

1989

Los And The Science Of The Elohim

John Michael Smith

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/digitizedtheses>

Recommended Citation

Smith, John Michael, "Los And The Science Of The Elohim" (1989). *Digitized Theses*. 1825.
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/digitizedtheses/1825>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Digitized Special Collections at Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digitized Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact tadam@uwo.ca, wlsadmin@uwo.ca.



**National Library
of Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

**Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4**

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

LOS AND THE SCIENCE OF THE ELOHIM

by

John Michael Smith

Department of English

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
August 1989

© John Michael Smith 1989



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-51752-2

Canada

ABSTRACT

This study re-examines what have been commonplace propositions for Blake criticism: that Los is Blake's chief symbol for the activity of imagination in the prophecies; that the theme of Los's labours, his attempt in Golgonooza to practise "the Science of the Elohim," serves as a focus for Blake's critique of, and alternative to, the science of "Bacon, Newton and Locke"; and that Blake's opposition to the latter stems from his rejection of its "Cartesian" foundation, its dualism of mind and body, subjective and objective realms. This study begins by attempting to show that, while we have agreed to place Los at the centre of Blake's anti-Cartesian argument, we have approached and expounded this argument with a critical discourse that is shaped by, and, however unwittingly, promulgates the dualism of mind or imagination and nature. Whether we say, with Northrop Frye, that nature for Blake is sub-moral, subhuman, sub-imaginative; or whether we say, with Tilotoma Rajan, that Blake is naive because he refuses to accept that imagination lacks the substantiality of things; we are attributing to Blake the idea of an imagination-nature opposition, and interpreting his argument in terms consistent with the assumptions of Cartesian discourse. The formal assumption of Los's Science of the Elohim, this study contends, is Blake's claim that "Nature is Imagination itself." As a critique of Descartes or Newton, this claim (I will attempt to show) is consistent with Werner Heisenberg's thesis that the nature itself or objective reality posited by Cartesian

science is not an object of knowledge for contemporary physics. The theme of Los's Elohistical labours in Golgonooza to separate Ulro from Generation articulates Blake's distinction between the Cartesian concept of nature as a reality external to imagination (a reality unknown and unknowable, Blake argues, except as the product of the idolatrous act which posits it), and nature understood as a Vision of the Science of the Elohim, the World of Generation, which consists of the "mundane" order of things and appearances we perceive and know, and of the "vegetative" functions which express and sustain our capacity to "live upon Earth."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to my advisors, Professor Richard Shroyer and Professor Ross Woodman, for their useful advice, considerable patience, and timely encouragement throughout the course of this project.

My brother, David Smith, gave freely and generously of his time to supervise completely the word-processing and editing of this text. I would also like to thank Andrea Friedman for her help with the word-processing. Computer facilities were provided by the Department of Anthropology at The University of Western Ontario.

My parents, John and Carolyn Smith, have offered encouragement and support at all times.

Finally, and especially, I would like to express my gratitude to my wife, Carol Gardiner, for her patience and support throughout.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION: A SUM OF HUMAN RELATIONS	1
Part 1 - Los, Imagination, Nature	1
Part 2 - The Cloven Fiction	11
Part 3 - The Consensus	20
Part 4 - Desires of the Mind and the Nature of Things	31
Part 5 - An Alternative	36
Notes	43
CHAPTER TWO - THE BUILDING OF NATURAL RELIGION	50
Section A - Originating Error	50
Part 1 - Imagination and Error	50
Part 2 - Before Error: "in Eternity"	53
Part 3 - Into Error: the selfhood	59
Section B - Error as Truth	62
Part 1 - Priesthood	62
Part 2 - Abstract Philosophy	64
Part 3 - Bacon, Newton and Locke	70
Notes	95
CHAPTER THREE - SCIENCE	97
Section A - Cartesian Science	97
Part 1 - The Other and the Gap	97
Part 2 - Induction, Speculation, and Observed Facts	113
Section B - Blakean Science - "for Jerusalem's sake"	127
Part 1 - The Being of the Phenomenon	127
Part 2 - Imagination Appears	136
Notes	148
CHAPTER FOUR - THE LABOURS OF LOS	154
Part 1 - Introduction	154
Part 2 - Los in Lambeth	163
Part 3 - Ulro and Generation: separating, mixing, interpreting	168
Part 4 - The World of Generation	180
Part 5 - A Murderer of Its Own Body	191
Part 6 - This Newtonian Phantasm	199
Part 7 - The Sleep of Ulro	206
Part 8 - Subduing the Spectre	216
Part 9 - Building Golgonooza	228
Part 10 - The Gate of Los	245
Notes	253
BIBLIOGRAPHY	257
VITA	262

The author of this thesis has granted The University of Western Ontario a non-exclusive license to reproduce and distribute copies of this thesis to users of Western Libraries. Copyright remains with the author.

