on Necker" (8,10). Physical and intellectual dependence causes Louis's downfall. Blake's description in scene two of the den of Horror complements the king's position. This den "held a man / Chain'd hand and foot, round his neck an iron band, bound to the impregnable wall. / In his soul was the serpent coil'd round in his heart, hid from the light, as in a cleft rock;" (26-28). King Louis is not only bound to his couch and requires the aid of his satellite, Necker, but he writhes "in dim and appalling mist" (2-3). Such symbolic inner turmoil complements the position of King Louis XVI as he slowly disintegrates from active participation in the discussions amongst his supporters to a passive automaton that merely fulfils the wishes of his counsel.

The sceptre Louis finds a burden is "unwieldy" (*Richard II* 4.1.205). When Richard resigns his throne, he tells Henry, "I give this heavy weight from off my head, / And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand" (4.1.204-205). Richard finds the symbols of

kingship cumbersome. In Blake's poem, Louis, like Richard, dismisses his most trusted adviser and opens himself to advisers who place their needs above the state's.

There is another scene in *The French Revolution* that would have impressed contemporary readers with its Shakespearean resonance, the confrontation between Louis and his great ancestor Henri IV.⁵³ Henri IV is presented by Blake as the French counterpart to England's Henry V. By the eighteenth century, the prestige of Henry V as the supreme English monarch, the great people's King and the great warrior King, largely rested on Shakespeare's play, which, during that century, probably because of the recurrent wars with France, dominated the Shakespearean stage. When the shadow of Henri IV appears, he listens to the deliberations of the King and his nobles, and then "indignant departed on horses of heav'n" (201). It is a symbolic moment, because it betokens the departure from France of the ideal of kingship. On his departure the first to speak eloquently is not the King, nor any of his nobles, but the Abbe de Seyes, and he speaks in the voice of a new authority, "like the voice of God following a storm" (202):

Hear, O Heavens of France, the voice of the people, arising from valley
and

hill,

O'erclouded with power. Hear the voice of vallies, the voice of meek
cities,

Mourning oppressed on village and field, till the village and field is a
waste.

For the husbandman weeps at blights of the fife, and blasting of trumpets

consume

The souls of mild France; the pale mother nourishes her child to the
deadly

slaughter (206-210).

The authoritative voice is no longer the voice of kingly authority, but ‘the voice of the people’. Blake’s point may be this. In the great arc of Shakespeare’s second tetralogy, the deposition of Richard II is justified retrospectively by the reign of Henry V. But in France the possibility of true kingship is positioned not in the future but in the distant past, and that possibility is represented by Blake as abandoning the nation in indignant despair.

A confrontation with the ghost of a great ancestor is a common event in the radical poems of this period. In Southey’s *Joan of Arc*, the maid descends to the Underworld and meets the shade of dead Kings. In Landor’s *Gebir* (1798), Gebir confronts the shade of his dead father, as does Ivar in Cottle’s *Alfred* (1800). In a late use of the topos, the Turkish ruler, Mahmud, is confronted by the ghost of his great ancestor, Mahomet II, in Shelley’s *Hellas* (1821). It is a device through which the radical poets offer their own baleful transformation of Burke’s vision of a society bound to its own past. The “encouragement to look forward rather than backward,” says George Woodcock, distinguishes “the influence of the French Revolution from that of the American Revolution in Britain” (5), though it might be truer to say that it distinguished its influence on those who viewed events in France sympathetically. But the appearance of a ghost would also inevitably have reminded Blake’s readers of the several plays by Shakespeare in which ghosts appear.

Most often, as in *Richard III*, *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*, the ghost of the victim confronts his murderer. Henri IV may have been assassinated, but Louis clearly bore no responsibility for his death. He appears, it seems, to remind his successor, Louis, and the nobles of France of their duty. His military appearance and the fear that he inspires both serve to associate him with the most famous of all Shakespeare's ghosts, the ghost of old King Hamlet:

The Abbe de S[i]eyes from the Nation's Assembly. O Princes and
 Generals
 of France,
 Unquestioned, unhindered, awe-struck are the soldiers; a dark shadowy
 man in the form
 Of King Henry the Fourth walks before him in fires, the captains like men
 bound in chains
 Stood still as he pass'd, he is come to the Louvre, O King, with a message
 to thee;
 The strong soldiers tremble, the horses their manes bow, and the guards of
 thy palace are fled (163-7).

Old King Hamlet appears to instruct his son on his duty to avenge his father's murder, but the appearance of the ghost of Henri IV is understood by the nobles as signifying that the chivalric values that once ruled France have had their day. He appears as a way of intimating that the ideal of kingship that he best represented is dead.

Shakespeare's presence in Blake's *The French Revolution* is far from intrusive. Indeed, only in a single passage that echoes the journey of Birnam Wood to Dunsinane is

it anything like direct. Nevertheless, it is important, because by 1791 Shakespeare's plays had come to function as the most powerful discourse through which the English refracted their political understanding. As the cartoons of the day so amply illustrate, political events were repeatedly understood by locating them in the terms of a Shakespearean original. Most often, and perhaps most easily, this Shakespearean typology underwrote a conservative ideology, as in almost all the cartoons that depicted contemporary politicians in the guises of the witches in *Macbeth*. One of Blake's impulses is to free himself from the mythology of the past, to create his own system for fear that he be enslaved by somebody else's, but his other impulse is to take a past mythology to wrest it to his own purposes, and this tactic operates in the muted Shakespearean borrowings detectable in *The French Revolution*.

CHAPTER 5

Subjugation to Revolution: Visions of the Daughters of Albion



Rape of Lucretia, Titian⁵⁴

The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America perhaps best summarises the colonials' attitude toward Britain prior to the American Revolution: George III's attitude is "a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. ... He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people" (Andrews 166) (Appendix 34). British identity in the eighteenth century, founded upon "Protestantism, social openness, intellectual and scientific development, and a prosperity based upon trade" (Greene 208), would be challenged by a colony across the Atlantic who sought liberty and justice from the tyranny of a king who dominated Parliament and dictated how the war would be fought and eventually lost. Ironically, liberty was the "hallmark of Englishness" (Greene 212), yet British settlers fought their brethren for the pursuit of liberty that will define them as Americans.

This historical allegory frames *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* almost immediately as the poem opens. America is mentioned twice in the first three lines of Plate one and, in lines twenty to twenty three, Bromion tells Oothoon,

Thy soft American plains are mine, and mine thy north & south:

Stamp't with my signet are the swarthy children of the sun:

They are obedient, they resist not, they obey the scourge:

Their daughters worship terrors and obey the violent:

Blake, then, embeds his poem within historical events in the Thirteen Colonies and uses rape as a secondary narrative to comment upon Britain's response to the colonials who refuse to accept taxation. We are told that "Oothoon wanderd in woe, / Along the vales of Leutha seeking flowers to comfort her; / And thus she spoke to the bright Marygold of Leutha's vale" (1:3-5). Oothoon plucks the Marygold and places the glowing flower between her breasts. Three lines later, Oothoon is raped. The plucking has been, as David Erdman suggests, "mistaken for a symbol of the rape, and her later argument is mistaken for defense of an 'affair' with Bromion" (*Blake: Prophet*, 236). Erdman reiterates the allegory: "When the soul of America goes 'seeking flowers to comfort her,' she is looking for a further blossoming of the revolutionary spirit . . . , and when she finds a 'bright Marygold' in the 'dewy bed' of 'the vales of Leutha', she is taking note of the Negro insurrections in Santo Domingo in the Caribbean around which the debate in Parliament raged" (*Blake: Prophet*, 236-237).

In the context of the American Revolution, a different argument emerges. While the revolution was breaking out, colonial citizens did not wholeheartedly endorse war with Britain: "the second Continental Congress remained divided. Could union with

Britain be preserved if its government took America back to the halcyon days before 1763 and agreed to a broad degree of self-government including the right of self-taxation? Or was absolute independence now the only possible option?" (Schama *A History*, 476). On July 1775, Congress produced the "declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking up Arms". This declaration was, in essence, an "olive branch" petition from Congress (Schama *A History*, 476). Oothoon's Marygold can be read as this "olive branch" seeking union with Theotormon and then peace with him after being raped by Bromion. Symbolically, the flower is associated with Mary's Gold and the various legends that abound that on the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, marigolds were found in Mary's purse by robbers in place of gold coins. In *Revelations* 12:16, Mary, the Woman of the Apocalypse, is clothed with the sun, and is pregnant. She emerges with flowers rising up at her sides, recalling that the earth helped protect her from the dragon. Blake seems to play upon this allusion in the poem, since the "swarthy children of the sun" to which Bromion refers and Oothoon's flight towards Theotormon is the result of Bromion's robbery of Oothoon's chasteness.

Moreover, Blake begins with the highly sexually charged symbol representing Theotormon and his relationship with Oothoon—a relationship that figures the possible formation of an economic and figurative nation independent from Britain. The glowing Marygold symbolises the separation between Britain (Bromion) and America (Oothoon) but also the strength of America, because Oothoon argues with Theotormon throughout the poem that she remains uncompromised despite the rape.

In the eighteenth century, a woman was the property of her father or husband and female sexuality was defined in economic terms, in much the same way the king attempts

to rape his colonies economically through taxation and other measures. The slang used at the time “incarcerated the notion of a woman’s sexuality as property, defining female genitals as ‘commodity,’ ‘purse,’ or ‘ware’, a figure perpetuated in the bourgeois descriptions of a woman’s sexuality as a “treasure” or a “jewel” (Clark 22). This view served to reinforce an age-old attitude towards rape: “From Old Testament Jewish codes up to feudalism, rape was treated primarily as theft, as a property offence, but one perpetrated against men” (Porter 217).

The woman was a slave bound economically so that “for a man, female sexuality became a commodity to be bought, bartered for, or stolen by force” (Clark 33). In the case of rape, punishment was rare: In practice, British judges and juries refused to take rape victims seriously; they almost never regarded the rape of an adult woman as a punishable offense” (Clark 58). Anne Mellor believes Blake’s project is concerned with liberating the ““daughters of Albion,’ British women, from the greater slavery they experience at home . . . the psychological slavery of ‘subtil modesty’” (“Sex”, 365-366), but in Blake’s poem Oothoon is a slave only in her identity as a colony and in her reluctance to part from Theotormon.

Within an economic framework, what was happening to America can be interpreted as a rape. The British colonies were used to increase British revenue. By the American Revolution, one-third of English imports had customers in the American colonies. Exports from the colonies were varied indeed: New Hampshire exported forest products and ships; Rhode Island and Connecticut, foodstuffs; Maryland and Virginia provided tobacco, wheat and corn; North Carolina, naval stores and foodstuffs; and South Carolina and Georgia provided rice, indigo, and deerskins (Shepherd 6) (Appendices 35-

38 for more trade data). Between 1772 and 1773, North America was the “most important destination of exports for both England and Britain” (Price 87). The colonies were essential to Britain in the eighteenth century because they enabled Britain to expand her overseas commerce. By doing so, Britain had become an even stronger empire, but the American colonies would soon attempt to sever their connection.

Britain’s decision to tax the colonies, for example, was the result of increased financial problems after the Seven Years’ War. The National Debt rose from 74.6 million pounds at the beginning of the war to 132.6 million pounds at its close (Conway “Britain”, 327). American revenue was seen as the cure to the lack of British revenue, but George III did not seem to comprehend the animosity that would result from his measures to increase revenue without colonial consent. In 1764, British Parliament would pass the Revenue or Stamp Act, to regulate Imperial trade and increase revenue to support an army in America. Parliament’s American Mutiny Act was passed in the same year. Colonists were supposed to provide various items to the troops to aid in supporting the British garrison stationed there (Conway “Britain”, 328). Townshend’s Bill was meant to impose a tax on tea and a few other items imported into the colonies. As Alan Lloyd points out, while the “entire revenue involved was less than 40,000 pounds per year, ... the actual tax on tea, three pence per pound, was one quarter of the tax on tea in England” (211).

Colonialists interpreted taxation as a direct attempt by the king to suppress them, and they responded with violence. Opinion in the winter of 1774-1775 inside Britain was divided because mercantile cities relied on trade and “faced catastrophe should war break out. ... Parliament was dominated by calls to inflict on the wicked and ungrateful

children across the Atlantic a hiding they would never forget” (Schama *A History*, 472). The Colonists’ attempts to riot, however, were unsuccessful. The King sought to “strengthen his own views in the Cabinet by the inclusion, among others, of the rabidly anti-American Sandwich, who openly alluded to the colonists as rebels and cowards, loudly exclaiming that three battalions and a few frigates would bring them to their senses” (Lloyd 211). When the colonists responded aggressively to their subjugation, George III imposed further restrictions upon them. After the Boston Tea Party the king exerted his power over Massachusetts. He closed the Boston port to all commerce and withdrew “the liberties it had once enjoyed ever since the Pilgrim Fathers landed there. Its charter was altered. The choice of the council was transferred from the people to the Crown, and the nomination of its judges was transferred to the governor” (Lloyd 214). These tactics, meant to destroy Massachusetts and act as a warning to other colonies, did not work. The Colonies seemed to become ever more unified, as the anger intensified against Britain and King George.

Blake borrows this historical framework but he borrows a narrative that in its origins stretches back to antiquity. Rome “gave us two great narratives of rape: the rape of the Sabines and of Lucretia” (Bryson 154). It is the second of these that seems to have most influenced Blake and, I will argue, it is a narrative that is mediated for him through Shakespeare’s poem *The Rape of Lucrece*. In Shakespeare’s poem, Lucrece condemns Tarquin for his rape but also believes that merely by virtue of being a victim of an assault she is guilty of a crime against her husband. In Blake’s poem, Oothoon believes she is guilty of a crime against Theotormon, which is why she offers to provide him with other women. Oothoon and Theotormon on one level represent the Thirteen Colonies and their

citizens, and the response of one to the other adumbrates the relationship between the colonies at the time. No colony was completely independent of the other, as the patterns of trade data indicate (Appendix 35-37). Each colony supplied Britain with some variety of goods or services. As a unified country, however, the colonies could be independent of Britain, and even ironically maintain trade relations with her. While Lucrece, as convention dictates, kills herself because “only by dying is she able to escape from marginality and regain her social and personal identity as a chaste wife” (Kahn 62), Oothoon remains alive as a hovering figure of despair. She has been raped, yet she is a new country whose citizens have to rebuild their lives independent of their oppressor.

Blake develops in this poem a more mature commentary on George III than he had contrived in his early fragments. In this work, *King Lear* is not the Shakespearean drama Blake turns to; rather, he turns to poetry and Shakespeare’s *The Rape of Lucrece*. Britain’s rape of America occurs in line sixteen of plate one, but Blake rapidly shifts to Theotormon’s reaction: the central focus of the poem. Blake seems to borrow directly here from Shakespeare’s poem. Rawdon Wilson notes that in Shakespeare’s *Rape of Lucrece* the “rape itself, the central violent incident of the story, occurs within ellipsis (lines 860-866). That absence poses, with cool confidence, the narrative transaction both as game and as challenge” (Wilson 54). The incident’s placement reinforces the fact that the motive for rape and the consequences of it dominate the poem and not the act itself. Similarly, Blake places little emphasis upon the rape, noting Oothoon’s rape in a single line: “Bromion rent her with his thunders” (4.16).

In Shakespeare’s poem, as Coppélia Kahn suggests, “Collatine’s proprietorship provokes Tarquin’s desire to rape Lucrece” (57). Bromion “rends” Oothoon’s virgin

mantle because he desires her. Bromion tells us about “his power and ownership of Oothoon and others” (Lattin 17). In the words in which Bromion attempts to explain his action, Blake articulates his understanding of George III’s feelings towards his colonies. But Shakespeare in *The Rape of Lucrece* had anticipated Blake by himself drawing an analogy between the crime of rape and the exercise of imperial power. Like Tarquin, Bromion is incited not by Oothoon herself, rather by his idea of her. Bromion’s utterance maps Oothoon as the conquered woman. Tarquin possesses Lucrece using similar language: “Under that colour am I come to scale / Thy never-conquered fort” (481-482). Kahn explains that Tarquin concludes his announcement of his arrival “by shaking his ‘Roman blade’ over the defenseless Lucrece (505-506), a familiar gesture of military victory” (57).

The titlepage of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* introduces the poem with a gnomic motto, “The Eye sees more than the Heart knows”. Most importantly, the motto functions to propose a reading method for the poem, directing the reader not simply to respond sentimentally to the poem’s narrative, but to grasp an intellectual argument that Blake develops through his illustrations as much as his text. The motto works, then, to insist that Blake’s illustrations must be understood as much more than merely decorative. The motto, of course, inverts a proverbial truth, but it may be more than a coincidence that it is a proverb that had been used by Shakespeare, and in a context wholly relevant to *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*.

Titus Andronicus is not mentioned in any of the theatrical histories of this period; from the time of Ravenscroft’s edition in 1678 until 1923 *Titus Andronicus* “seems to have been performed in England only in radically altered versions: (Waith 45). Waith

notes that the “long absence of any version of the play from the London stage was probably due to the distaste for its horrors and to the closely related doubts about Shakespeare’s authorship” (Waith 47). Nonetheless, it is in *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare’s most powerful play about rape, that Quintus says, “My heart suspects more than mine eye can see” (2.3.213).

In the frontispiece illustration, the three figures avoid each other’s gaze. They have impaired vision because they are each of them enclosed within their own verbal sphere so that the speech of each is a soliloquy heard by no one but the reader. Furthermore, the facial expression of the characters offers a visual equivalent of the soliloquy that each declaims (Appendix 38). In the frontispiece, the cave that frames the page suggests an allusion to Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave.” What Plato’s shackled individual sees in the cave is nullified when he emerges from the darkness and learns that what he saw was merely illusory. A similar incident occurs for Oothoon. In the text she tries to convince Theotormon that her purity remains intact. Oothoon sees beyond the rape and the darkness in which the event occurred and implies that because she was not a willing participant, her purity remains intact. Theotormon refuses to accept this reading of the events, a refusal which is also clearly implied in Blake’s visual representation of him. Irene Chayes notes that Oothoon’s pose in the frontispiece echoes that of Lady Macbeth in Fuseli’s *Macbeth* design, in which she is seated in profile with her head bowed her hair falling forward over her face (152). Fuseli uses this pose again in *Silence* between 1799-1800 (Appendix 39). The pose is almost identical, as Chayes tells us, to that of a prominent mourner in Donatello’s pulpit relief of the Entombment of Christ in the church of San Lorenzo, Florence (152) (Appendix 40). She finds that “Blake too was

attracted, [by the posture] apparently by way of Fuseli's *Lady Macbeth*, for a very similar pose recurs among his designs of the mid-1790s" (152).

Since Oothoon is the central character in the work her central position within the frontispiece's picture space is appropriate. Oothoon's shameful, shackled position acts as a poignant reminder of her rape by Bromion, an event through which Oothoon became a helpless victim of "powers completely outside her control" (Fox "The Female", 513). Bromion however dominates the picture space with his physical presence yet possesses a facial expression of despair and fright as he is shackled to his victim.

The entire picture space, the two male bodies and the cave growth at the top form an inverted U shape. W.J.T. Mitchell associates this shape with "images of contraction and with emotional states of self-absorption, fear, pain, and isolated entrapment" (69). Bromion desires power but he is now shackled to Oothoon. Oothoon's body forms an 'S' shape which tends "to appear in expansive, dynamic contexts, conveying emotional states of passionate abandon and ecstasy" (Mitchell 69), but here only to ironic effect, for Oothoon fails to convince Theotormon that her purity remains uncompromised. The 'V' formation also appears frequently throughout the picture space and subtly comments upon the trifold visions of Bromion, Theotormon, and Oothoon. This arrangement also visually establishes their placement in the picture. The lighted space between Oothoon's and Theotormon's body parallels the shape created by the three bodies of Oothoon, Theotormon and Bromion.

In *The Rape of Lucrece* Shakespeare constructs a scene in which Lucrece, awaiting the arrival of her husband, sees a painting of "Priam's Troy" (1367). Jonathan Hart records that Shakespeare's narrator acts "as a transition between the characters and

the reader, he comments on the characters's speeches and describes the characters" (66). The narrator provides a picture of Troy so the reader can comprehend how Lucrece interprets the painting and the events it represents. Shakespeare uses the narrator's voice to summarise the setting, emotion, and imagery of the work. It is the narrator who tells us that

art gave liveless life:

Many a dry drop seem'd a weeping tear,

Shed for the slaught' red husband by the wife;

The red blood reek'd, to show the painter's strife (1374-1377).

Judith Dundas comments that when Lucrece "returns to the wall-painting to occupy herself until her husband's return, her eyes become the instrument for understanding what has happened to her" (13). Moreover, the "usual ekphrastic praise for the artist's skill in overcoming the limitations of his medium—paint turned into tears and blood, for example—shows art [echoing] the real tears and real blood shed by Lucrece" (Dundas 16). In Blake's work, of course, pictures are presented to us literally, not simply as represented in the verbal text, so that the reader's eyes, rather than the eyes of one of the characters, become, as Blake motto suggests, "the instrument for understanding".

Shakespeare's narrator mentions what he sees of the depicted events: "In great commanders, grace and majesty / You might behold triumphing in their faces; (1387-1388). The violent picture he then verbally depicts for us describes a vast array of individuals. The use of words such as *might*, *possibly*, and *seemed* prevents the portrayed events from becoming concrete. The narrator provides us with a visual narrative that

attempts to close the lacuna between a static picture and the events that it represents: “It seem’d they would debate with angry swords” (1421). The narrator adds,

For much imaginary work was there,
 Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
 That for Achilles’ image stood his spear,
 Grip’d in an armed hand, himself behind
 Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind (1422-1426).

These lines identify what Shakespeare calls the “eye of mind”, a phrase that may also have lurked in Blake’s mind when he devised the motto for his poem.

The voice functions as a synecdoche that completes itself only when Lucrece’s voice states her reactions and provides another interpretation of the work. The narrator uses and labels the synecdoche trope when he identifies Achilles: “A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head / Stood for the whole to be imagined” (1427-1428). He attempts to identify the man’s image—the whole—with the body parts—the part. Through language we are provided with flashbacks to Tarquin’s initial description of Lucrece before he rapes her. When Lucrece identifies himself with Hecuba and emotionally reacts to the painter’s depiction of Sinon, she usurps the function of the narrator in herself guiding the reader’s response to the picture. Lucrece immediately “draws a parallel between her condition and that of the defeated heroes. She identifies herself more particularly with Queen Hecuba who has lost her country, her husband and her children at the hands of the conquering enemy. While Lucrece weeps for their losses she really bemoans her own loss” (Feitelberg 60). When Lucrece “throws her eyes about the painting round, / ... who she finds forlorn, she doth lament” (1499-1500). She identifies with particular figures based

upon her experience with Tarquin and foreshadows her own dilemma. Sinon's depiction transfixes her because it reminds her of Tarquin. She attempts to justify what happened to her: "It cannot be, . . . 'that so much guile' . . . 'can lurk in such a look" (1534-1535). But her knowledge of Tarquin's crime alters "cannot" to its positive equivalent. Lucrece converses with the painting unable to comprehend how Priam could mistake Sinon's character. But she, like Priam, has failed to see beyond the mask. She tears the figure of Sinon from the picture space and acknowledges that Tarquin's "wounds will not be sore" (1568). She has merely destroyed a representation, not the grim truth that the representation figures.

Blake's poem parallels the structure of *The Rape of Lucrece*. Both works begin with an argument that summarises the events that will follow. Shakespeare's argument introduces the main characters, outlines Lucrece's dilemma, and mentions Tarquin's expulsion within 45 lines of the 1900 that compose the poem. In Blake's work, the argument occupies only two stanzas and is still more condensed. Although Blake does not introduce the main characters, he states the dilemma whose results become the verbal and visual focus of the poem: Bromion's "terrible thunders" tear Oothoon's "virgin mantle in twain" (3.8). Blake poignantly underlines the significance of Oothoon's decision to pluck the flower by using similar colours throughout various plates, almost enveloping Oothoon and Theotormon in a palette of fiery reds and yellows. Visually, there is a sense of innocence as the naked figure conceals sexual aspects of her body, but also connotes revolution. A 'v' formation exists between Marygold's and Oothoon's bodies which foreshadows the dual identity of Marygold as both a flower and a nymph. Perhaps the "virgin mantle torn" is the red that dominates Marygold, the figure and

flower who is the catalyst for Oothoon's downfall, the symbol of Mary, and the woman taking flight into Egypt with her family to escape political unrest.

The first words uttered by Oothoon complement the dual reading Blake suggests by the visual and verbal juxtaposition: "Art thou a flower! Art thou a nymph! I see thee now a flower; / Now a nymph! I dare not pluck thee from thy dewy bed!" (4.6-7). Blake, however, identifies Marygold as the Golden nymph who identifies herself as a "flower" and Oothoon plucks her at her own request. The double reading suggests two possible interpretations of the flower, a duality that recurs when Oothoon sees herself as a "new wash'd lamb" (6.18) while Theotormon interprets her quite differently. In the illustration, Blake depicts Marygold as a human form almost emerging from a plant rather than simply a flower. Following the Argument, Shakespeare continues, "Lust-breathed Tarquin leaves the Roman host, / And to Collatium bears the lightless fire, / Which in pale embers hid, lurks to aspire" (3-5). Tarquin, motivated by lust, conceals his intention to see Lucrece. These lines parallel Oothoon's love for Theotormon as she leaves Leutha's vale, consumed by passion, to meet Theotormon. Oothoon initially hides in Leutha's vale and then meets Marygold. She plucks Marygold and places her between her breasts because the flower/nymph identifies herself with "the soul of sweet delight" (4.9). Janet Warner recognizes that the graceful leaping figure in the Argument section of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* "is the essence of Leutha's flower, the human form of the flower, and therefore the human image of the desire" (127). Propelled by her love for Theotormon, Oothoon flies towards him in a similar manner to the way Tarquin proceeds to Collatium and to Lucrece. The catalyst for both individuals appears emotional—love for Oothoon and lust for Tarquin.

In Shakespeare's poem, immediately after Lucrece's rape, the male and female characters begin a series of queries. They respond to their questions with further interrogatives. Blake appears to merge Lucrece's and Tarquin's behaviour in Oothoon's series of questions and answers. For twenty lines (730-750), Shakespeare juxtaposes his main characters' feelings after the rape. Lucrece's rape occurs during the night (line 729). In the darkness she "remains a hopeless castaway" who prays "she never may behold the day: 'For day,' quoth she, 'night's scapes doth open lay, / And my true eyes have never practic'd how / To cloak offenses with a cunning brow'" (744, 746-749). For Lucrece, night is "comfort-killing" and evokes an "image of hell" (764). She does not wish to be made an "object to the tell-tale Day: / The light will show, character'd in my brow, / The story of sweet chastity's decay" (806-808).

Throughout the work, the central metaphor—stain—is "repeatedly and forcefully attached to Lucrece" (Kahn 47), and so are various synonyms such as blot, spot, blur, blemish, attaint, scar, and pollution (Kahn 47). As Kahn indicates, Lucrece wishes to conceal herself from the daylight because she believes she is stained; she knows it is there and assumes that everyone else could see it" (59). For her, the rape comprises two crimes, "that which Tarquin committed against her and that which she committed against Collatine" (59).

In *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, Blake transfers the woman's despair from daylight to night. Oothoon says, "Arise my Theotormon I am pure. / Because the night is gone that clos'd me in its deadly black" (2.28). Theotormon responds by refusing to recognize the distinction between night and day. Oothoon concludes that Theotormon believes "the night and morn / Are both alike: a night of sighs, a morning of fresh tears"

(2.37-38). For Theotormon, the distinction between the two has lapsed: “what is the night or day to one o’erflowd with woe” (3.22). He dismisses the women’s despair and transfers it to himself. He does not wish to distinguish between daylight and evening because the reality of his beloved’s condition—pregnancy—does not change regardless of the time of day.

The separation that occurs between Oothoon and Theotormon is evident in the illustration to plate seven (Appendix 41). Oothoon is enveloped within a dark enclosure that separates her from Theotormon whose face is hidden from the audience. In Blake’s work the huddled and head-clutching figures “are symbols of despair” and the hunched-up figure with drawn-up knees, viewed from the front is “Blake’s primary symbol for mankind in the state of despair” (Warner 107). The hunched figure also possesses connotations of Hell as in Blake’s *Hecate* portrait (Warner 120). Appropriately, Blake submerges Theotormon in a bright yellow or golden area and places the hovering, shackled Oothoon, in a prayer-like gesture above him in an arch or wave formation. Her association with the wave, when juxtaposed with the image in plate five, establishes their separation.

A lack of colour is evident throughout this plate that implies a barren wasteland, that reflects the emotional distance that presently exists between Oothoon and Theotormon. The male figure in the illustration is washed ashore both visually and emotionally. Blake verbally and visually reinforces the frontispiece in this plate. Visually, the frontispiece establishes a scene of reading that gradually metamorphoses with each following image and verbal text. The yellow and red associated with Oothoon’s encounter with Marygold appear once again and envelop 2/3 of the picture space

including Theotormon. Theotormon ponders, “upon what mountains / Wave shadows of discontent?” (3.25, 4.1). The word *Wave* then punningly echoes the illustration. W.J.T. Mitchell notes that Blake “superimposes an S-curve over a basic composition of inverted U-forms (the wave which lifts the enchanted Oothoon over the crouched figure of Theotormon)” (66).

Lucrece’s lament after Tarquin’s attack complements Oothoon’s. Lucrece juxtaposes contrasting images throughout her recitation: worm, maiden bud (848); cuckoos, sparrows (849); toads, founts (850). Likewise, Oothoon juxtaposes dual nature imagery: chicken, hawk (3.2); mouse, frog (3.4); and worm, snake; (3.10-11). Jonathan Hart believes that Tarquin and Lucrece “pile up natural images to describe the unnatural rape and its consequences and attempt to make sense of the situation with personifications” (63), much as Oothoon does in her diatribe.

In both works the female character poses and answers her own questions in an attempt to gain possession of the conversation, but the only result is to isolate her. No one listens to Oothoon’s speeches and no one is present to listen to Lucrece’s. Their lamentations become monologues of despair and comprehension. In the illustration to plate six, Oothoon allows the eagle to rend her body (Appendix 42). In the illustration, the eagle’s wings seem to engulf her, to miniaturize her and remind the reader of Bromion’s “rending” of her at the beginning of the poem. Theotormon merely smiles.

Oothoon makes three speeches after she is raped. Nancy Goslee notes that “Oothoon’s three pleas, one in each section of the poem, address not her plight as slave but her damage as his property or as his narcissistic reflection” (111). In *Titus Andronicus*, similarly, Titus interprets his daughter’s rape as his shame. In the second

part of Blake's work, "the two male characters fail to understand her rape in any way but their own" (Goslee 115). Shakespeare's Lavinia is cut off from communication because of her physical impairments; likewise, in Blake's poem "there is virtually no external dialogue in the poem: no communication between Oothoon and the men" (Heffernan "Blake's", 7). Instead, her verbal communication with the reader, especially since she speaks throughout most of the poem, is "opaquely symbolic, as though she has lost the literal referents of her words" (Rajan 87). Visually, Blake reinforces this image since, as David Aers notes, "Blake leaves Oothoon lamenting and bound to Bromion" (506).

In the first speech in plate six, Oothoon intersperses questions and answers in an attempt to understand her present relationship to Theotormon. She opens the plate by saying, "And none but Bromion can hear my lamentations" (3.1) and then proceeds with a series of interrogatives: "With what sense is it that the chicken shuns the ravenous hawk? / With what sense does the tame pigeon measure out the expanse?" (3.2-3). She answers with an indirect query, "are their habitations / And their pursuits, as different as their forms and as their joys . . . / How can I be defild when I reflect thy image pure?" (3.5-6, 16).

Oothoon believes the rape transforms her into a

new wash'd lamb ting'd with the village smoke & the bright swan

By the red earth of our immortal river: I bathe my wings.

And I am white and pure to hover round Theotormons breast (3.18-20).

In the Argument, Oothoon uses the past tense to tell us she "loved Theotormon / And . . . was not ashamed" (1-2). In the previous utterance she uses the past tense of *wash* and *tinge* but the present tense of *bathe* and the verb *to be*. The intermingling of tenses

implies that she views her rape as a past event and she can begin anew, regain her purity, when she cleanses herself of the rape. The Argument implies the contrary. She will be unsuccessful in her attempt to persuade Theotormon to listen to her because he refuses to listen to her.

In Shakespeare's poem, after the rape, Lucrece's questions and answers lengthen to reflect the intense emotion Lucrece experiences. Like Oothoon in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, Lucrece reacts to her state with a specific type of violence:

My honor I'll bequeath unto the knife
That wounds my body so dishonored.
'Tis honor to deprive dishonor'd life,
The one will live, the other being dead.
So of shame's ashes shall my fame be bred,

For in my death I murder shameful scorn:

My shame so dead, mine honor is new born (1184-1190).

Her reaction parallels Oothoon's in that both women wish to inflict pain on themselves, both women are or think they are pregnant, and both women want to remove the problem or potential problem of a pregnancy. Oothoon however tries to do so through language rather than self-inflicted violence. In *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus* the women are helpless victims of lust who respond to their condemnation in a similar manner to Oothoon. Oothoon wishes to reason with Theotormon, but he is blinded by the situation. The male suitor in Shakespeare's poem is also blind to the event and reacts in a similar manner to Theotormon—abandonment of the female.

Throughout *Titus Andronicus* severed limb imagery dominates. Most of Titus's family members have severed limbs. The moment Titus learns of Mutius's aid to Bassanius so the latter can marry Lavinia, Titus slays his son. He justifies his killing: "Nor thou, nor he, are any sons of mine, / My sons would never so dishonor me" (1.1.294-295). He fails to consider the consequences of his actions. The violence escalates as the play proceeds. Tamora seeks revenge on Titus for killing her son. She encourages her sons to rape Lavinia: "away with her, and use her as you will; / The worse to her, the better lov'd of me" (2.3.166-167). Although she physically survives the rape and mutilation, Saturnius suggests that Titus kill her: "Because the girl should not survive her shame, / And by her presence still renew his sorrows" (5.3.41-42). Immediately, Titus slays her. Throughout the duration of Lavinia's disfigurement, Shakespeare verbally effaces her from the play, so her literal removal from the drama is not surprising. It has been foreshadowed. Titus and the emperor converse about Lavinia's fate. The horrible reaction to her rape is underwritten by her silence. Lavinia and Oothoon evoke our pity not simply because they are raped but by their reactions to their rape. Their respective fates are precipitated by a male character ashamed of their condition. Oothoon tries to obtain Theotormon by subjecting herself to further violence and despair, but without success, yet she believes that violence is the answer to the problem. Theotormon's eagles must tear Oothoon's body as Bromion did because she believes such torture is necessary to regain Theotormon's love.

In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lucrece asks, "Why should the private pleasure of some one / Become the public plague of many moe?" (1478-1479). She replies to her own query:

Let sin, alone committed, light alone
 Upon his head that hath transgressed so;
 Let guiltless souls be freed from guilty woe.
 For one's offense why should so many fall,
 To plague a private sin in general? (1480-1484).

A. Robin Bowers observes that “Shakespeare chose and developed his stories of rape . . . to draw attention both to the private, personal insult and injury of rape, and also to the public, social repercussions which inevitably followed from such a destructive act” (82). Perhaps Blake does so for similar reasons. Lucrece’s father and husband decide “to bear dead Lucrece thence, / To show her bleeding body thorough Rome, / And so to publish Tarquin’s foul offense” (1850-1852). As Wilson makes explicit, “the narrative concludes with the determination to “publish” Tarquin’s offense in Rome: to tell the story, in an indefinite series of retellings, yet again” (50). In a similar manner, Blake makes Oothoon’s demise a public one at the beginning of the poem as he visually depicts her shackled to Bromion while Theotormon hides his face in shame and torment. In the conclusion Oothoon becomes the hovering figure from which she is escaping in the titlepage.

Blake maintains Oothoon’s isolation throughout the remaining plates. The feminine figure depicted in plate eight lies on the ground with her head turned away from the audience. Her hidden head and face correspond to Theotormon’s image in the frontispiece. She, like him, now retreats from the world. Plate nine reinforces the significance of her stance (Appendix 43). Oothoon places her head in her hands as a symbol of despair, but she is more active in this plate. She appears to run away rather

than remain supine. Verbally, she identifies her previous self as a “hypocrite of modesty” (6.16) and contemplates whether or not Theotormon views things in a similar manner. In plate seven, Oothoon seems to reach a deeper understanding of her predicament: “happy, happy Love! Free as the mountain wind, / Can that be Love, that drinks another as a sponge drinks water?” (7.16-17). This query seems to refer to the shackled Theotormon who tries to consume Oothoon. The black ocean becomes a visual symbol of the abyss. Blake refers to it as a “margind ocean conversing with shadows dire” (8.12). The figures on the ground parallel Theotormon in the frontispiece except that two women glance upward towards the hovering Oothoon. She is easily identified because the author uses a similar yellow and red to those used in the illustration to the Argument. Theotormon continues to ignore Oothoon’s wails.

Oothoon’s arms, although symbolically associated with Christ’s crucifixion, may be read in two different ways in the light of earlier statements. Oothoon views her rape as a resurrection—a “new-wash’d lamb”—while Theotormon interprets the rape as the crucifixion of his love. Warner suggests that Oothoon’s hovering form is “a sad and ironic echo of the hovering beard form menacing her on the title-page, a form whose wings, rather than arms, are outstretched” (95). Warner further suggests that “Oothoon’s failure to become one with Theotormon has made her an image of the very forces she was trying to overcome” (95).

King George’s tyrannical behaviour towards America, his economic rape of the Thirteen Colonies, instigated revolution. Oothoon becomes Blake’s representative of America, the political unrest at the time, and the Thirteen Colonies’ active search for union at a time when they are fighting their brethren from across the Atlantic. The

Marygold glowing between Oothoon's breasts attracts Bromion, but she argues with Theotormon that she remains chaste. America is transformed into an independent nation, but a nation which, at the end of the poem, is left to hover in solitary despair, because she has to overcome the newfound obstacles that await her as a newly-formed nation. But Blake's decision to represent this historical moment through a narrative of rape owes much to *The Rape of Lucrece*, for Blake found in Shakespeare's poem a powerful representation of the origins of empire in a masculine code that cannot distinguish between love and ownership. For Shakespeare's Collatine, Lucrece is his property: she "was my wife, / I owed her" (1802-1803). His failure to recognise his wife as a person foreshadows George III's failure, for his love of America is contingent on America remaining his possession. Through Shakespeare, Blake found a narrative in which the politics of sex and the politics of empire fuse, and offer each a powerful explanation of the other.

CHAPTER 6

**“And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns them to shapes”:** *Milton*



Titlepage, *Milton*⁵⁵

Milton, the titlepage of which is dated 1804, and which Blake seems to have begun in 1801, is at once an autobiographical poem, a poem about the state of English poetry, and a poem about the state of the nation. Its autobiographical status is indicated by the references to Felpham, where Blake and his wife moved in 1800 to take up residence in the cottage let to them by William Hayley, and by such things as the reference to the dragoon, Schofield. Schofield’s ejection from Blake’s garden led to his being charged with sedition. The poem’s concern with the need to revivify English poetry is also evident throughout and is explicit in passages such as this one from Book 2 in which Milton announces it as his project:

To cast aside from Poetry, all that is not Inspiration

That it no longer shall dare to mock with the aspersion of Madness
 Cast on the inspired, by the tame high finisher of paltry Blots,
 Indefinite, or paltry Rhymes; or paltry Harmonies (41:7-10).

The evil of war is still a more pervasive topic, and it reminds us that, though the composition of the poem spanned the short-lived Peace of Amiens, it was written during a period in which Europe was being torn apart by warring armies. It is a poem in which Blake “listens to the sounds of War astonish’d and ashamed” (25:24), or “astonished and confounded” (23:8). He sees around him a Europe in which the ideological conflicts of the Reformation are being acted out once again still more savagely, and, since the new ideological differences are secular, still more ignobly:

Remember how Calvin and Luther in fury premature
 Sow’d War and stern division between Papists & Protestants.
 Let it not be so now! (23:47-49).

In *Milton*, Blake sees

The Gods of the Kingdoms of the Earth: in contrarious
 And cruel opposition: Element against Element, opposed in War
 Not Mental, as the Wars of Eternity, but a Corporeal Strife (31:23-25).

His aim, as he announces in the great hymn that begins the poem, is to transform physical into “mental fight.”

After all, the corporeal war was being played out in France while he was composing *Milton*. The threat of a French invasion was perceived as a real possibility. Coleridge wrote his poem “Fears in Solitude” during the alarm of a French invasion as early as 1798. The invasion threat was also reported regularly in *The Times London*,

particularly throughout the early 1800s. On Tuesday, April 5, 1803, a report was printed that troops were assembling across the Channel. A similar report emerged a year later, but the rhetoric changes when France's presence in the Channel is no longer seen as a mere threat. By 1804, however, Napoleon's decision to evade, rather than invade Britain, becomes, according to *The Times*, a decision based upon fear: "he did not dare to come; because he had the good sense to foresee certain destruction to himself and his banditti" if he did invade (August 25, 1804).

On an autobiographical level, Blake proclaims himself the epic poet of his own age, the Milton of the beginning of the nineteenth century. But, as he indicates both in the poem itself and in its preface, this ambition does not require only, or even primarily, that he re-make himself in Milton's image: it requires that Milton purge himself of everything that had, in his lifetime, restricted the free expression of his creative imagination. Most importantly, as the Preface puts it, Milton must switch his allegiance from "the Daughters of Memory" to the "Daughters of Inspiration", and in doing so cure himself of "the general malady & infection from the silly Greek & Latin slaves of the Sword." The responsibility for the war-torn Europe over which Blake laments in *Milton* lies not just with the politicians but with the poets. As he puts it in the poem, the wine-press of Los that is "call'd War on Earth" is also a "Printing-Press" (Plate 24).

The perception that the time demanded that Milton be born again was not confined to Blake. At the same time that Blake was drafting his poem, and quite independently, Wordsworth was reviving the English sonnet. "Milton! Thou shouldst be living at this hour", Wordsworth writes. Blake's poem realises Wordsworth's wish.

Moreover, in “Great men have been among us”, Milton is the friend to the English poets Sydney, Marvel, Harrington and Vane. In these sonnets of 1802, Wordsworth establishes the Commonwealth and its writers as the ideal to which the present British state and its poets should aspire. By using the sonnet form, and in the context of some of the sonnets, he identifies Milton as the proper model for the contemporary poet. Wordsworth in the 1802 sonnet also celebrates Shakespeare as well as Milton. It may be that at this critical moment, when the survival of Britain was threatened, the celebration of both Shakespeare, who celebrated the ideal of kingship, and the republican Milton, was an important affirmation of national unity.

Quite properly, critical commentary on Blake’s poem has concentrated on exploring the relationships that it forges with Milton’s poems, primarily *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, and with Milton’s biography. In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Harold Bloom claims, “criticism is the art of knowing the hidden roads that go from poem to poem” (96). These “hidden roads” have been researched in many critical projects. An analysis of Milton’s cultural reception in the Romantic period, for example, is complex and one Lucy Newlyn, in her book *Paradise Lost and the Romantic Reader*, undertakes. In her book she applies, in contrast to her contemporaries, Milton’s cultural reception and textual allusions to **different** Romantic writers to expand the boundaries of his influence, while other critics have a more single-author focus. Between 1705 and 1800, *Paradise Lost* was published

over a hundred times: along with *The Pilgrim’s Progress* and the Bible, it was the most widely read book of the century. Passages from it were excerpted and anthologised for the moral edification of the young and the

female, not least by Wollstonecraft herself. Children, familiarized with it during the early stages of their education, were encouraged to read it as a kind of primer; and in the popular imagination it acquired the status of a biblical text. Novelists, male and female alike, turned to it as a model for the structure of their narratives for the delineation of their characters. They knew they could rely on the immediacy and effectiveness of its popular appeal to bring home any moral point they themselves wished to convey (Newlyn 19).

Milton was virtually omnipresent in the century. What critics fail to mention, however, is that Milton's literary competitor was Britain's national poet—Shakespeare.

Both men's works spoke to the people because their ideas correlated with what was transpiring in contemporary history. Milton appealed to the religious and moral beliefs of the nation, while associated with Oliver Cromwell and regicide. Milton becomes, "for the numerous radicals, in the wake of the French Revolution, ... republican hero and champion of freedom of speech" (Newlyn 33). The Romantic writers' adoration of him even included echoing his "descriptive phrases" and repeatedly parodying Milton's hell (Newlyn 20). Milton's dramatic counterpart, Shakespeare, is not a hero; rather, when read within the context of contemporary history, his plays become political commentaries on kingship, Britain and her long-time enemy—France.

The Romantic poets, Lucy Newlyn writes, note this disparity between the two authors. For them, Shakespeare and Milton are complementary figures. Shakespeare dramatises and evokes pathos, while Milton invokes the sublime. Shakespeare depicts, even investigates the fragile nature of the human psyche. Milton shies away from it.

Shakespeare's plays promote openness. Milton's religious poems promote closure (Newlyn 59).

David Riede seems to argue that competing multiple voices exist in *Milton*—Milton, Blake, St. Paul—that instigate a “combative reading process” which prevents readers “from being ‘misled’ by the encumbering doctrines which *Paradise Lost* appears to embody” (Newlyn 258). This process also complements Blake's narrative: the relationship between Satan and Palambron in Book 1 of *Milton*. Other studies of Blake's poem include the feminist viewpoint of Betsy Bolton⁵⁶, the masculine reading by Marc Kaplan,⁵⁷ Jennifer Keith's and Florence Sandler's biblical study,⁵⁸ David Erdman's historical analysis,⁵⁹ and Susan Fox's investigation in *Poetic Form in Blake's Milton*.⁶⁰

Susan Fox clearly outlines Blake's methodology in a linear manner. She argues that each book of Blake's poem has three basic sections: a prologue to its section, an account of various aspects of the action, and an epilogue defining effects of the action (*Poetic*, 21). Each of these three sections is then subdivided. Each Prologue has four parts and each of these four parts has a three-part narrative with a continuously shifting focus (Appendix 44). The action of Book one—Milton's descent to Ololon—parallels the action of Book two: Ololon's descent to Milton. The epilogue is an intense visionary experience liberated by and connected with action. For Fox, these parallels persist throughout the poem. Milton's Satan fell by arrogance and therefore cannot be saved; whereas, Blake's Satan fell by weakness and delusion and “therefore must be saved for the preservation of humanity” (Fox *Poetic*, 52). Perhaps Blake's Satan is saved because he fuses with various characters and each union increases his self-awareness. Milton's

Satan merely creates an environment that parodies heaven and lacks the self-perception, vision that Blake's character will exhibit.

Moreover, in the Preface to Blake's poem, Blake implies the presence of another author who permeates the text of *Milton*, however elusively. Milton appears conjoined with his great predecessor, Shakespeare: "Shakespeare & Milton were both curb'd by the general malady & infection from the silly Greek & Latin slaves of the Sword" (Preface). Much less attention has been paid to Shakespeare than to Milton in critical commentary on Blake's poem. In fact, very little critical commentary exists on Shakespeare's presence in *Milton*.

Frederick Burwick is one of many critics to examine Shakespeare's importance to the Romantics, yet he does not engage in a critical analysis of Shakespeare's presence in Blake's *Milton*. Instead, Burwick provides a detailed sketch of Lamb and Hazlitt's Shakespeare criticism and the various Shakespeare editions that existed in the Romantic period. His contribution is certainly useful, since it establishes, perhaps reinforces, Shakespeare's eminence in the Romantic period, despite the focus upon Milton and his works. However, a lacuna of scholarly criticism exists between Shakespeare and Blake's *Milton*. The only critic who seems to dedicate any time to an investigation of Shakespeare's role in the poem is Jonathan Bate in *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination*, but this book was published in 1986. Bate tells us, "no one has yet undertaken a wide-ranging study of Shakespeare and Romantic poetry" (118), particularly the relationship between Blake and Shakespeare. While a preliminary analysis into a complex subject area, Bate's work failed to generate further critical analysis, yet the Milton-Blake connection continues to do so today.

Jonathan Bate tells us that Blake's appropriations of Shakespeare are "similar to those of the other major poets of the 1790s" (*Shakespeare and*, 118). Perhaps his most profound statement, it unites Blake with his contemporaries and reinforces the important position Shakespeare held alongside Milton in the Romantic period, despite the lack of scholarly interest. Bate clearly maps Shakespeare's influence on Blake and understands that Shakespeare's influence on Blake's later works is "more covert, more dependent on the reader's fitness to discern allusions and echoes" (*Shakespeare and*, 144).

Shakespeare's presence does not direct the action in Blake's *Milton*: Blake does. The poem is, after all, alluding to *Paradise Lost*. As Blake is both the author and a character in the poem, Milton must unite with him to enter "the nether regions" of the imagination (21:65). Blake is the visionary, and the unequivocal allusion to 5.1.14-16 of *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream in the poem confirms Blake's role:

And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes.

Book 1, however, is a surreptitious parody of *King Lear*. The combination of direct and indirect allusions complements the structure of *Milton*. The lines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* point us to Shakespeare, in case we missed the subtle appropriations. These subtle allusions to characters and themes from *King Lear* reinforce the importance of Milton's fusion with Satan, the Bard, Blake and Los. In his book, however, Bate does not proceed much beyond the role of tour guide through Shakespeare's works. The purpose of this chapter is to correct this imbalance by

exploring the relationship that Blake establishes in his poem with the earlier of the precursors that he names in his Preface, Shakespeare.

The first point to make is that Blake is utterly conventional in identifying Shakespeare and Milton as the two great English poets. For Coleridge, as for almost all of his contemporaries, Shakespeare and Milton are securely positioned on the “two glory-smitten summits of the poetic mountain”, but this is *Biographia Literaria*, and hence not the end of the 18th century. Coleridge was equally conventional in his insistence that the two poets do not occupy the same summit, but rather two quite distinct summits.

In Wordsworth’s “Scorn not the sonnet,” Shakespeare is the poet who can unlock the critic’s heart with his harmonious poetry.⁶¹ Moreover, Shakespeare is the poet who unites the poetic past, present and future: Petrarch, Tasso, Camöens, Dante, Spenser, and Milton. Each author is subsequently juxtaposed with a musical instrument except Shakespeare. He, listed first in the sonnet, provides the key that unlocks the critic’s emotional response and begins the imagery that follows. Shakespeare begins the poem and is the catalyst for the action. Milton can blow “Soul-animating strains” on his trumpet, but they are simply “too few” (13-14). Blake identifies this problem as Milton’s error in *Paradise Lost* in 1804.⁶²

Wordsworth is not the only Romantic to do so. Coleridge and Southey also project a similar view of Shakespeare and Milton. In his *Biographia Literaria*, the “myriad-minded” (Perkins 455) Shakespeare is juxtaposed with the single-minded Milton. They are two poets on “two glory-smitten summits of the poetic mountain” but Milton is the “compeer, not the rival” (Perkins 458). Shakespeare combines creative power and intellectual energy into an embrace that is equated to war, what Blake labels a

Mental War. For Milton “All things and modes of action shape themselves anew” (Perkins 458) in a unified, poetic ideal. The fact that activity connotes a new form complements Blake’s idea of corporeal war. For Blake, these two poets signify the importance, the necessity, of mental and corporeal war in order for a new Jerusalem to be built.

Southey, in his essay “On Shakespeare and Milton,” portrays a similar Shakespeare and Milton. For him, Shakespeare describes things “as they would be” and thereby embraces what surrounds him daily—reality (Perkins 621). Milton describes things “as they ought to be” and uses the epic form to dictate it—an ideal world, perhaps a Utopia. Southey uses the fermentation image to encapsulate what Shakespeare creates—works in which similarity and difference co-exist and create a layered whole. In *Milton*, no such relationship exists. When Blake merges the two authors, he creates and develops the mental and corporeal; the Redeemed, the Reprobate and the Elect; the male and his female emanation; the Spectre and the Shadow. Their juxtaposition and/or relationship is not vital to the poem. Milton’s realisation of their existence and his fusion with Satan, the Bard, Blake, and Los in Book 1 and his journey to unite with Ololon in Book 2 is. They enable Milton not only to see the “nether regions of the imagination” but to enter them completely—his error in *Paradise Lost*. Perhaps Keats’s negative capability, which he defines in letters written in 1817 and 1818, is an accurate summary of Blake’s depiction of Milton’s error in his poem.⁶³

William Blake’s portraits of Milton and Shakespeare (Appendices 45 and 46), when juxtaposed, develop an interesting complementary and conventional narrative. Milton’s portrait reveals a captive man within a wreath composed of oak and bay

leaves—the symbols of England and the poet laureate. Milton's head appears in the background while the wreath dominates the foreground as the snake figuratively acts as a hand that presents Milton's head to us. The background—the snake—serves as the focal point of the catalyst for the action only the snake dictates our glance rather than Raphael. Milton is also depicted blind. His pupils are nonexistent and he does not glance in the audience's direction; rather, the light that highlights Milton's face draws attention to the blind man—the author. The snake, with the forbidden fruit in his mouth, emphasises, even presents, Milton's error: evil exists outside the self and surrounds and corrupts the self. Blake pictorially highlights what he sees as Milton's error. The collective—mankind—is punished. Stephen Behrendt says, "Milton's blindness ... was not externally apparent. In Blake's pictures external conditions frequently reflect the internal, and such is presumably at least partly the case here, Milton's blindness being equated with artistic and doctrinal matters with which Blake elsewhere takes specific issue" (*The Moment*, 10). In essence, then, Blake visually externalises Milton's error and then writes *Milton* to amend what he visually identifies.

In the Shakespeare portrait (Appendix 46), the wreath is loosely woven and Shakespeare's head appears to jut from it. To the right and left of the head, Blake seems to insert images from *Macbeth*. He depicts two events in the play: On the right, Blake depicts the scene in 4.1, where Macbeth approaches the witches and received his second set of prophecies; on the left is the ghost of Banquo pointing to the first of the succession of kings. In the play, the witches and various apparitions confront Macbeth, but he alone must address the evil he has committed: murdered Duncan, Banquo, and Lady Macduff and her son. The journey is one that is individual and Blake sees Shakespeare as a less

shackled individual (the wreath, the placement of the head) who addresses themes central to Blake's own work. Blake however, also suggests, in *Milton*, that he alone is the person most able to free man from his shackles and encourage him to journey through his own personal hell, since Milton enters Blake's left foot and thereafter can see and enter the "nether regions" (21:65).

But Blake is not alone in choosing to compare rather than to contrast Shakespeare and Milton. In one of Wordsworth's Miltonic sonnets of 1802, "It is not to be thought of that the Flood," Wordsworth addresses his countrymen as a people

Who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held (11-13).

Shakespeare and Milton appear to provide the materials for what Blake supports: liberty and religion. Blake implies in his poem however that the two are not necessarily complementary. In the Preface, Liberty is Blake's desire in *Milton* and is then fused with mental and corporeal war. Neither appears independent of the other in this hymn; rather, the "Mental fight" is the abstract concept that creates the action and the two will enable him to construct an English Jerusalem:

I will not cease from Mental Fight
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In Englands green & pleasant Land.

As Linda Colley has shown, war is a major, perhaps the major, catalyst of national unity, and is perhaps best seen as a reflex of the need, that times of war make urgent, to assert

national unity, that writers such as Wordsworth should be prompted to assert the unity of the English poetic tradition, and to offer Shakespeare's and Milton's as complementary rather than as antithetical achievements.

Blake's *Milton*, too, is much concerned with national unity. In several passages in the poem he invokes a Britain that extends from the northernmost point of Scotland to the cliffs of Cornwall. In Book 1, for example:

From Golgonooza the spiritual Four-fold London eternal
 In immense labours & sorrows, ever building, ever falling,
 Thro Albions four Forests which overspread all the Earth,
 From London Stone to Blackheath east: to Hounslow west:
 To Finchley north: to Norwood south: and the weights
 Of Enitharmons Loom play lulling cadences on the winds of Albion
 From Caithness in the north, to Lizard-point & Dover in the south (6:1-7)

And again in Book Two:

Then Albion rose up in the Night of Beulah on his Couch
 Of dread repose seen by the visionary eye; his face is toward
 The east, toward Jerusalems Gates: groaning he sat above
 His rocks. London & Bath & Legions & Edinburgh
 Are the four pillars of his Throne; his left foot near London
 Covers the shades of Tyburn: his instep from Windsor
 To Primrose Hill stretching to Highgate & Holloway
 London is between his knees: its basements fourfold
 His right foot stretches to the sea on Dover cliffs, his heel

On Canterburys ruins; his right hand covers lofty Wales

His left Scotland; his bosom girt with gold involves

York, Edinburgh, Durham & Carlisle & on the front

Bath, Oxford, Cambridge Norwich; his right elbow

Leans on the Rocks of Erins Land, Ireland ancient nation. (39:32-45).

But in the sonnets of 1802 Wordsworth is appealing for a national unity that must be secured if Britain is to maintain its part in the war against Napoleonic France, and in this he reveals himself, as Blake would have thought, as much a slave of the sword as Shakespeare and Milton themselves. Blake was inspired by a vision of peace rather than war with France, Britain's nearest neighbour. In a letter to John Flaxman written in October 1801, Blake hopes for a union between France and England in which "Emblems of Peace" will be erected (718).

In a letter to Thomas Butts written on November 22, 1802, Blake confronts his father (Storch 119). Margaret Storch's psychoanalysis of the letter, based upon circumstantial evidence, seems forced at times; however, the importance of the letter, written two years prior to the publication of *Milton*, is paramount. It anticipates images in *Milton* and ideas that compose the subplot of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The preface of Blake's famous verse,

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:

Bring me my Arrows of desire:

Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!

Bring me my Chariot of fire! (9-12)

is picked up in the letter:

With the bows of my mind & the Arrows of Thought

My bowstring fierce with Ardour breathes

My arrows glow in their golden sheaves (722).

This letter may be what Blake considers a failed attempt at what eventually become the emphatic images of the preface and poem in 1804.

In *Milton*, Blake distinguishes the true unity that is brought about by “mental fight” from the false unity, which is the only possible outcome of “corporeal” war. True unity occurs when all people recognise themselves as incorporated in the living body of Albion, which is at once the embodiment of Britain and of the whole world, “the eternal all-protecting Divine Humanity”. Wordsworth’s ideal of unity is of a kind that seems to Blake satanic, because it “divided the Nations” (plate 8). In *Milton*, Blake suggests that the Napoleonic wars, the wars fought in the name of “Voltaire & Rousseau” (40:12), are only a continuation in modern form of the wars fought in the name of “Luther and Calvin” in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, amongst which was Milton’s own war, the English Civil War:

Charles calls on Milton for Atonement. Cromwell is ready

James calls for fires in Golgonooza. For heaps of smoking ruins

In the night of prosperity and wantonness which he himself Created (5:39-41).

Wordsworth is, in his own terms, right to invoke Shakespeare and Milton as inspirational figures in the English war against Napoleonic France, because they were, both of them, slaves of the sword, both of them proponents of a nationalist ideology which Blake represents as destructive. It initiates a process that will not end

Till Brotherhood is chang'd into a Curse and a Flattery
 By Differences between Ideas, that Ideas themselves (which are
 The Divine Members) may be slain in offerings for sin (35:4-6).

True unity, then, can be expressed only by the truly imaginative poet. The two great English examples of such poets are Shakespeare and Milton, but before they may be wholeheartedly embraced as true predecessors, both of them must be freed from the false identities that obscure and distort their true nature. The plot of *Milton*, as its title indicates, focuses on Milton, who is resurrected so that he may achieve the annihilation of his false selfhood, but, implicit in the poem, is a similar re-creation of the identity of Shakespeare.

Given that this poem is Blake's project, oddly the Shakespeare play invoked most explicitly in *Milton* is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The revisionary Blake of the early works becomes, by *Milton*, a participant who creates a covert operation in which the reader is given clues to map Shakespeare's texts—*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *King Lear*—but is not a clear route. A dynamic, dialectical relationship emerges, but this relationship is actually visually depicted earlier in Blake's Shakespeare paintings of the 1780s and 1790s: *King Lear and Cordelia*, *Oberon, Puck and Titania with Fairies Dancing, Pity*, and *Hecate* (Appendices 11, 15, 18, and 19). Blake's visual presentation seems to be transferred to his verbal project. The structure of Blake's work, obviously, is rooted in *Paradise Lost* in which thesis and antithesis is the foundation. Scenes involving Satan and his followers are always juxtaposed with scenes involving God as a character or agent. In Blake's poem, Book 1 involves Milton's descent to Ololon, while Book 2

depicts Ololon's descent to Milton. This dichotomy is clearly outlined, as stated earlier, by Susan Fox in *Poetic Form in Blake's Milton*.

The most direct Shakespearean allusion in Blake's *Milton* is to Theseus' speech in 5.1.12-17 of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to aery nothing
A local habitation and a name.

This speech is his reaction to the lovers' story about the events in the Arden forest. The English forest, a world of desire, is juxtaposed with the world of law—Hermia may be given the death penalty if she refuses to abide by her father's wish that she marry Demetrius. Initially, the forest is a place of refuge, desire but also disruption: ethereally invoked with earthly victims. When the lovers return from the forest, Theseus attempts to justify their behaviour and story by suggesting that the lovers displaced reason with the passion and behaviour of “the lunatic, the lover, and the poet” (5.1.7). The lunatic “sees more devils than vast hell can hold” (5.1.9), while the lover sees, “Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt” (5.1.11). These two individuals define their vision, but do not respond to it. The poet does. He not only envisions something, he becomes bombarded with “forms of things unknown” and then “shapes ... and gives to aery nothing / A local habitation and a name” (5.1.15-17). In essence, he creates the image from the vision and then

Theseus reminds us of the ease at which an image can be misinterpreted: “How easy is a bush suppos’d a bear!” (5.1.22).

Blake picks up this dilemma in his allusion to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*:

Some Sons of Los surround the Passions with porches of iron & silver
 Creating form & beauty around the dark regions of sorrow,
 Giving to airy nothing a name and a habitation
 Delightful! With bounds to the Infinite putting off the Indefinite
 Into most holy forms of Thought: (such is the power of inspiration)
 (28:1-5).

For Blake, the imagination “is not a State: it is the Human Existence itself” (32:32). Man is the imagination and Milton must fuse with other characters so that his imagination is no longer limited to singular perception. While Theseus’s oration identifies a locale—the Arden forest—Blake’s does not after he unites with Satan-the Bard-Blake-Los. Blake’s “aery nothing”, Theseus’ attempt to trivialise what has occurred, is universal and more difficult to identify and locate. He seems to borrow this characteristic from Theseus’ lines, since the poet glances both to heaven and earth. Shakespeare’s setting is restricted because his characters are on a corporeal journey in the Arden forest and are oblivious to the fairies that surround them and dictate their love. Milton is on a mental journey, without boundaries, which must be experienced in stages, defined only as he proceeds through them. Milton must identify them himself. By doing so, he extends the limitations of his human imagination. The poet’s task in Theseus’ speech, then, correlates to Milton’s in Book 2 only the Sons of Los “labour incessant; with many tears and afflictions: / Creating the beautiful House for the piteous sufferer” (28:6-7). The darkness

or tragedy that shadows *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is picked up by Blake and attached to Milton, the characters with whom he fuses, and the journey he must undertake.

This darkness even permeates Book 2 of *Milton*. When it opens, however, a pastoral Paradise appears before us that is defined as a “pleasant lovely Shadow / Where no dispute can come” (30:2-3). Although still ambiguous, the undefined setting of Blake’s poem begins to attain an identity. The temporal nature of the Emanations in Beulah creates a desire in them for refuge from their male counterparts.

In Book 2, Beulah is enveloped in flowers: “The Pink, the Jessamine, the Wall-flower, the Carnation, / The Jonqui, the mild Lilly” (31:59-60). These flowers evoke “precious Odours” from their blooms and are protected by Og and Anak (31:46). The serene setting and the effect it has on the males—“sick with Love!”—permeates this scene, just prior to Milton’s death-couch. Even Milton seems transfixed by the flowers, as they create a “vision & dream beatific” (32:2) for him. This transformation from Book 1, in which Milton becomes aware that he is Satan and then unites with different figures, is perhaps because Milton must locate Ololon and unite with her, a figure from Beulah.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, flower imagery is primarily associated with Titania, the Queen of the Fairies, much like Beulah in Blake’s poem. While Beulah is a female habitat, so too is the Arden forest since the mortal women—Hermia and Helena—lead their men here. The immortal Titania also rules the fairy world with Peaseblossom, Mustardseed, Cobweb, and Moth, as her servants and the forest’s vegetation as her bower. Ironically, this pastoral world contributes to her foolish behaviour with Bottom after Oberon places the love potion on her eyes. The King of the Fairies can nullify its

power only if he wishes to do so, but not before his objective is fulfilled—the addition of the changeling boy to his train.

In 2.1. in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon identifies the location of Titania's bower:

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
 Where oxslips and the nodding violet grows,
 Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
 With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine;
 There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
 Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight; (2.1.249-254).

Blake seems to draw on these lines in his description of Beulah. Both Beulah and Titania are enveloped in pastoral imagery, but the allusion to Shakespeare's play is a warning in both works. Oberon utters his lines as he prepares to place the love potion on Titania's eyes because he desires her changeling boy. When he is unsuccessful earlier in that scene, he resorts to magic to achieve his ends. In Blake's poem, the wild thyme sets the scene for Beulah in plate 31, but is defined in plate 36 as

Los's Messenger to Eden, a mighty Demon
 Terrible deadly & poisonous his presence in Ulro dark
 Therefore he appears only a small Root creeping in grass
 Covering over the Rock of Odours his bright purple mantle
 Beside the Fount above the Larks nest in Golgonooza
 Luvah slept here in death & here is Luvahs empty Tomb
 Ololon sat beside this Fountain on the Rock of Odours (36:54-60).

The wild thyme not only assumes devil-like characteristics, but he also, like Oberon, is beside the female he wishes to deceive. While he is King of the Fairies, Oberon abuses his powers. He interferes with the natural order of things and infects the human world as well. To achieve order, Oberon must remove love-in-idleness from Titania's eyes and from Lysander's. In Blake's poem, Thyme, by name, is part of the natural world but Blake extends his function. He is also a messenger to Eden who parodies Satan in *Paradise Lost* whom Blake subsequently effaces from the text thereafter because Ololon becomes an active figure in the text whose identity is established after she descends to Milton.

In Shakespeare's play, Puck reminds us,

If we shadows have offended,

Think but this, and all is mended,

That you have but slumb'ed here

While these visions did appear (5.1.430-433).

This speech enables the audience to dismiss the supernatural events in the play if they wish to do so. Not only does "an ambivalence in the status of the fairies" imply an "ambivalence in the status of love" (Miller 256), as Ronald Miller suggests, but their very existence in the play as well. Blake never allows his audience to contemplate such a choice because inspiration is yoked to human existence. If inspiration is removed, so is human existence. Milton requires inspiration in order to free himself from his self-imposed shackles in *Paradise Lost*. His redemptive journey throughout *Milton* reinforces the tie between inspiration and human existence and thereby creates a comedy from a tragic foundation. Bottom and company efface the imagination in *Pyramus and Thisby*:

Bottom triumphantly attains his goal of having spectators ever aware of the actors qua actors. No one is ever allowed to escape into the state of mind which tentatively accepts as true that which is untrue from a strictly mundane perspective. Bottom is even willing to converse directly with the audience if his commitment to the literal truth seems to demand it (Miller 261).

Blake does not approve of such mental shackles, as is evident in his response—*Milton*—to *Paradise Lost*. Milton's error is the result of self-imposed imaginative imprisonment. Blake addresses this problem and frees Milton from these shackles.

A Midsummer Night's Dream may seem an inappropriate play to invoke in a poem designed to rescue Shakespeare, like Milton, from his slavery to the sword, for it is not one of Shakespeare's more militaristic plays. It is, however, a play about the possibility of making and re-making one's identity. The forest is a realm in which the hard contours of identity soften, and a place in which a benign, transformative magic may operate, a magic of the same kind that Blake seeks to conjure in a poem that is designed to effect a much grander transformation than any attempted by Puck or the other denizens of Shakespeare's forest. Shakespeare's forest is a place where identities lose their fixity, when both people and their relations with one another can be dissolved and reformed. In *Milton*, Blake takes Milton's poem into the forest of his own creative imagination, dissolves it, releases it from the fixities of Milton's theology and then re-forms it. Blake also takes Milton's action, which is, in some sense tragic, ending with the loss of Eden, and transforms it into a comedy in which Eden is regained. *Milton* works to effect the

transformation not just of Milton but of Shakespeare and of the entire English tradition of poetry of which they are the mightiest representatives.

But as in Blake's earlier poems, it is *King Lear* on which Blake focuses, though in *Milton* the presence of *Lear* is far less explicit than it is in *Tiriel*. In Plate 24, Los is depicted as "bald and aged who is in eternal youth" (70) and is an obvious correlation to King Lear who enters the tempest as an "unaccommodated man" in order to punish himself for succumbing to feigned evocations of love. This "unaccommodated man" image is picked up earlier, perhaps established then, in Plate 13 of *Milton* (Appendix 47). Nakedness, for Blake, is a symbol for innocence, or in this case, an attempt to regain it. Innocence connotes that the mind is a sponge, free to absorb anything and everything possible in order to understand, to reason. This freedom also promotes creativity and, by extension, the imagination. Milton lacks clarity of vision. He must cleanse himself of the past and all it connotes in order to begin a new journey towards personal salvation and his unification with the Bard, Satan, Blake, Los and Ololon. Lear, in Shakespeare's play, must do the same, only his reunification is towards a tragic end.

In 4.1 of *Lear*, Gloucester is on the heath preparing for a journey to Dover when he meets an Old Man and Edgar, but he is blind and cannot discern that he is speaking with his eldest son. Instead, Gloucester tells the Old Man,

He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm. My son
Came then into my mind, and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him. I have heard more since.

As flies to wanton boys, are we to th' gods.

They kill us for their sport (4.1.31-36).

The humans, here, are compared to flies and the gods to vindictive boys. They are offered as types of the worthless, the valueless and perhaps vindictive. This image connotes something very different for Blake when Albion speaks to Milton in Book 1:

Seest thou the little winged fly, smaller than a grain of sand?

It has a heart like thee; a brain open to heaven & hell,

Withinside wondrous & expansive; its gates are not clos'd,

I hope thine are not: hence it clothes itself in rich array (20:27-30).

These flies become

gorgeous clothed Flies that dance & sport in summer

Upon the sunny brooks & meadows: every one the dance

Knows in its intricate mazes of delight artful to weave:

Each one to sound his instruments of music in the dance,

To touch each other & recede; to cross & change & return

(26:2-6).

Blake's fly images are different from Shakespeare's in that Shakespeare's are enveloped in tragic imagery; whereas, Blake's flies begin a pastoral segment of the poem that develops in Book 2 and is the setting for the world of Beulah. Albion's speech to Milton defines the flies' roles as models for Milton. They embrace an all-encompassing world and are receptive to it. Albion hopes Milton is also, but fears he is not.

In the second passage, the flies retain their receptiveness, but also possess individuality. While the dance possesses certain movements from each fly—touch,

recede, cross, change, return—each knows the steps that form the maze. Within these steps, the flies maintain their individuality, since each fly sounds an instrument that is specifically relegated to him. In essence, then, Milton's eventual entrance into the "nether regions of the imagination" still allows him to retain his individuality, despite his fusion with several different figures. Each union is, perhaps, a different instrument for his self-preservation and the self-preservation of humanity. The Shakespeare allusion reminds us of the dangers of his journey as he begins to address, even enter, the "nether regions" and unifies with Ololon. Both Gloucester and Milton become more aware of themselves and the situation responsible for their current predicament.

Satan and Palambron, by comparison, compete for the favour of their father Los, much like Edmund's plot to oust Edgar. Satan's function is to work. His work, however, is "Eternal Death, with Mills & Ovens & Cauldrons" (4:16-17). Blake borrows the dilemma that emerges between Palamabron and Satan from Edmund and Edgar. The fraternal tension exists in both works, but Blake's is less tragic because Milton's journey connotes a mental battle whose figures struggle for control but fail to achieve it because Los and Leutha interfere—interrupt the action. Edmund is the catalyst for Edgar's downfall, as is Satan for Palamabron's, yet Leutha will sacrifice herself to save Satan/Milton/the Bard. Edmund dies alone. Palamabron merely disappears from the text.

In *Lear*, Cordelia willingly sacrifices herself because she believes her expression of love is not comparable to her sisters'. She truly loves her father and perhaps believes that her past actions towards him reflect that love. Her choice to remain silent, however, is misinterpreted. Lear reads her silence as confirmation of her dislike even disobedience to him. Blake seems to read this scene at the opening of Shakespeare's play very

differently. Leutha addresses the Great Solemn Assembly to outline her involvement in Satan's behaviour, but like Cordelia, she willingly sacrifices herself. Leutha tells the Assembly that she is "the Author of this Sin" and her "Parent power Satan has committed this transgression" by her suggestion (11:35-36). While Blake's reading differs, the outcome is similar. The Bard ceases his Song and takes refuge in Milton's bosom. Milton then acknowledges, almost immediately, "I in my Selfhood am that Satan: I am that Evil One! / He is my Spectre" (14:30-31). Cordelia invokes a similar response in *Lear*, but he must engage in mental and corporeal war before he willingly acknowledges his blindness to her love because of his own selfish need for verbal confirmation of her love for him. Blake retains the tragic undertones in Shakespeare's play here, but implies a positive connotation in the self-awareness that occurs in Milton. Both women are catalysts for action and mental awareness, but Shakespeare's is tragic and Milton's is comic.

In both *King Lear* and *Milton*, Lear and Milton must address their weaknesses—narrowed perception of the world in which they live. Lear lacks self-knowledge and the moment he decides to divide his kingdom, which actually occurs *in medias res*, his physical and mental disintegration begins. His suffering is paralleled with Edgar's and Gloucester's. They trust people who are distrustful. Lear and Gloucester banish those individuals—Cordelia, Kent, Edgar—who are defined by their truth. These three characters do not mask themselves, as do Goneril, Regan and Edmund. They do not possess an ulterior motive. They do not seek monetary rewards for their "loyalty." Lear publicly addresses his daughters, rewards or punishes them in the same manner, and then must spend the rest of the play confronting his weakness, seeking redemption, and reconstructing who he is. The king who possessed untrammelled power was polluted by it

and uses it against his daughters. What appear to be indirect questions are replete with what can be termed a bribe—the largest section of Britain:

Tell me, my daughters
 (Since now we will divest us both of rule,
 Interest of territory, cares of state),
 Which of you shall we say doth love us most,
 That we our largest bounty may extend
 Where nature doth with merit challenge? (1.1.48-53).

His elder daughters understand their father's weakness and prepare to deal with him.

They are repelled by their father's behaviour and Goneril observes,

You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it
 hath [not] been little. He always lov'd our sister most, and with what poor
 judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly (1.1.288-290).

Lear's alteration in his behaviour towards Cordelia is one that Blake picks up in *Milton*. Satan appears to be bullied by Los early in Book 1, but Satan manipulates Palamabron and rouses the "horses of the Harrow ... with tormenting fury" (7:17-18) and then claims his innocence: Satans self, believ'd / That he had not oppress'd the horses of the Harrow, nor the servants (7:39-40). Satan does not appear to recognise his role in the events that transpire between him and Palamabron in much the same way in which Lear lacks the self-awareness necessary to understand that his behaviour will have devastating consequences. Moreover, the public display of Cordelia's banishment is parodied in Blake's poem. Satan and Palamabron appear in front of the Assembly, but Leutha will assume responsibility for Satan's actions.

Throughout Lear's and Gloucester's quests they will be aided by the individuals who best embody truth and loyalty: Edgar, Kent and Cordelia. They remain steadfast in their love and service to Lear and/or Gloucester. Lear's madness enables him to experience the human condition that Edgar and Kent must, because of the punishment that awaits them if they are caught. Gloucester's blindness enables him to see what he was blind to earlier in the play. The heath, in general, becomes a place of refuge, self-knowledge, and desire for redemption. Dover becomes the locale for the reunification of Gloucester and Edgar, Lear and Cordelia. The danger inherent in this fusion, however, is underpinned by the fact that Dover is also the closest place in which France can most quickly invade England. Blake's choice to parody this event is an apt one. Cordelia is, after all, Queen of France and returning to England as such. Napoleon's threat to invade England was certainly a possibility at the time Blake is writing his response to *Paradise Lost*.

Milton's journey begins when he realises that he is Satan—"I in my Selfhood am that Satan" (14:30)—at the end of the Bard's Song, but like Lear and Gloucester, who require the aid of another to help them in their journey, Milton does not utter this statement until after the Bard has sought refuge in him. Thereafter, Milton begins to see a new world appear around him, but it is yet to be defined. His union with Blake will provide another dimension to his imagination. Prior to Blake, Milton merely sees "Albion upon the Rock of Ages" (15:36), but does not address him; knows that "the Three Heavens of Beulah were beheld / By him on earth in his bright pilgrimage of sixty years" (15:51-52), but continues his journey. Milton remains a passive figure until almost the mid-point of Book 2. While he unifies with Los as well, Milton remains silent. Milton is

secondary to the other characters and scenes because he must be the passive receptacle of his surroundings in order for greater insight to occur.

When Milton descends into Blake's garden and realises he must unify with Ololon, he begins to speak. Prior to that incident, Milton has split into Spectre, Shadow and Milton himself. This division is a prerequisite for vision—the imagination—or, within the context of *King Lear*, self-knowledge. While Lear's self-knowledge involves a paradox, sanity to insanity, in order for him to redeem himself, Milton's involves a three fold self-division and a five-fold union with individuals: The Bard, Satan, Blake, Los and Ololon. Shakespeare suggests that despite Lear's newfound self-knowledge, the tragedy he created at the opening of the play cannot be altered. Blake points out both Milton's and Shakespeare's error in the Preface to *Milton*. They were both "curb'd by the general malady & infection from the silly Greek & Latin slaves of the Sword." The tragic vision Blake identifies with Milton at the beginning of the poem, can be emended, as the poem itself reveals:

Say first! What mov'd Milton, who walked about in Eternity

One hundred years, pondering the intricate mazes of Providence

Unhappy tho' in heav'n, he obey'd, he murmur'd not. He was silent (2:16-18).

Milton's tragedy in *Paradise Lost*, as interpreted by Blake, could be a comedy if its author had possessed the necessary receptiveness to poetic vision he suggests he has in Book 1 of *Paradise Lost* when he invokes the Muses:⁶⁴

Sing Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top

Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire

That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,

In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
 Rose out of Chaos. . . . I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous Song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above the Aonian Mount, while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rime. (1:6-10, 12-16).

Milton continues to ask the muse to

Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
 Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss
 And made it pregnant; What in me is dark
 Illumin, what is low raise and support;
 That to the highth of this great Argument
 I may assert Eternal Providence,
 And justify the wayes of God to men (1:19-26).

Blake suggests that Milton's imagination can only be freed from its shackles if he engages in the journey and is receptive to it. In the poem, Milton unites with other characters and then actively seeks for his emanation—Ololon—and thereby begins his self-knowledge and expansive vision. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton asks the Muses to guide him, while he remains passive, what Blake seems to identify as Milton's error.

When Lear reunites with Cordelia, he is most vulnerable, yet she treats him as a king—a title he relinquished when he divided his kingdom. She asks him to hold his hand in benediction over her, granting him the power he once possessed, but Lear refuses to

accept her courtesy because of his past actions. He does, however, acknowledge his error in shunning her and thereby begins his ascent into recovery. Lear must reunite with Cordelia to achieve personal salvation. The reunion of Milton and Ololon is similar. Ololon is an inspirational figure that appears to Blake in his garden at Felpham. She seeks Milton. Ololon tells Milton,

I see thee strive upon the Brooks of Arnon. There a dread
And awful Man I see, oercovered with the mantle of years.
I behold Los & Urizen. I behold Orc & Tharmas;
The Four Zoas of Albion & thy Spirit with them striving
In Self annihilation giving thy life to thy enemies (40:4-8).

She appears to see an aged Milton who is willing to sacrifice himself to his enemies. She sees the Milton before her, while Milton engages in the “nether regions of the imagination.” She sees Milton as he is, at this moment in much the same way he perceived Albion earlier in Book 2. She questions whether she is responsible for Milton’s current state and then shortly thereafter divides and flees “into the depths of Miltons Shadow as a Dove upon the stormy Sea” (42:5-6). Ololon’s fusion with Milton becomes a religious experience in which Ololon envelops Jesus and Milton. Nature and humanity are affected:

I fell outstretched upon the path
A moment, & my soul returnd into its mortal state
To Resurrection & Judgment in the Vegetable Body
And my sweet Shadow of Delight stood trembling by my side
Immediately the Lark mounted with a loud trill from Felphams Vale

And the Wild Thyme from Wimbletons green & impurpled Hills

And Los & Enitharmon rose over the Hills of Surrey

Their clouds roll over London with a south wind (42:25-32).

The blood that emerges in this scene suggests a tragic action; however, it also connotes sacrifice and an unselfish desire to aid in the salvation of another. Ololon sacrifices herself and independence for Milton, since she is his emanation and, according to Blake, an essential part of Milton.

Rather than the tragedy of *King Lear*, these characteristics establish a pastoral, comic end to the poem because Milton is more self-aware and has successfully removed his shackles. The reference to Thyme here is perhaps a subtle reminder of the dangers Milton has addressed with the aid of the Bard, Satan, Blake and Los. The poet, as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, can “give to aery nothingness a local habitation and a name,” but the mental war to “enter the nether regions of the imagination” never fully ceases for him. Each project is another battle waging within the poet and only one he can overcome.

The initial journey Milton begins in Blake's poem requires Milton to meld with other figures. His vision is restricted and his poetic imagination is thereby closed—a problem noted by Blake, Wordsworth, Hazlitt and Lamb, to name a few. Shakespeare's presence in the poem in the form of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *King Lear* not only address this issue but also map the poetic process and the dangers inherent in his current path respectively. Milton's fusion with other figures in Blake's poem parodies Shakespeare's forest in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The pastoral world, in both Book 2 and Shakespeare's comedy, enable characters to escape the limits and dangers of their worlds, to dismantle their selves, to release them from their imprisonment, and to reform

their identities in a world in which such goals are attainable. Shakespeare's plays, in a poem in which Milton's epic is the foundation, enable Blake to attack Milton, show him the error of his ways, and recreate a theology that frees the imagination, allowing it to use his pen to body forth "The forms of things unknown" and turn "them to shapes" over which the imagination reigns.

CHAPTER 7

“And all the men and women merely players;”⁶⁵



William Blake Death Mask⁶⁶

Blake scholars have always been interested in Blake's use of other writings, but that interest has been partial: There has been substantial focus on Milton, for obvious reasons. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Milton* are both of them explicitly concerned to articulate Blake's complex sense of his own relationship with his great predecessor. There has also been a concentration, particularly amongst Blake's early critics, on his knowledge of esoteric literature—Boehme, Swedenborg, and contemporary comparative mythologists, and again, for obvious reasons. To trace Blake's debts to such writers has offered a powerful way of explaining how Blake constructed his own mythology. More recently, in the work of critics such as Mee, McCalman, and the many other critics who have followed the approach to Blake's writings instigated by David Erdman, the focus has shifted to Blake's dealings with contemporary radical and popular texts. But up to now little work has been done on Blake's use of Shakespeare, despite Blake's claims in his letters for the importance of that influence. The primary exception,

of course, is the work of Jonahan Bate, whose groundbreaking work on Shakespeare and the Romantics was first published in 1986. My thesis has addressed this omission and expanded considerably on Bate's suggestions. But my concern has not been only, or even primarily, to identify Blake's borrowings from Shakespeare. Rather, my concern has been to find in the changing character of those borrowings a development that indicates the trajectory of Blake's poetic career.

In Blake's earlier poems, echoes of Shakespeare are quite easily recoverable. Most obviously, Blake's early dramatic fragments show the influence of Shakespeare's history plays, although the methodology of Shakespeare's chronicles are put to the service of a politics which it is very unlikely that Shakespeare would have approved. *Tiriel* quite clearly, as has always been recognised, is on one level a re-writing of *King Lear*. But it has not been recognised that *King Lear* remained for Blake throughout his career a pre-text rivalled in importance only by *Paradise Lost*. It is, for example, as I argue in my final chapter, a key text for Blake in *Milton*, the last but one of Blake's prophetic books.

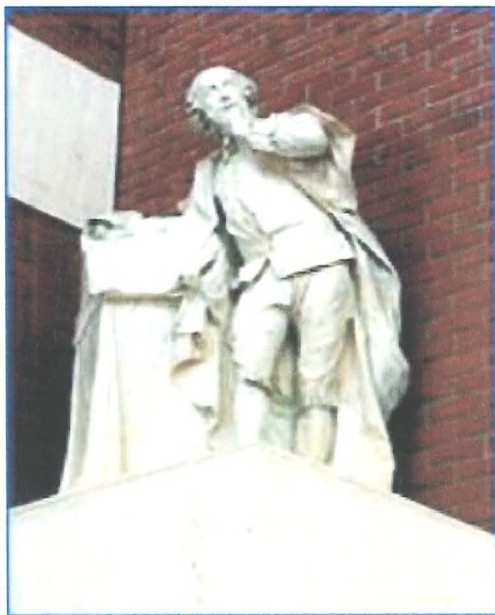
By the time that he wrote *Milton*, Blake had fully incorporated Shakespeare into his own vision. A single line in that poem is left to alert the reader to the trace left on the poem by *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the traces of *King Lear* are still more fugitive. In order to identify them, the critic must become an archaeologist, re-creating the process by which the poem was created from the fragmentary evidence that can still be detected in the completed work. *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, the topic of my fifth chapter, offers a convenient mid-point. In that poem, Blake's understanding of rape, and more particularly the analogy Blake insists on between male sexual violence and the

militaristic politics of empire, are foreshadowed, I argue, in Shakespeare's treatment of similar narratives in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

In his mature work, I would suggest by way of conclusion, Blake's interest in Shakespeare has changed. It is no longer simply the interest of one writer in a major predecessor. Rather, Blake's concern is for his country and his countrymen, and his ambition, as he puts it in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, is to cleanse the doors of their perception. Shakespeare is now most important to him because he recognizes that Shakespeare's works, perhaps second only to the Bible itself, are major determinants of the manner in which the English perceive their world. The English, as Wordsworth recognized, are a nation of people who "speak the tongue / That Shakespeare spake", and the way in which people perceive the world is controlled by their language. Blake's ambition would be fully realized, one feels, only if he could succeed in reversing the argument that I have pursued throughout this thesis; only if, instead of reading Blake through Shakespeare, the English would learn to read Shakespeare through Blake.

APPENDIX 1

Roubiliac's Statue of Shakespeare, 1758, commissioned by David Garrick



APPENDIX 2

Heart of Oak (1759)

Music: **Dr. William Boyce (1711-1779)**

Words: **David Garrick (1716-1779)**

Come cheer up, my lads! 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year;
To honour we call you, not press you like slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

Chorus

*Heart of oak are our ships, heart of oak are our men;
We always are ready, steady, boys, steady!
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.*

We ne'er see our foes but we wish them to stay,
They never see us but they wish us away;
If they run, why we follow, and run them ashore,
For if they won't fight us, we cannot do more.

Chorus

They swear they'll invade us, these terrible foes,
They frighten our women, our children, and beaus;
But should their flat bottoms in darkness get o'er,
Still Britons they'll find to receive them on shore.

Chorus

We'll still make them fear, and we'll still make them flee,
And drub 'em on shore, as we've drubb'd 'em at sea;
Then cheer up, my lads! with one heart let us sing:
Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen and Queen.

Chorus

APPENDIX 3

Hogarth, *A Just View of the British Stage, 1725*



Odell, George. *Shakespeare: From Betterton to Irving*. Vol. 1. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

APPENDIX 4

Frontispieces to Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, 1711



APPENDIX 5



*M^r SUTER in the Character of VALDEMAR.
My King, my love, I speak to thee my Heart.*



*— There's 'em for you. —
M^r LESSINGHAM in the Character of OPHELIA.*

M^rGARRICK in the Character of MACKBETH



I've done the Deed—didst thou not hear a Noise?

APPENDIX 6



Merchant, W. Moelwyn. "Blake's Shakespeare." *Apollo* 79 (April 1964): 318-25.

APPENDIX 7

William Blake. *Fiery Pegasus*, 1809.



http://www.cc.emory.edu/ENGLISH/classes/Shakespeare_Illustrated/Blake.Pegasus.html

APPENDIX 8

Benjamin Wilson, *David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy in Romeo and Juliet*, 1753.



Ashton, Geoffrey. *Shakespeare and British Art*. New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1981.

APPENDIX 9

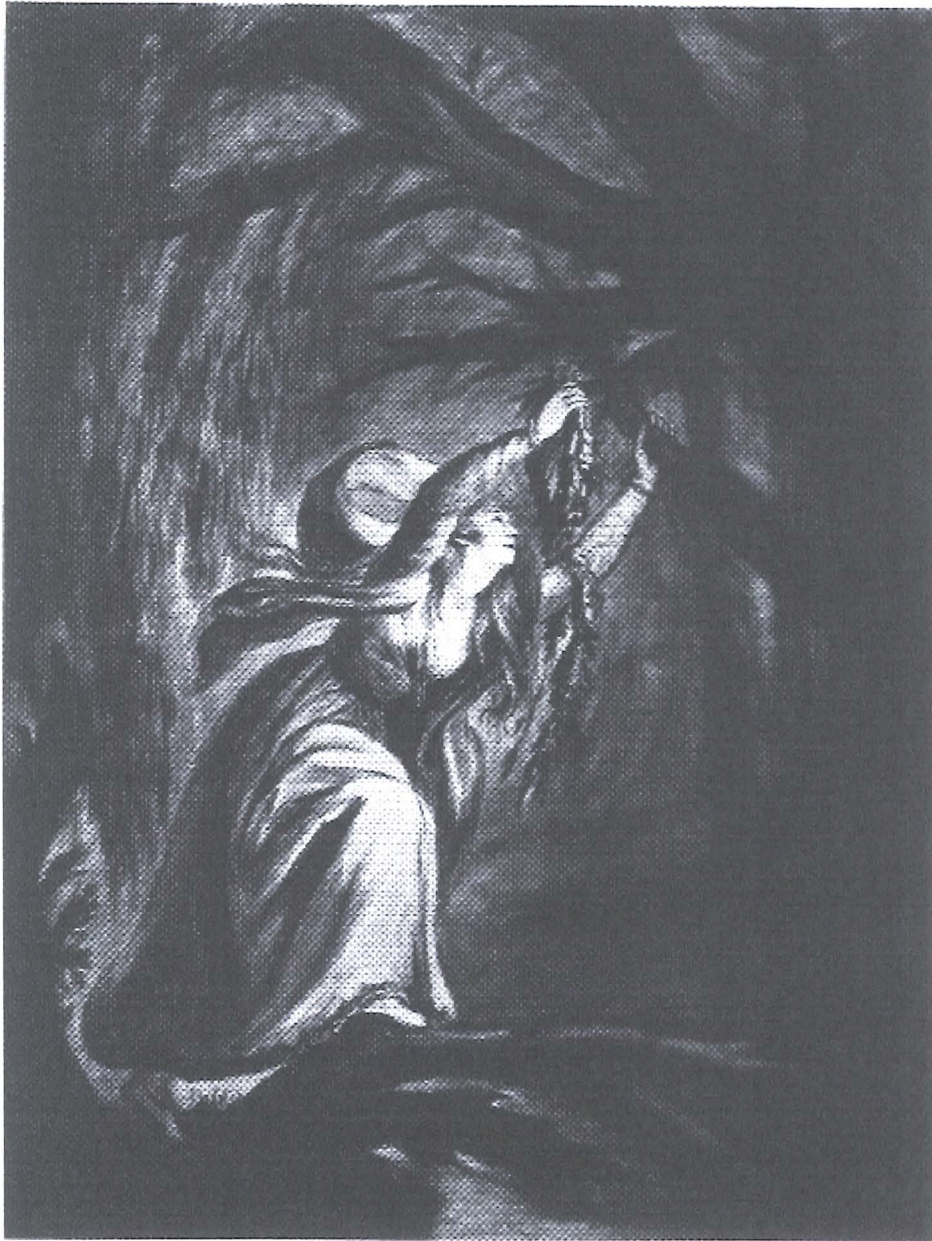
Mary Hoare, *Lady Percy watching the sleeping Hotspur*, 1781.



Ashton, Geoffrey. *Shakespeare and British Art*. New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1981.

APPENDIX 10

Mary Hoare, *Ophelia's Death*, 1781.



Ashton, Geoffrey. *Shakespeare and British Art*. New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1981.

APPENDIX 11

William Blake, *Lear and Cordelia in Prison*, ca. 1779



APPENDIX 12

James Barry, *King Lear* 5.3 ca. 1786-88



Friedman, Winnifred H. *Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976.

APPENDIX 13

Annibale Caracci, *Pietà*

Paulson, Ronald. *Book and Painting: Shakespeare, Milton and the Bible*. Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1982.

APPENDIX 14

Michelangelo's *St. Peter's Pietá*



APPENDIX 15

William Blake, *Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing*, ca. 1786.



APPENDIX 16

William Blake, *Nurse's Song*, *Songs of Innocence*, Plate 9.



APPENDIX 17

The Song of Los sometimes entitled *A King and Queen on a Lily*.
Oberon and Titania on a Lily ca. 1790-1793 is almost the same as the one below, but with the image reversed.



APPENDIX 18

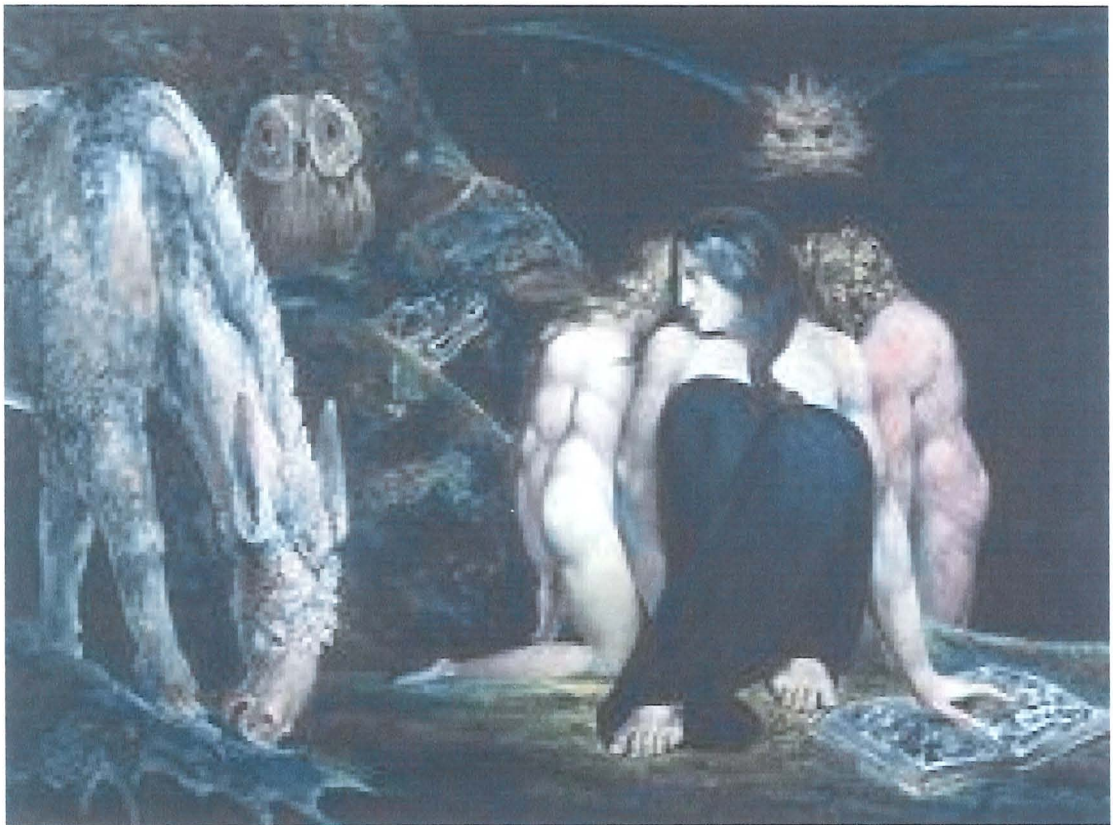
William Blake, *Pity* ca. 1795



<http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/ArtistWorks?id=41>

APPENDIX 19

William Blake, *The Night of Enitharmon's Joy* (formerly known as *Hecate*), ca. 1795



<http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/AWork?id=799>

APPENDIX 20

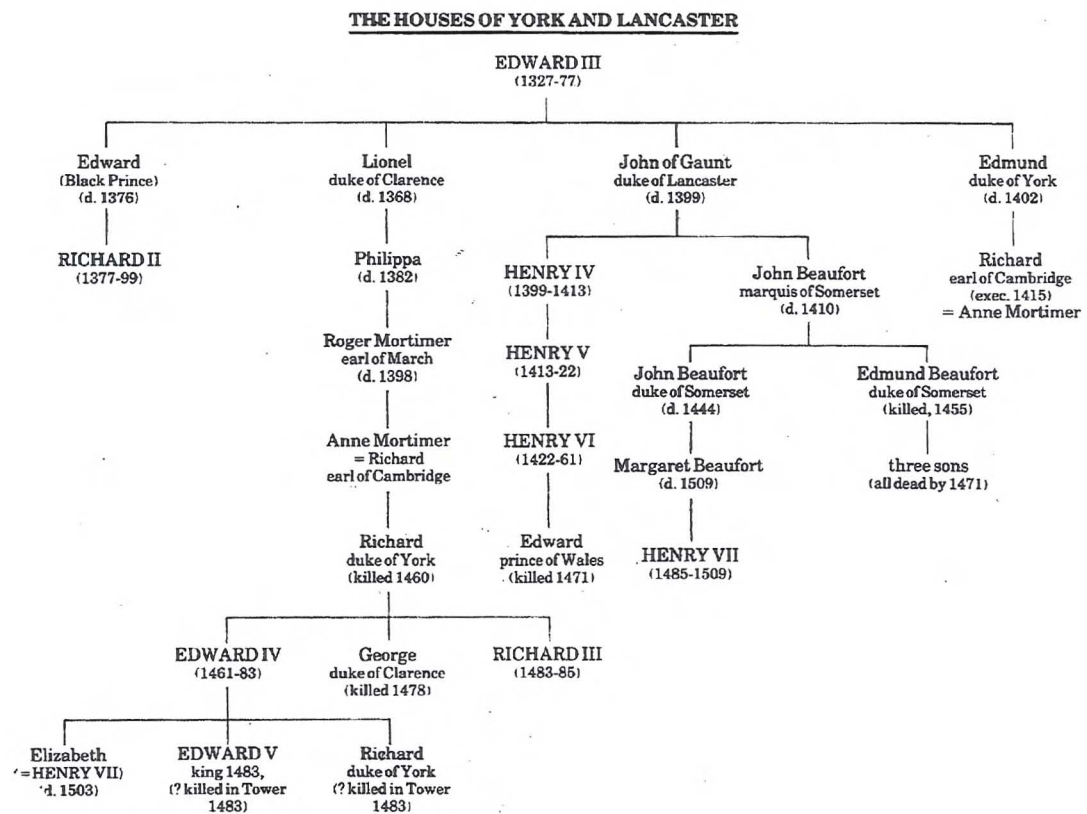
A typical Hekataion (threefold statue of Hekate)

Ermitage A512, at St Petersburg



<http://www.islandnet.com/~hornowl/library/hekate.html>

APPENDIX 21



APPENDIX 22

American Liberty Song (composed in 1768)

The tune is the English air, *Heart of Oak*. These American words were written by John Dickinson.
The English words were by David Garrick.

Come join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call;
No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim,
Or stain with dishonor America's name.

(Chorus:) In freedom we're born, and in freedom we'll live;
 Our purses are ready,—
 Steady, friends, steady,—
 Not as slaves, but as freemen, our money we'll give!

Our worthy forefathers—let's give them a cheer—
To climates unknown did courageously steer;
Thro' oceans to deserts for freedom they came
And dying bequeath'd us their freedom and fame.

Chorus

How sweet are the labors that freemen endure,
That they shall enjoy all the profit secure;
No more such sweet labors Americans know,
If Britons shall reap what Americans sow.

Chorus

Swarms of placemen and pensioners soon will appear,
Like locusts deforming the charms of the year;
Suns vainly will rise, showers vainly descend,
If we are to drudge for what others shall spend.

Chorus

The tree their own hands had to Liberty rear'd,
They lived to behold growing strong and revered;
With transport they cried, Now our wishes we gain,
For our children shall gather the fruits of our pain.

Chorus

Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall;
In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,
For heaven approves of each generous deed.

Chorus

Moore, Frank. *An Illustrated Ballad History of the American Revolution*.
<http://www.contemplator.com/america/liberty.html>

APPENDIX 23

Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death

Patrick Henry, March 23, 1775.

No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The questing before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House. Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves. Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free-- if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending--if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be

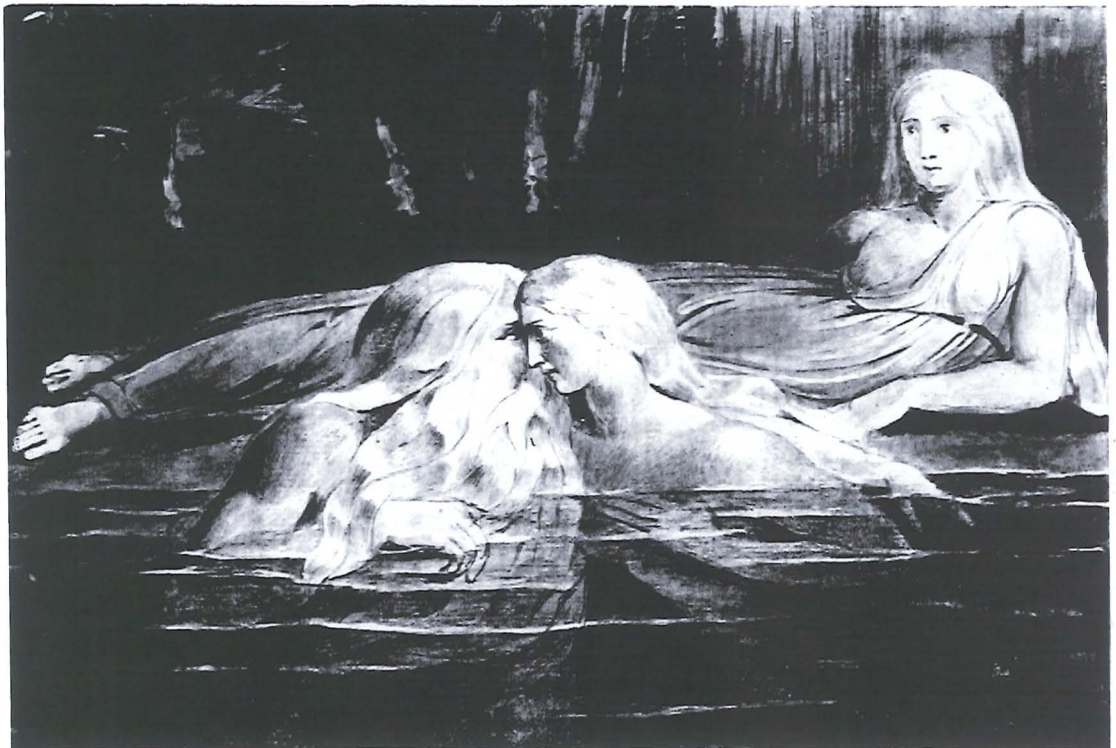
obtained--we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts is all that is left us! They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. The millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable--and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace-- but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

APPENDIX 24

Tiriell supporting Myratana

APPENDIX 25
Har and Heva Bathing



Bentley Jr., G.E. *William Blake Tiriell*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

APPENDIX 26
Har Blessing Tiriël



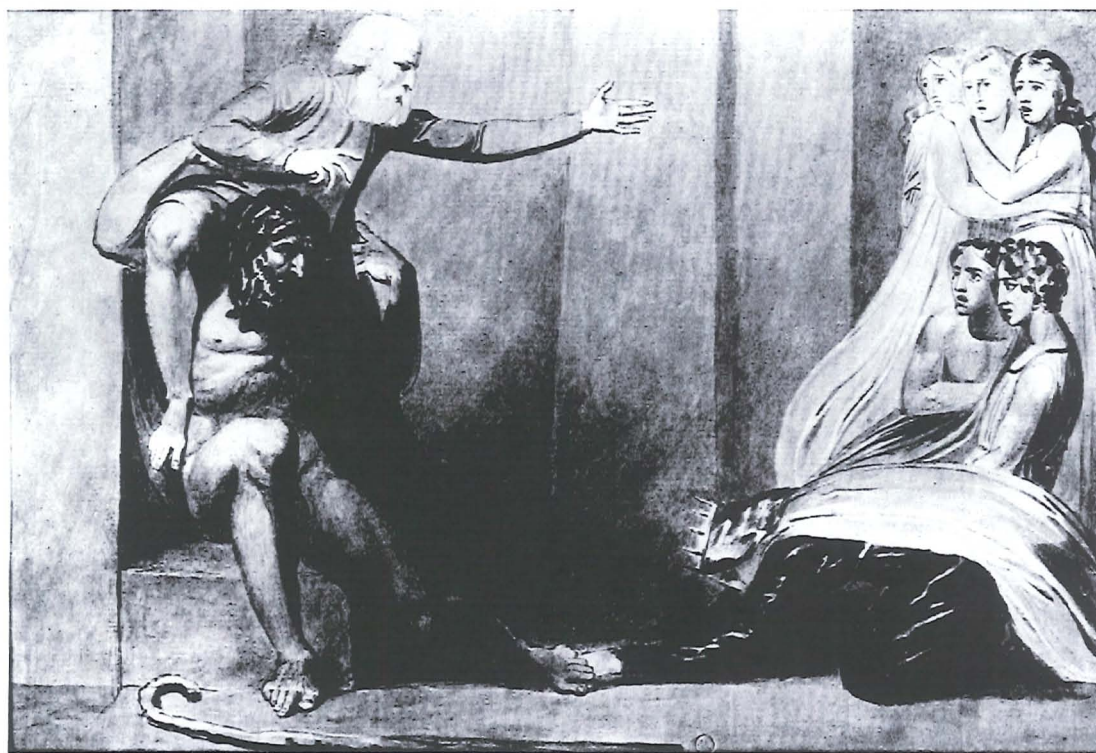
Bentley Jr., G.E. *William Blake Tiriël*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

APPENDIX 27
Tiriël Leaving Har and Heva



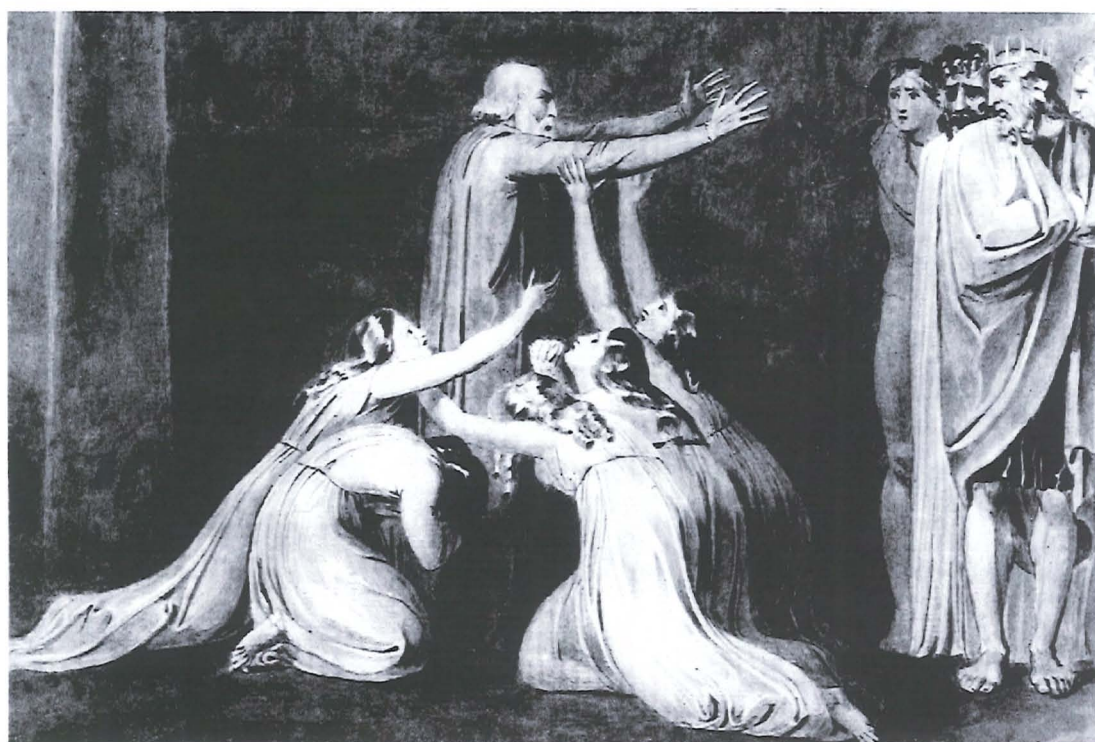
Bentley Jr., G.E. *William Blake Tiriël*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967

APPENDIX 28
Tiriël Carried by Ijim



APPENDIX 29

Tiriell Denouncing his Four Sons and Five Daughters



APPENDIX 30

Tiriel Walking with Hela



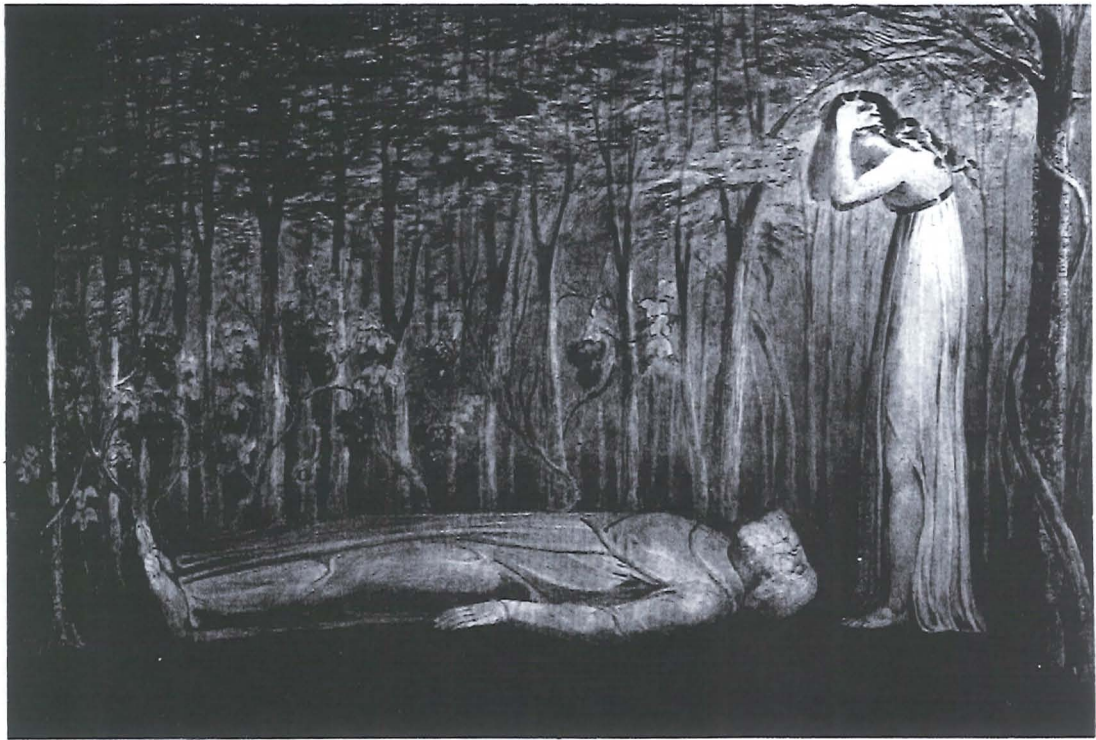
APPENDIX 31

Har and Heva Asleep



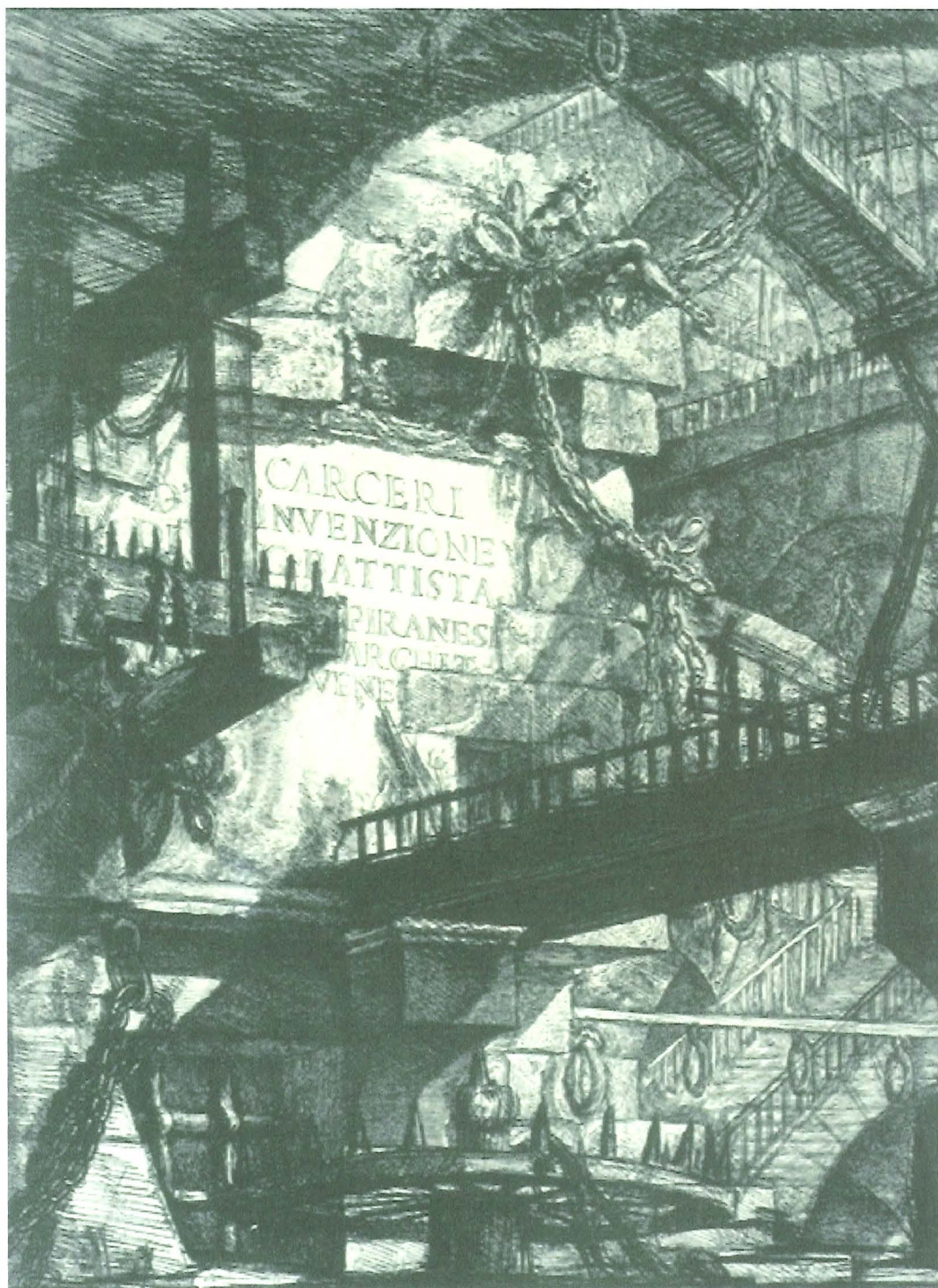
APPENDIX 32

Tiriël Dead before Hela



APPENDIX 33

Giambattista Piranesi, *Carceri d'invenzione*, ca. 1760.



APPENDIX 34

Declaration of Independence of the United States of America

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America:

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.-- That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

APPENDIX 35

Average annual exports to overseas areas: the thirteen colonies, 1768-72, and the United States, 1790-92 (in thousands of pounds sterling; 1768-72 prices)

<u>Destination</u>	<u>1768-72</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>1790-92</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Great Britain and Ireland	1,616	58	1,234	31
Northern Europe	---		643	16
Southern Europe	406	14	557	14
British West Indies	759	27	402	10
Foreign West Indies			956	24
Africa	21	1	42	1
Canadian colonies	---		60	2
Other	---		59	1
Total	2,802	100	3,953	100

Shepherd, James F. "British America and the Atlantic Economy." *The Economy of Early America: The Revolutionary Period, 1763-1790*. Ed. Ronald Hoffman, et. al. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988. 25.

APPENDIX 36

Average annual exports from colonies and regions of the thirteen colonies, 1768-72, and states and regions of the United States, 1791-92 (total exports in thousands of pounds sterling; per capita exports in pounds sterling; 1768-72 prices)

Origin	Total exports	1768-72 % of total	Per capita exports	Total exports	1791-92 % of total	Per capita exports
New England						
New Hampshire	46	2	.74	33	1	.23
Massachusetts	258	9	.97	542	14	1.14
Rhode Island	81	3	1.39	119	3	1.72
Connecticut	92	3	.5	148	4	.62
Total	477	17	.82	842	22	.83
Middle Atlantic						
New York	187	7	1.15	512	14	1.51
New Jersey	2	--	.02	5	--	.03
Pennsylvania	353	13	1.47	584	16	1.34
Delaware	18	1	.051	26	1	.44
Total	559	20	1.01	1127	30	1.11
Upper South						
Maryland	393	14	1.93	482	13	1.51
Virginia	770	27	1.72	678	18	.91
Total	1162	41	1.79	1160	31	1.09
Lower South						
North Carolina	75	3	.38	104	3	.27
South Carolina	455	16	3.66	436	12	1.75
Total	603	22	1.75	637	17	.88
Grand Total	2802	100	1.31	3766	100	.99

Shepherd, James F. "British America and the Atlantic Economy." *The Economy of Early America: The Revolutionary Period, 1763-1790*. Ed. Ronald Hoffman, et. al. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988. 28.

APPENDIX 37

Official value of imports from, and exports to, Great Britain to and from the American continental colonies, 1760-91; and the current value of imports from Great Britain to the American continental colonies, 1760-75 (rounded to the nearest thousand pounds sterling)

	Current value of imports from Great Britain	Official value of imports from			Official value of exports to		
		Great Britain	England	Scotland	Great Britain	England	Scotland
1760	2,786	2,798	2,612	186	1,150	761	389
1761	1,782	1,797	1,652	145	1,161	848	313
1762	1,474	1,547	1,377	170	1,069	743	326
1763	1,859	1,893	1,632	261	1,460	1,106	354
1764	2,442	2,475	2,250	225	1,449	1,111	338
1765	2,114	2,120	1,944	176	1,574	1,152	422
1766	1,984	1,982	1,804	178	1,428	1,044	384
1767	2,192	2,168	1,901	267	1,473	1,096	377
1768	2,393	2,390	2,157	233	1,657	1,251	405
1769	1,491	1,605	1,336	269	1,532	1,060	471
1770	2,133	2,262	1,926	336	1,498	1,016	482
1771	4,462	4,577	4,202	374	1,946	1,340	606
1772	3,460	3,311	3,103	298	1,800	1,259	542
1773	2,451	2,312	2,079	233	1,887	1,369	518
1774	2,953	2,843	2,510	253	1,847	1,374	473
1775	226	220	196	24	2,457	1,921	536
1776		56	55	1	186	104	82
1777		93	57	36	17	13	4
1778		69	34	35	43	18	25
1779		412	350	63	54	21	34
1780		997	825	171	98	19	80
1781		995	848	148	144	100	44
1782		301	256	44	136	29	107
1783		1,544	1,435	109	349	314	35
1784		3,738	3,418	320	749	701	38
1785		2,308	2,079	229	894	776	118
1786		1,603	1,431	172	843	744	99
1787		2,014	1,794	220	894	780	113
1788		1,886	1,710	176	1,024	884	140
1789		2,495	2,307	189	1,050	893	157
1790		3,432	3,258	174	1,191	1,043	148
1791		4,223	4,014	209	1,194	1,011	183

Shepherd, James F. "British America and the Atlantic Economy." *The Economy of Early America: The Revolutionary Period, 1763-1790*. Ed. Ronald Hoffman, et al. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988. 40-41.

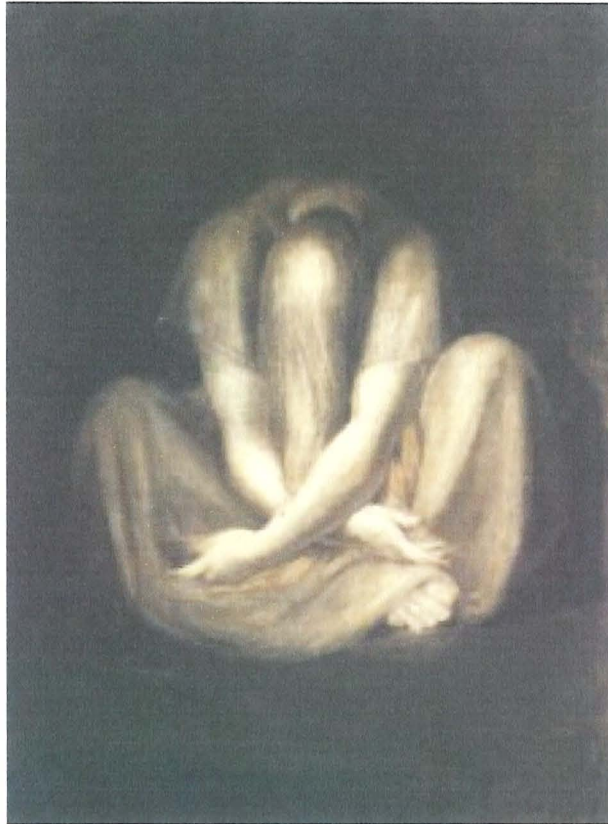
APPENDIX 38

Frontispiece, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*



APPENDIX 39

Fuseli, *Silence*, ca. 1799-1800



APPENDIX 40

Donatello, *The Entombment of Christ*, San Lorenzo, Florence



http://gallery.euroweb.hu/art/d/donatelli/3_late/lorenzo/pulpit21.jpg

APPENDIX 41

Plate 7, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*

Wine shadows of discontent; and in what houses dwell the wretched
Drunkards with new forgotten, and shut up from cold despair.

Tell me where dwell the thoughts forgotten till thou call them forth
Tell me where dwell the joys of old; or where the ancient loves;
And when will they renew again to the night of oblivion past?
That I might traverse aines to spaces far remote and bring
Conducts into a private grove and a night of pain
Upon quest thou O thought! to what remote land, or thy flight!
If thou returnest to the present moment of affliction
Wilt thou bring comforts on thy wings and dew and honey and balm;
Or poison from the desert wilds, from the eyes of the warrior.

Then Boreas said; and shook the cavern with his lamentation

Thou knowest that the ancient trees, seen by thine eyes have fruit;
But knowest thou that trees and fruits flourish upon the earth
To untried senses unknown? trees beasts and birds unknown:
Unknown, not unperceived, spread in the infinite microscope,
In places yet unvisited by the voyager, and in worlds
Over another kind of seas, and in atmospheres unknown.
Ah! are there other wars, beside the wars of sword and fire?
And are there other sorrows, beside the sorrows of poverty?
And are there other joys, beside the joys of riches and ease?
And is there not one law for both the lion and the ox?
And is there not eternal fire, and eternal chains,
To bind the phantoms of existence from eternal life?

Then Oothoon wailed silent all the day, and all the night.

APPENDIX 42

Plate 6, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*

And none but Bavian can hear my lamentations.

With what sense is it that the chicken shuns the pavenous hawk?
 With what sense does the tame pigeon measure out the expanse?
 With what sense does the bee form cells? have not the mouse & frog
 Eyes and ears and sense of touch, yet are their habitations,
 And their pursuits, as different as their forms and as their joys?
 Ask the wild ass why he refuses burdens; and the mule abroad
 Why he loves man; is it because of eye ear mouth or spine
 Or breathing nostrils? No, for these the mule and tiger have.
 Ask the blind worm the secrets of the grave, and why her spiders
 Love to curl round the bones of death; and ask the ravenous snake
 Where she gets poison; & the night eagle, why he loves the sun
 And then tell me the thoughts of man, that have been hid of old.

Silent I hover all the night, and all day could be silent,
 If Thestoron once would turn his loved eyes upon me;
 How can I, be defiled when I reflect thy image pure?
 Sweetest the fruit that the worm feeds on, & the soul provid on by
 The new washed lamb tingid with the milky snake & the bright swan
 By the red earth of our immortal river, I bathe my wings
 And I am white and pure to hover round Thestorons breast.

Then Thestoron broke his silence, and he answered.

Tell me what is the night or day to 'one overcloud with woe?
 Tell me what is a thought! & of what substance is it made?
 Tell me what is a joy, & in what gardens do joys grow?
 And in what rivers swim the scorpions, and upon what mountains



APPENDIX 43

Plate 9, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*

And a palace of eternity in the jaws of the Juno, grows
 Over his porch these words are written. Take thy bliss O Man!
 And sweet shall be thy taste & sweet thy infant joys renew!

Infancy, fearful, lustful, happy! nestling for delight
 In laps of pleasure; Innocence! honest, open, seeking
 The vigorous joys of morning light; open to vision, bliss,
 Who taught thee modesty, subtle modesty? child of night, & sleep
 When thou awakest, wilt thou dispense all thy secret joys
 Or wert thou not awake when all this mystery was displayed?
 How canst thou forth a modest virgin knowing to dissemble
 With notes found under thy night pillow, to catch virgin joy,
 And brand it with the name of whom; & sell it in the night,
 In silence, even without a whisper, and in seeming sleep.
 Religious dreams and holy vapours, light thy stately fires:
 Once were thy fires kindled by the gas of honest morn
 And does thy Theoterman seek this hypocrite modesty?
 How knowing, artful, secret, fearful, cautious, trembling hypocrite.
 Then is Oothoon a whore, indeed; and all the virgin joys
 Of life are harlots; and Theoterman is a sick man's dream
 And Oothoon is the crazy slave of selfish holiness.

But Oothoon is not so, a virgin filled with virgin fancies
 Open to joy and to delight, where ever lusty appears
 If in the morning sun I find it; there my eyes are fixed



APPENDIX 44

Susan Fox's Outline of *Milton*

I

Subject: "masculine" assertiveness, responsibility to his vision and his compeers

Themes: Wrath burning away Falsehood, renovation of Imagination, Three Classes of Men

Manner: Mythic and cosmic

Tone: Aggressive, intense, ringing

II

Subject: "Feminine" inspiration and support of poetic vision, responding to and interpreting counterpart sections in I

Themes: Pity recreating Truth, renovation of sense-perception, Three Heavens of Beulah

Manner: Intimate and personal

Tone: Gentle, gracious, relaxed

Prologue: Events leading up to main action

Bard's Song. Locale: Environs of Eden (cosmic limbo)

Theme: Fall of man in all generations; natural, inviolable distinctions among men

Style: Bardic, coherence: elaborate system of units of time.

Description and Songs of Beulah. Locale: Beulah

Style: Pastoral

1. Creation Myth

1. (2:25-4:5) Fall and binding of Urizen (by Los); separation of Los and Enitharmon (all happening after fall of Albion)

1. (30:1-31:7) Creation of Beulah by Jesus; protection and preservation of Emanations; Beulah-Eden relationship

2. Pivotal Action

2. (4:6-8:44) Fall and containment of Satan (recapitulates I, A, 1 above); usurpation of harrow; formation of 3 Classes

2. (31:8-63) Result of action in Bard's Song (I,A,2) Ololon descends from Eden into Beulah (Beulah-Generation relationship); Beulah weeps but Generation celebrates springtime renewal; renovation of the senses

3. Judgement on action

3. (8:45-11:27) **Locale:** Albion's death-couch. Great Assembly. Satan divides the nations; evil is consolidated and the sexes further separated. Eden judges Satan.

3. (32) **Locale:** Milton's death-couch. Judgement necessitated by events in I,A,3 concern with Satan's divisions. Angels of Presence tell Milton to judge himself.

4. Contrition for action

4. (11:28-13:44) Leutha's contrition (gives motivation for yet-unclarified events in I,A, 1-3)

4. (33) Contrition prompted by Judgement; Ololon recognises her shadow in Rahab; she repents.

A. Refracted account of main action

Act: Union of prophetic powers in 3 simultaneously-occurring events; Milton's descent
Locale: Ulro (sea of time and space, vortex)

Interpretation of action II,B; union of male and female forces in slow-motion close-ups of sequential instants; Ololon's descent

Theme: Self-sacrifice
Technique: Disjunctive narrative

Locale: Ulro (polypus)
Style: Disjunctive narrative

1. Resolution

1. (13:45-14:42) Bard's incarnation in Milton;
 decision and descent

1. (34:35:17) Ololon descends through
 Beulah (Alla, Al-Ulro, and Or-Ulro) to
 "Gates of the Dead."

2. Incarnation

2. (15:1-20:50) Milton-Bard's incarnation in Blake

2. (35:18-36:32) Ololon passes through
 polypus to Blake

3. Consummation

3. (20:51-24:47) Los's merger with Blake-Milton-
 Bard

3. (37-42:23) Ololon unites with Milton in Blake's
 garden

B. Epilogue: Vision associated with main action

C. (24:48-29:65) **Vision:** Hymn to Inspiration
Locale: Golgonooza
Theme: Providence of Time and Space
Style: Visionary

C. (42:24-43:1) **Vision:** Natural World
Locale: Felpham
Theme: Apocalyptic significance of natural images
Style: Prophetic

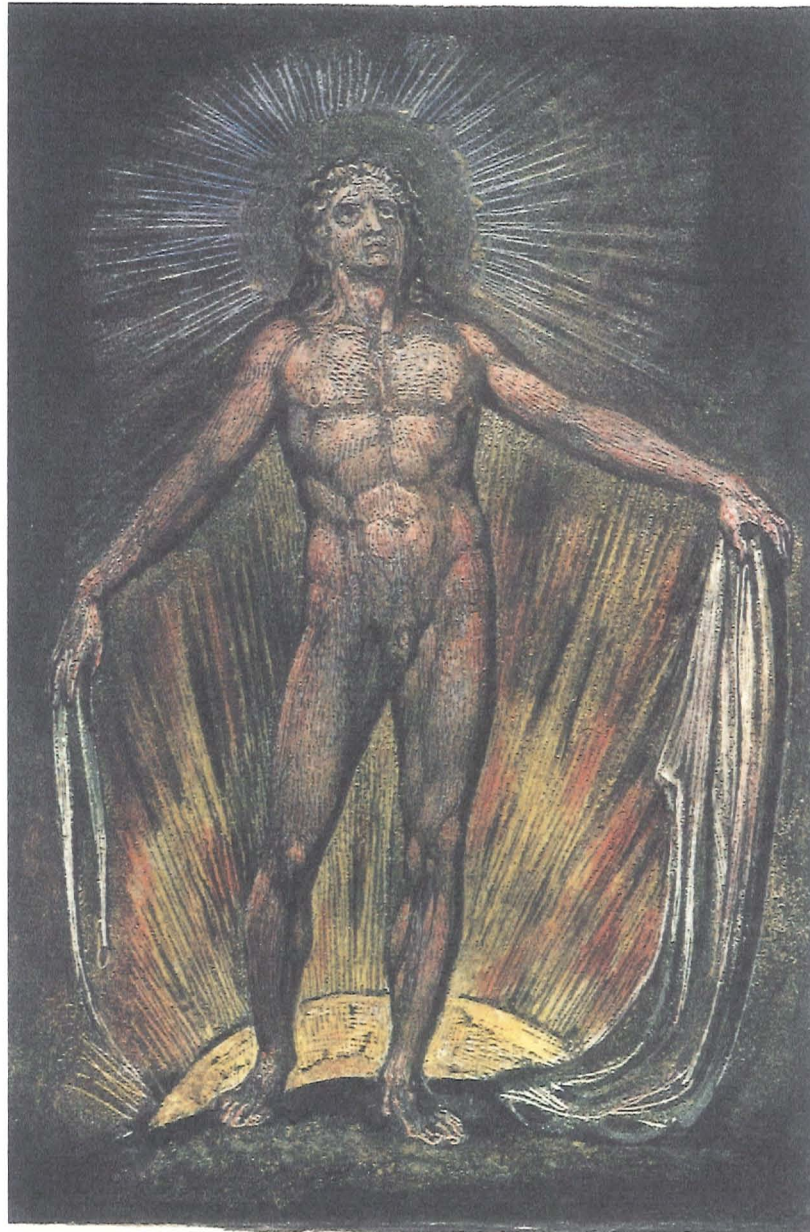
Johnson, Mary Lynn. "Recent Reconstructions of Blake's Milton and *Milton*: A Poem." *Milton and the Romantics* 2 (1976): 7.

APPENDIX 45**A Portrait of Milton**

Behrendt, Stephen C. *The Moment of Explosion: Blake and the Illustration of Milton*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1983. 11.

APPENDIX 46**A Portrait of Shakespeare (1800-1803) William Blake**

APPENDIX 47

Plate 13, *Milton*

Essick, Robert and Viscomi, Joseph, eds. *Milton: A Poem, and the final illuminated works*. Vol. 5. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993.

ENDNOTES

¹ This picture is from www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/classes/Shakespeare_Illustrated/Blake.Shakespeare.html

² Mr. Phillips of St. Paul's Church Yard is described in Blake's letter as "a man of vast spirit & enterprize. With a solidity of character which few have. . . . His connections throughout England & indeed Europe & America enable him to Circulate Publications to an immense Extent" (Erdman *Complete*, 746).

³ All citations from Blake's works will be from David V. Erdman's *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*. In this chapter, I will use page numbers to refer to Blake's letters in Erdman's text. In chapter 2, I will use scene

⁴ Wordsworth, in a poem entitled "London 1802" is a tribute to Milton as a poet who can inspire and speak for the nation. In the sonnet "Great men have been among us" Wordsworth establishes the Commonwealth and its writers as the ideal to which the present British state and its poets should aspire. By using the sonnet form, and in the content of some of the sonnets, he identifies Milton as the proper model for the contemporary poet. Wordsworth in the "London, 1802" sonnet also celebrates Shakespeare as well as Milton.

⁵ Jean Hagstrum embraces the autobiographical method in "Babylon Revisited, or the Story of Luvah and Vala". He defines Beulah as "a distillation of the best moments of Blake's marriage with Catherine and his collaboration with that sweet and simple woman in creating the lovely forms" (41). Blake enters *Milton* as a character and includes an illustration of himself in the text; however, Catherine's presence is much more elusive. His use of the adjectives "sweet" and "simple" seems trite if her presence in the poem signifies her marriage when Beulah is a state not only through which Milton will travel, but also one that will appear throughout Blake's *corpus*.

⁶ David Erdman's investigation, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, creates an historical framework for *Milton* based upon weak evidence. He suggests that Blake's original inclusion of "12" within the titlepage to the work and not "2" automatically implies that there are 10 missing books and that they are a "visionary account of the English Revolution" (423).

⁷ Jennifer Keith and Florence Sandler are two of many critics that explore the biblical elements in Blake's *Milton*.

⁸ Susan Fox and Jackie DiSalvo examine and critique Milton's role in the poem of his name.

⁹ Angela Esterhammer, in her book *Creating States: Studies in the Performative Language of John Milton and William Blake*, while she remains within the confines of a Blake-Milton framework for her interpretation, uses speech act theory as the basis for her analysis.

¹⁰ John Beer, in Appendix One of *Blake's Visionary Universe*, opens with a quotation from a letter Blake wrote to Flaxman. While Bate explores Shakespeare's relationship with Blake more thoroughly than Beer, the latter's Appendix expands upon the line and its significance, even suggesting Blake read Shakespeare "as human allegory" (314). For Beer, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* "was more than a statement about the origins of evil or the way that tyrannies establish themselves: it was an exhibition of the slavery of the heart under the laws of Urizen, where the tyranny of analytic reason turns human sublimity into destructive fear, and human pathos into helpless pity" (319). Then, Beer unites *Tiriel* with *King Lear*, arguing that "Lear is only partly relatable to Tiriel himself, however: Gloucester's blindness in this world of experience aligns him more closely with this figure, whereas Lear is nearer to Blake's innocent Har" (320). I concur with Beer that contrarities exist in Blake's work in relation to Shakespeare plays, and *King Lear* is certainly an indication of this problem, both in Blake's early fragments and in his later prophecies.

¹¹ Dobson establishes Dryden's prologue to Davenant's play as placing Shakespeare in the past (38):

As when a Tree's cut down the secret root
Lives under ground, and Thence new Branches shoot;
So, from old Shakespear's honour'd dust, this day
Springs up and buds a new reviving Play.

¹² The Exclusion Crisis included beliefs that the Catholics wanted to destroy the Church of England. Dobson identifies the Exclusion Crisis as incorporating “dissenting schemes to restart the English Revolution, and generated a theatrical climate in which every play produced was potentially controversial” (63). Nancy Klein Maguire seems to agree with Dobson, specifically in relation to Nahum Tate’s version of *King Lear*. Tate’s creative license reworks a Renaissance plot perhaps to “comment upon the 1678-83 Exclusion Crisis” (30) associated with Tate’s time period. Rewriting Shakespeare was “particularly prevalent in times of political strife, especially during the Exclusion Crisis, and was a necessity for performance of those adaptations with a political argument” (Marsden 21).

¹³ Adaptations were common for almost a hundred years. Between 1660 and 1770 more than “50 adaptations appeared in print and on the stage, works in which playwrights augmented, substantially cut, or completely rewrote the original plays. The plays were staged with new characters, new scenes, new endings, and new words” (Marsden 1). Part of the reason for Tate’s adaptation may be because, from 1681 until 1838, Shakespeare’s *Lear* was not acted because the political climate was too sensitive, so the *Lear* of Tate was staged instead.

¹⁴ This song would, ironically, retain the music but the title would become *The American Liberty Song* and the lyrics would symbolise American independence from Britain (see Chapter two for more details).

¹⁵ Another gallery that focused upon Shakespeare was Retzsch’s Shakespeare Gallery that began publishing in 1828. It terminated in 1847 but was as famous, in its day, as Boydell’s gallery (Vaughan 175). See *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery*, edited by Walter Pape and Frederick Burwick for a much more indepth analysis of the gallery.

¹⁶ In *the Riverside Shakespeare* edited by G. Blakemore Evans, Henry IV’s surname is spelled this way. I will use Evans’s edition throughout this dissertation and will refer to plays by name, act, scene and line number and to *The Rape of Lucrece* by line number only.

¹⁷ For a complete list of sets of Shakespeare across the period, see Jaggard’s *Shakespeare Bibliography*, printed at Stratford in 1911.

¹⁸ Sir Thomas Hanmer was known as the Oxford editor, but Jacob Tonson and his associates considered themselves owners of the rights to Shakespeare. While Oxford University published Hanmer’s edition with illustrations that he commissioned and paid for, there was a query as to whether or not Oxford or Hanmer owned them (for a more detailed description of this problem, see Bernice Kliman’s “Samuel Johnson and Tonson’s 1745 Shakespeare.”

¹⁹ Janet Warner, in her book *Blake and the Language of Art*, argues that Blake may have known Bulwer’s *Chirologia*, a book published in 1644, “devoted exclusively to gesticulation and first to explain the execution of certain gestures by means of chirograms which picture the positions of the hands and fingers” (46). She notes, moreover, that hand gestures were described in instruction manuals for actors and orators (49). These bodily gestures were categorised in the eighteenth century.

²⁰ Joseph Thomas commissioned this illustration from Blake for his copy of the second folio of Shakespeare’s plays. The inspiration for the picture comes from *1 Henry IV* 4.1.107-110, where Sir Richard Vernon at the Battle of Shrewsbury comments on the sudden transformation of Prince Hal into a soldier who

vaulted with such ease into his seat
As if an angel [dropp’d] down from the clouds
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus

And witch the world with noble horsemanship.

Prince Hal's transformation on the battlefield not only confirms his military prowess, but his intellectual prowess as well. The illustration's suggestion of the "dawn of a new day" and Pegasus's reaction in the picture space suggest rebirth, regeneration and the male figure's stance suggests final acceptance of his future role as King of England.

²¹ In a letter to William Hayley on February 23, 1804 Blake writes "I have inclosed for you the <22> Numbers of Fuselis Shakespeare that are out" (Erdman *Complete*, 742).

²² De Louthembourg did topographical paintings and aquatint illustrations but also worked for Bell's Shakespeare edition. He drew the figures and Bartolozzi engraved them.

²³ Prior to Garrick's appearance on the stage, a collaboration "occurred on an extension of the stage known as the forestage, the apron, or the playform while the stage curtain and the stage proper remained behind the actors as the play unfolded" (Hazelton 19).

²⁴ For an excellent, detailed examination of *ut pictura poesis*, see Rensselaer W. Lee's article "*Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting*." M.H. Abrams, in *The Mirror and the Lamp*, notes that *ut pictura poesis*, almost dissipates completely in the nineteenth century: "the comparisons between poetry and painting that survive are casual, or, as in the instance of the mirror, show the canvas reversed in order to image the inner substance of the poet. In place of painting, music becomes the art frequently pointed to as having a profound affinity with poetry" (50).

²⁵ See Chapter 4 on *The French Revolution* for a detailed examination of this poem in relation to Shakespeare's histories and tragedies.

²⁶ Mellor reminds us that Blake's knowledge of Michelangelo may stem from drawings at Windsor Castle and the copies, engravings and casts available in London at the time. Mellor emphasises that "It is more than likely that Blake never saw an original Michelangelo work and knew even the Windsor Castle drawings only secondhand, in copies. When we examine the engravings Blake is most likely to have found in the Library of the Royal Academy, where we know he studied the prints of Michelangelo, and elsewhere, three important facts emerge" (*Blake's Human*, 129). Most importantly, evidence suggests that Blake may have seen a two-dimensional world where a three-dimensional one existed because of the effacement of subtle *chiaroscuro*, lighting effects and plastic modelling (Mellor *Blake's Human*, 130).

²⁷ The following is a list of some of Blake's works of Shakespeare plays: *Oberon and Titania*; *Lear and Cordelia*; *Jaques and the Wounded Stag*; *Richard the Third and the Ghosts*; *Oberon, Titania, Puck and the Fairies*; Two Versions of *Queen Katherine's Dream*; *Pitty Like a Naked Newborn Babe*; *The Triple Hecate*; *Brutus and the Ghost of Caesar* from an extra-illustrated Second Folio; Fuseli's Illustrations for Rivington's Edition, 1805, engraved by Blake: *Queen Katherine's Dream*, *Romeo and the Apothecary*.

²⁸ David L. Clark, in "How to do Things with Shakespeare: Illustrative Theory and Practice in Blake's *Pitty*," argues contrary to Heppner. For Clark, Macbeth's similes are "set up as alternate, contiguous illustrations of the same thing: pity is *either* like a "naked new-born babe" or like "heav'ns cherubin" (116). The either/or relationship in the painting suggests that "the naked babe ascends purposefully above a supine woman and into the outstretched arms of a distracted cherub" (116). The "form of contact" is established in the painting by the picture space and the "ambiguous form of contact" suggested in the placement of the figures within the picture.

²⁹ Christopher Heppner argues that *sightless* means "*invisible* (from Johnson's edition of the play). *Courier* connotes runner. *Couriers of air* are winds, air in motion." He further states that Blake "visualised the phrase 'hors'd / Upon the sightless couriers of the air' in the concrete form suggested by Warburton, and then had no option but to interpret *sightless* as meaning *blind*, rather than *invisible* as Johnson ... suggested" (113-14).

³⁰ This painting is now labelled “The Night of Enitharmon’s Joy.” Gert Schiff connected the image with the words on Plate 7 of *Europe*. The central figure is supposedly Enitharmon, and her glance towards the girl in the picture space signifies that she will be the instrument for woman’s ‘dominion’ over man. I, however, attribute the painting as a symbolic representation of lines from *Macbeth*.

³¹ See Chapter 3.

³² See later chapters.

³³ This picture is from www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page66.asp.

³⁴ A play written in 1596 entitled *The Raigne of King Edward the Third*^d has often been attributed to Shakespeare. As Margaret Lowery notes, it was one of the fourteen plays in the “Shakespeare Apocrypha” (110). It was first included in an edition of Shakespeare by J. Payne Collier in 1878. It had been ascribed to Shakespeare by E. Capell “when, on the title-page of his *Prolusions*, he listed the play as ‘thought to be writ by Shakespeare’” (Lowery 110). *Prolusions* appeared at a time in which Blake may have had access for a ten to fifteen year period. *The Raigne*, while it may be Shakespeare’s, is very different from Blake’s. The first third of the play examines the relationship between Edward III and a Countess. Edward wishes to have a liaison with her and asks her father to approach his daughter. Edward wants the countess, who is married, to be his mistress. The father promotes Edward to her and outlines the benefits of such a role.

³⁵ A *chevauchée* was smaller than a full invasion force. It was also safer since the purpose of a *chevauchée* was to create havoc, not engage in battle.

³⁶ Now of the conqueror this isle had Brutain unto name,
And with his Trojans Brut began manurage of the same.
For razed Troy to rear a Troy, fit place he searched then,
And views the mounting northern parts. (Warner *Albion’s England*, 1-4).

³⁷ This painting is from Winnifred Friedman’s book *Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976.

³⁸ GE Bentley Jr. calls Blake’s drawings illuminated works because he believes Blake’s designs rarely illustrate a work.

³⁹ Another source is certainly the *Oedipus* trilogy, if it can be labelled such. Difficulty arises when the plays are discussed because they were produced at different times: *Antigone*, 441 BC; *Oedipus the King*, fourteen or fifteen years later; *Oedipus at Colonus*, 405 BC. The fact that the plays were not produced in sequential order suggests that each play begins *in medias res* as does Shakespeare’s *King Lear* or Blake’s *Tiriel*.

⁴⁰ John Clarke, in his book *The Life and Times of George III*, argues that George III was not suffering from madness but porphyria, a “rare disturbance of porphyrin metabolism” (144). Clarke acknowledges that this disease was not “understood until the 1930s” (144); therefore, George III’s madness, whether fact or misdiagnosis, is moot within an eighteenth century context since medical professionals at the time were unaware of such a condition. Willis diagnosed him as suffering from madness and treated him accordingly. George III’s behaviour in the public arena, Dr. Francis Willis’s appointment—a man who “kept a private lunatic asylum” (138)—and the King’s own belief in his impending insanity suggests that King George was insane. Clarke notes that the King even said “he would prefer death to insanity” (135).

⁴¹ In Sophocles’ works, *Antigone*, *Oedipus the King*, and *Oedipus at Colonus* respectively, the reader begins *in medias res* because the plays “were not conceived and executed at the same time and with a single purpose” (Greene 1). *Antigone*, the final play in the trilogy, if a trilogy it is, was the first written. It begins with Eteocles and Oedipus already dead, so that the primary dilemma in the play shifts to Antigone. Sophocles focuses upon her decision to bury Polyneices against the wishes of her uncle, Creon. Her

judgement, like her father's, begins a series of events that will inevitably cause her destruction but she knows the outcome of her actions whereas her father unknowingly condemns himself to a life of misery.

⁴² The importance of the staff and begging are best evident when juxtaposed with Teiresias's prophecy to Oedipus:

blindness for sight
and beggary for riches his exchange,
he shall go journeying to a foreign country
tapping his way before him with a stick
(Greene *Oedipus the King*, 454-457).

⁴³ Sheila Spector provides an interesting reading of Blake's text. She interprets Blake's poem as a "negative response to Spenser's *Legende of the Knight of the Red Crosse, or of Holinesse*" and that the "language of *Tiriel* is an attempt to return to Adamic origins by coordinating the Hebrew and English languages" (315). For my purposes, Sheila Spector's etymological definition is interesting within the context I place it because it parallels the pastoral scene and language of the text.

⁴⁴ This picture is taken from www.historywiz.com/bastille.htm

⁴⁵ Joseph Johnson also published the *Analytical Review*, a radical monthly. In late 1790 and early in 1791, Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* was discussed extensively. The *Review* tended to support Paine's views, particularly on the despotism of the English system.

⁴⁶ A radical may be defined as someone who followed the principles of what Robert Palmer terms the "democratic revolution" (Lottes 79). In England, the Glorious Revolution removed any questions regarding sovereignty, while in France, sovereignty was the central issue during the French Revolution. The sovereign was an absolute monarch; however, the Abbe de Sieyes's questioning of the Third Estate created a new form of sovereignty—legal titles became civil rights (Lottes 86).

⁴⁷ Jacob Bronowski, in his book *William Blake and the Age of Revolution* provides a Marxist interpretation of the poem, while Ronald Paulson (*Representations of Revolution*), James Heffernan (*Representing the French Revolution*), E.P. Thompson (*The Making of the English Working Class*), and Alison Yarrington (*Reflections of Revolution*) provide interesting studies of the French Revolution itself, Blake's poem and how events were represented in the literature and art of the day.

⁴⁸ Ib Johansen also examines the rhetoric inherent in the discourse of the French Revolution but focuses upon the antagonism inherent in *The French Revolution*. The poem "attempts to bring about a reconciliation between its antagonistic 'order' or classes" (56) through imagery and the "phantasmatic" (59). This reconciliation however is one in which all members are silenced: The tyrannous *ancien régime* and the people.

⁴⁹ H. Summerfield also proposes a biblical reading of *The French Revolution*; however, he argues that Blake dismisses the "legalistic and authoritarian" aspect of the Old Testament while retaining its prophetic element (29). In the remainder of his article, "Blake's *The French Revolution* and the Bible," Summerfield undertakes to show a dual God—one present in both the New and Old Testament—in Blake's poem. Stephen Prickett, in *England and the French Revolution*, like Halloran, examines the Biblical element in Blake's poem but does not read the text as a dramatic epic; rather, he reads it as a prophetic poem.

⁵⁰ Caricaturists also used *Henry IV* and *Henry V* as the basis for their work because Hal symbolised the prodigal son who metamorphoses into the soldier and people's king when he is needed most. The Prince of Wales's private life and conduct was continuously scrutinised by George III and under constant ridicule by caricaturists. His life complemented Shakespeare's Prince Hal, only caricaturists focused upon the Prince's mischievous ways and his lack of desire to transform into the Prince the people desired. Blake must have been aware of this connection, since he also alludes to the *Henriad* plays in *The French Revolution*. He will use the French Henry and his association with war and *hubris* to invoke images of Shakespeare's Hal.

-
- ⁵¹ One such person was Cruikshank, as is evident in his print entitled, *False Liberty Rejected*.
- ⁵² De Launay, unlike the King, is a very active figure in the poem. Throughout *The French Revolution*, the *ancien régime* is defined as breathing “power and dominion” (21) over the prisoners, and the Governor becomes consumed with the “purple plague” (24)—the indecision and passivity of the King. His indecision to respond to the people suggests that the “purple plague” tugs at his “iron manacles” (25), and he becomes a prisoner of the garrison he operates.
- ⁵³ In order to distinguish between the French and English Kings of the same name, I have used the French spelling of the name that corresponds to how it would have been spelled at the time.
- ⁵⁴ This picture was borrowed from http://www.artchive.com/artchive/T/titian/titian_lucretia.jpg.html
- ⁵⁵ This illustration is from Parkhurst, Kay and Easson Roger, eds. *Milton*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1973.
- ⁵⁶ Betsy Bolton, in her article “A Garment dipped in blood”, examines Ololon and the problems of gender in Blake’s poem. In particular, she notes how Ololon’s description of Milton in Book 2 is allocated five lines, while the description of Milton’s Shadow occupies 79 lines of verse (66). In essence, then, Ololon seems almost silenced, yet her descent to Milton is a prerequisite for his redemption. Anne Mellor also presents a feminist reading of Blake’s poem in her book *Romanticism and Gender*.
- ⁵⁷ See Marc Kaplan’s article “Blake’s *Milton*: The Metaphysics of Gender” in which he argues that Blake presents, in *Milton*, “a masculinist model of gender” which is the “foundation stone, the ground upon which Blake seeks to moor his visionary cosmos” (153).
- ⁵⁸ Jennifer Keith’s article “The Feet of Salvation in Blake’s *Milton*” and Florence Sandler’s “The Iconoclastic Enterprise: Blake’s Critique of Milton’s Religion” explore the biblical elements in Blake’s poem.
- ⁵⁹ In *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, Erdman proposes that *Milton* is a Blakean epic. He suggests that Blake’s original inclusion of “12” within the titlepage to *Milton* and not 2 “automatically implies that there are 10 missing books and that they were “a visionary account of the English Revolution” (423). He fails to consider that perhaps Blake’s removal of the number was deliberate—to halt any attempt to unify Milton’s work with his own—since Blake’s poem is a response to *Paradise Lost* and not necessarily an epic tale of the English Revolution. Blake does, after all, respond to contemporary historical events in his earlier works and seems to retain that strategy in his later prophetic works as well.
- ⁶⁰ In an excellent article, “Recent Reconstructions of Blake’s *Milton* and *Milton: A Poem*,” Mary Lynn Johnson provides an extensive critique of both Fox’s and Wittreich’s books on Blake’s poem. She summarises their two viewpoints and then addresses the problems inherent in both texts. While she does not provide any new insight into the poem, she does provide a ten-page book review that is quite useful for *Milton* critics.
- ⁶¹ All citations to Wordsworth’s poems or *Biographia Literaria* will be from David Perkins’s text *The English Romantic Writers*.
- ⁶² Joseph Wittreich, in his book *The Romantics on Milton*, argues, “the Romantics’ love for Milton deepened into a kind of veneration that they had for no other poet. As a hero, Milton cut across and subsumed all areas of human experience; he was the quintessence of everything the Romantics most admired. A rebel, a republican, an iconoclast, a mighty poet, a lofty thinker, Milton was an exemplar of noble, though not flawless, character” (11). However, I wish to argue that the Romantics also see Shakespeare with similar veneration. In fact, Milton and Shakespeare occupy complementary peaks on the “poetic mountain”, each with his own contributions, each vital to English poetry. Wittreich continues, “To

be sure, Shakespeare provided the Romantics with their concepts of poetic objectivity and negative capability, with their idea of the poet as a Proteus. But it was Milton in whom they found ideas resembling their own” (13). I am not sure, however, that the same can be said for Blake. Blake certainly immersed himself in Milton’s *corpus*, even painting illustrations to *Paradise Lost*, but *Milton* becomes, for Blake, a poem in which Milton’s error is identified and addressed through Shakespeare’s visionary *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and tragic *King Lear*, with *Paradise Lost* as the underlying foundation to the text but Shakespeare’s dramas as the symbolic, visionary catalyst for the poem.

⁶³ Perhaps Bate best summarises Keats’s term:

Our life is filled with change, uncertainties, mysteries; no one complete system of rigid categories will explain it fully. We can grasp and understand the elusive flux of life only by being imaginatively open-minded, sympathetic, receptive—by extending every possible feeler that we may have potentially in us. But we can achieve this active awareness only by negating our own egos. We must not only rise above our own vanity and prejudices, but resist the temptation to make up our minds on everything, and to have always ready a neat answer. ... A great poet is less concerned with himself, and has his eyes on what is without (361n).

⁶⁴ All citations from *Paradise Lost* will be from Shawcross’s edition.

⁶⁵ *As You Like It* 2.7.140.

⁶⁶ http://www.hughlane.ie/fb_studio/furniture_blake.html

WORKS CITED

- Abrams, M.H. *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*.
New York: Oxford UP, 1953.
- Allman, Eileen Jorge. *Player-King and Adversary: Two Faces of Play in Shakespeare*.
Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1980.
- Analytical Review* 12 (March 1792): 302.
- Andrews, Allen. *The King Who Lost America*. London: Jupiter Books Limited, 1976.
- Ashton, Geoffrey. *Shakespeare and British Art*. New Haven: Yale Center for British Art,
1981.
- Bate, Jonathan, ed. *Shakespeare: An Illustrated Stage History*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996.
- . *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.
- . *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830*. Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Beer, John. *Blake's Visionary Universe*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1969.
- Behrendt, Stephen C. *The Moment of Explosion: Blake and the Illustration of Milton*.
Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1983.
- . "'The Worst Disease': Blake's *Tiriel*." *Colby Library Quarterly* 15 (1979): 175
-187.
- Bentley Jr., G.E. *Blake Records*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- . *William Blake Tiriel*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.
- Billington, Sandra. *Mock Kings in Medieval Society and Renaissance Drama*. Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Bindman, David. *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution*.

- London: British Museum Publishers, 1989.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.
- Boase, T.R. "Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 10 (1947): 83-108.
- Bolton, Betsy. "A Garment Dipped in Blood': Ololon and Problems of Gender in Blake's *Milton*." *Studies in Romanticism* 36.1 (1997): 61-101.
- Bowers, A. Robin. "Emblem and Rape in Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus*." *Studies in Iconography* 10 (1984-1986): 79-96.
- Bronowski, J. *William Blake and the Age of Revolution*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965.
- Bryson, Norman. "Two Narratives of Rape in the Visual Arts: Lucretia and the Sabine Women." *Rape*. Ed. Sylvana Tomaselli and Ray Porter. London: Basil Blackwell, 1985. 152-177.
- Burnim, Kalman A. *David Garrick: Director*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1973.
- Burwick, Frederick. "Shakespeare and the Romantics." *A Companion to Romanticism*. Ed. Duncan Wu. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999. 512-519.
- Cannon-Brookes, Peter, ed. *The Painted Word: British History Painting 1750-1830*. London: Helm, 1991.
- Chayes, Irene H. "Between Reynolds and Blake: Eclecticism and Expression in Fuseli's Shakespeare Frescoes." *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities* 85 (1982): 140-168.
- Clark, Anna. *Women's Silence Men's Violence: Sexual Assault in England 1770-1845*. London: Pandora, 1987.

- Clark, David L. "How to do Things with Shakespeare: Illustrative Theory and Practice in Blake's *Pity*." *The Mind in Creation*. Ed. J. Douglas Kneale. Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1992. 106-133.
- Clarke, John. *The Life and Times of George III*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972.
- Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1992.
- Conway, Stephen. "Britain and the Revolutionary Crisis, 1763-1791." *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. Vol. 2. *The Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. 325-346.
- . *The War of American Independence 1775-1783*. London: Edward Arnold, 1995.
- Davidson, Philip. *Propaganda and the American Revolution 1763-1783*. Chapel Hill: The U of North Carolina P, 1941.
- DiSalvo, Jackie. "Blake Encountering Milton: Politics and the Family in *Paradise Lost* and *The Four Zoas*." *Milton and the Line of Vision*. Ed. Joseph Anthony Wittreich. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1975. 143-84.
- Dobson, Michael. *The Making of the National Poet*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Dramatic Character Plates for Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays 1775-1776*. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969.
- Dundas, Judith. "Mocking the Mind: The Role of Art in Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 14.1 (Spring 1983): 13-22.
- Ehrstine, John W. "William Blake's *King Edward the Third*." *Research Studies* 36 (1968): 151-62.
- Emsley, Clive. "Revolution, War and the Nation State: The British and Foreign Experiences 1789-1801." *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*. Ed. Mark Philip. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

- Erdman, David. *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1977.
- . *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*. New York: Anchor Books, 1988.
- Esterhammer, Angela. *Creating States: Studies in the Performative Language of John Milton and William Blake*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1994.
- Evans, G. Blakemore. *The Riverside Shakespeare*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974.
- Feitelberg, Doreen. "The Theme of Love and Wooing and the Consequences of Seduction in Shakespeare's Poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece." *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* 7 (1994): 51-60.
- Fox, Susan. "The Female as Metaphor in William Blake's Poetry." *Critical Inquiry* 3 (Spring 1977): 507-519.
- . *Poetic Form in Blake's Milton*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976.
- Franklin, Colin. "Print and Design in Eighteenth-Century Editions of Shakespeare." *The Book Collector* 43.4 (Winter 1994): 517-528.
- Friedman, Winnifred. *Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976.
- Fuller, David. "The Translation of Vision: Reading Blake's *Tiriel*." *Durham University Journal* 75.1 (December 1982): 29-36.
- Gleckner, Robert F. "Tiriel and the State of Experience." *The Piper & the Bard*. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1959. 131-156.
- Godechot, Jacques. *The Taking of the Bastille*. Trans. Jean Stewart. London: Faber and Faber, 1970.

- Goslee, Nancy Moore. "Slavery and Sexual Character: Questioning the Master Trope in Blake's *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*." *English Literary History* 57.1 (Spring 1990): 101-128.
- Greene, Jack P. "Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution." *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. Vol. 2. *The Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. 208-230.
- Greene, David and Lattimore, Richard, eds. *Sophocles I*. Trans. David Grene, Robert Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Wyckoff. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1954.
- Hagstrum, Jean. "Babylon Revisited, or the Story of Luvah and Vala." *William Blake*. Ed. David Punter. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996. 36-53.
- . *William Blake: Poet and Painter*. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1964.
- Halloran, William F. "The French Revolution: Revelation's New Form." *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*. Ed. David V. Erdman and John E. Grant. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970. 30-56.
- Harris, Arthur John. "Garrick, Colman, and *King Lear*: A Reconsideration." *Shakespeare: The Critical Complex*. Eds. Stephen Orgel and Sean Keilen. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999. 213-222.
- Hart, Jonathan. "Narratorial Strategies in *The Rape of Lucrece*." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 30.1 (Winter 1992): 59-77.
- Hazelton, Nancy. *Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century Shakespearean Staging*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987.
- Heffernan, James A.W. "Blake's Oothoon: The Dilemmas of Marginality." *Studies In Romanticism* 30 (Spring 1991): 3-18.
- , ed. *Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography and Art*.

- Hanover: University Press of New England, 1992.
- Heppner, Christopher. *Reading Blake's Designs*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.
- Hibbert, Christopher. *George III: A Personal History*. London: Viking, 1998.
- Hogan, C.B.. *The London Stage 1660-1800*. Part 5: 1776-1800. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1968.
- Johansen, Ib. "The Fires of Orc: William Blake and the Rhetoric of Revolutionary Discourse." *The Impact of the French Revolution on English Literature*. Ed. Anders Iversen. Aarhus: Aarhus UP, 1990. 43-75.
- Johnson, Mary Lynn. "Recent Reconstructions of Blake's Milton and *Milton: A Poem*." *Milton and the Romantics* 2 (1976): 1-10.
- Kahn, Coppélia. "The Rape in Shakespeare's Lucrece." *Shakespeare Studies* 9 (1976): 45-72.
- Kaplan, Marc. "Blake's *Milton*: The Metaphysics of Gender." *Nineteenth Century Contexts* 19.2 (1995): 151-178.
- Keith, Jennifer. "The Feet of Salvation in Blake's *Milton*." *Bulletin de la Société d'études Anglo-Américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles* 41 (1995): 51-67.
- Kendall, Alan. *David Garrick: A Biography*. London: Harrap, 1985.
- Kliman, Bernice W. "Samuel Johnson and Tonson's 1745 Shakespeare: Warburton, Anonymity, and the Shakespeare Wars." *Reading Readings*. Ed. Joanna Gondris. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1998. 299-317.
- Lattin, Vernon E. "Blake's Thel and Oothoon: Sexual Awakening in the Eighteenth Century." *Literary Criterion* 16.1 (1981): 11-24.
- Lee, Rensselaer W. "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting." *The Art Bulletin* 22.4 (December 1940): 197-269.

- Lloyd, Alan. *The King Who Lost America*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971.
- Lottes, Gunther. "Radicalism, Revolution, and Political Culture: An Anglo-French Comparison." *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*. Ed. Mark Philip. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.
- Lowery, Margaret Ruth. "Edward the Third." *Windows of the Morning: A Critical Study of William Blake's Poetical Sketches, 1783*. New Haven: Archon Books, 1970.
- Maguire, Nancy Klein. "Nahum Tate's *King Lear*: 'the king's blest restoration.'" *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*. Ed. Jean I. Marsden. New York: Harvester Whitesheaf, 1991. 29-42.
- Marsden, Jean I. *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation & Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory*. Lexington: The UP of Kentucky, 1995.
- Mee, Jon. *Dangerous Enthusiasm: William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Mellor, Anne K. *Blake's Human Form Divine*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1974.
- . *Romanticism and Gender*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- . "Sex, Violence, and Slavery." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 58.3 345-370.
- Merchant, Moelwyn. "Blake's Shakespeare." *Apollo* 79 (April 1964): 318-25.
- . *Shakespeare and the Artist*. London: Oxford UP, 1959.
- Miller, Ronald F. "A *Midsummer Night's Dream*: The Fairies, Bottom and the Mystery of Things." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26.3 (Summer 1975): 254-268.
- Mitchell, W.J.T. *Blake's Composite Art*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978.

- Moody, Jane. "Writing for the Metropolis: Illegitimate Performances of Shakespeare in Early Nineteenth-Century London." *Shakespeare: The Critical Complex*. Eds. Stephen Orgel and Sean Keilen. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999. 223-231.
- Newlyn, Lucy. *Paradise Lost and the Romantic Reader*. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1993.
- Odell, George C.D. *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*. Vols. 1-2. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.
- O'Gorman, Frank. *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political & Social History 1688-1832*. London: Arnold, 1997.
- Ostrom, Hans. "Blake's *Tiriel* and the Dramatization of Collapsed Language." *Papers on Language and Literature: A Journal for Scholars and Critics of Language and Literature* 19.2 (Spring 1983): 167-182.
- Parkhurst, Kay, and Easson, Roger R., eds. *Milton*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1973.
- Paulson, Ronald. *Book and Painting: Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible*. Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1982.
- . *Representations of Revolution (1789-1820)*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1983.
- Pedicord, Harry William. *The Theatrical Public in the Time of Garrick*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois P, 1954.
- Perkins, David, ed. *English Romantic Writers*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1967.
- Porter, Roy. "Rape—Does it have a historical meaning?" *Rape*. Ed. Sylvana Tomaselli and Ray Porter. London: Basil Blackwell, 1985. 216-236.
- Price, Jacob M. "The Imperial Economy, 1700-1776." *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. Ed. P.J. Marshall. Vol. 2. *The Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. 78-104.

- Prickett, Stephen. *England and the French Revolution*. London: Macmillan, 1989.
- The Raigne of King Edward the Third*. London: Cuthbert Burby, 1596.
- Raine, Kathleen. "Some Sources of *Tiriel*." *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 21.1 (November 1957): 1-36.
- . "*Tiriel*." *Blake and Tradition*. Vol. 1. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969. 34-68.
- Rajan, Tilottama. "Engendering the System: *The Book of Thel* and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*." *The Mind in Creation: Essays on English Romantic Literature in Honour of Ross G. Woodman*. Ed. J. Douglas Kneale. Quebec: McGill-Queen's UP, 1992. 74-90.
- Rudé, George. *Paris and London in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: The Viking Press, 1970.
- Sandler, Florence. "The Iconoclastic Enterprise: Blake's Critique of Milton's Religion." *Blake Studies* 5.1 (1972): 13-57.
- Schama, Simon. *A History of Britain*. Vol. 2. *The Wars of the British 1603-1776*. New York: Hyperion, 2001.
- . *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990.
- Seary, Peter. *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- Shawcross, John T., ed. *Paradise Lost. The Complete Poetry of John Milton*. New York: Doubleday, 1971. 249-518.
- Shepherd, James F. "British America and the Atlantic Economy." *The Economy of Early America: The Revolutionary Period, 1763-1790*. Eds. Ronald Hoffman, et al. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1988. 3-44.

- Small, Ian. "Introduction." *The French Revolution and British Culture*. Eds. Ceri Crossley and Ian Small. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989.
- Smith, D. Nichol, ed. *Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.
- Spector, Sheila. "Tiriell as Spenserian Allegory Manque." *Philological Quarterly* 71.3 (Summer 1992): 313-335.
- Stone Jr., George Winchester. *David Garrick: A Critical Biography*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1979.
- Storch, Margaret. "The 'Spectrous Fiend' Cast Out: Blake's Crisis at Felpham." *Modern Language Quarterly* 44.2 (June 1983): 115-135.
- Summerfield, H. "Blake's *The French Revolution* and the Bible." *University of Dayton Review* 17.3 (1986): 29-39.
- The Times London*. Friday, June 17, 1779. Number 1182.
- . Monday, July 13, 1779. Number 1202.
- . Thursday, July 23, 1789. Number 1212.
- . Tuesday, April 5, 1803. No. 5678.
- . Saturday, August 25, 1804. No. 6109.
- Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1963.
- Vaughan, W.H.T. "Shakespeare Compared: Boydell and Retzsch." *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery*. Eds. Walter Pape and Frederick Burwick. Bottrop: Peter Pomp, 1996. 175-86.
- Waith, Eugene, M., ed. *Titus Andronicus*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.
- Walder, Ernest. *Shaksperoam Criticism: Textual and Literary from Dryden to the end of*

- the Eighteenth Century*. Kirkgate: Thomas Brear & Co., Limited, 1895.
- Walsh, Marcus. *Shakespeare, Milton and eighteenth-century literary editing*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Warner. *Albion's England. The Renaissance in England*. Ed. Hyder E. Rollins and Herschel Baker. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1954. 10-12.
- Warner, Janet A. *Blake and the Language of Art*. Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1984.
- Waugh, Scott L. *England in the Reign of Edward III*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.
- Webb, Timothy. "The Romantic Poet and the Stage: A Short, Sad History." *The Romantic Theatre: An International Symposium*. New Jersey: Barnes and Noble, 1986.
- Wells, Stanley, ed. *Shakespeare in the Theatre: An Anthology of Criticism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997
- Wilson, R, Rawdon. "Shakespearean Narrative: *The Rape of Lucrece* Reconsidered." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 28.1 (Winter 1988): 39-59.
- Wittreich Jr., Joseph Anthony. *The Romantics on Milton*. Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University, 1970.
- Woodcock, George. "The Meaning of Revolution in Britain." *The French Revolution and British Culture*. Eds. Ceri Crossley and Ian Small. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989. 1-14.
- Yarrington, Alison, ed. *Reflections of Revolution: Images of Romanticism*. London: Routledge, 1993.