Electronic theses and dissertations available in The University of Western Ontario's institutional repository (Scholarship@Western) are solely for the purpose of private study and research. They may not be copied or reproduced, except as permitted by copyright laws, without written authority of the copyright owner. Any commercial use or publication is strictly prohibited.

The original copyright license attesting to these terms and signed by the author of this thesis may be found in the original print version of the thesis, held by Western Libraries.

The thesis approval page signed by the examining committee may also be found in the original print version of the thesis held in Western Libraries.

Please contact Western Libraries for further information:

E-mail: libadmin@uwo.ca

Telephone: (519) 661-2111 Ext. 84796

Web site: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: A SUM OF HUMAN RELATIONS

Part 1 - Los, Imagination, Nature

Blake, everyone agrees, thought of himself as a prophet of imagination; and Los, everyone agrees, is Blake's major figure or metaphor for the activity of imagination in the prophecies. Our interpretation of Los and the theme of his "eternal labours" has much to do with our understanding of what Blake means by "imagination," which is to say, of what Blake means.

Los first appears in the engraved prophecies of the late Lambeth period (1794-95). His function here is ambiguous: he is called "the Eternal Prophet," but his Lambeth labours, consisting chiefly of the binding of Urizen and Orc, culminate in "a Human Illusion."¹ This early Los is "potentially redemptive," notes Morton D. Paley, "but he is subject to error, and at times is as vicious as Urizen."² The Four Zoas manuscript, with the distinction between Los and his spectre, the building of Golgonooza and the Looms of Cathedron, and the clarification of Satan as Los's chief adversary, shows Blake determined to refine the theme of Los and his labours.

In the major prophecies, Milton and Jerusalem, Los stands out as the mainstay of defence against the "devouring" nihilism of Natural Religion. Throughout the six-thousand year period of Albion's sleep, "Los. who is of the Elohim" (J73.24) labours incessantly, "for Albions sake" (J8.17), "That Man may live upon Earth till the time of his

awaking" (M27.61). At the time of Albion's awaking Los is praised "Because he kept the Divine Vision in time of trouble" (J95.20). "[M]y business is to Create" (J10.21), Los declares, and his principal creation is "The great City of Golgonooza" (J12.46), the temporal home of the awakened imagination "in time of trouble," and the alternative to the "Building [of] Natural Religion" (J66.8). In Golgonooza, Los labours "To Create a World of Generation from the World of Death" (J58.18), "Fixing The Sexual into an ever-prolific Generation" (J73.26). The most complete description of Golgonooza appears in the first chapter of Jerusalem (12.45-13.55). The most extensive account of the "Elohistic" labours undertaken in Golgonooza appears in the final plates of Milton, I (24.44-29.65); this section concludes by identifying "the World" Los creates with "Nature" understood as "a Vision of the Science of the Elohim": "Such is the World of Los the labour of six thousand years. / Thus Nature is a Vision of the Science of the Elohim" (M29.64-65).³

While few studies have made Los their principal subject (and no study to my knowledge takes Los's Science of the Elohim as its major focus), it has long been a commonplace of Blake criticism to recognize that around "the Shadowy Prophet" are gathered many of the central issues of Blake's poetic argument. "Los's labors," as S. Foster Damon put it, "represent the development of Blake's thought."⁴ According to W. J. T. Mitchell, "Blake has Los, his alter ego, personify Time, Poetry, Prophecy, and the Imagination simultaneously."⁵ Following Fearful Symmetry, which began with Blake's theory of knowledge and invoked the principle, esse est percipi, to explain his idea of imagination, Los has been closely linked to the theme of perception,

being regarded as "the shaper of our perceptions" (Frosch), as "the act of perceiving" (Rose), and as the creator of those "imaginative constructs which give form to human perception" (Paley).⁶ The notion that what exists is relative to human perception flatly contradicts the primary assumptions of classical physics and empiricism; and the theme of Los and his labours has been considered in relation to Blake's critique of "Bacon, Newton & Locke."⁷ Underlying the theme of perception and Blake's dispute with Newtonian science is the broad issue of the relation between "imagination" and "nature." The central role of Los in critical assessments of this issue we will examine in more detail shortly.

The consensus of opinion in what W. J. T. Mitchell has called the "formalist" phase of Blake criticism has tended to confirm Northrop Frye's view that Los is "the hero of all Blake's later poems," that is, a comic hero labouring in the assurance of an eventual apocalyptic triumph over the demonic perversions of Natural Religion.⁸ A foundation of this comic perception of Los has been the differentiation of his Lambeth labours from those of the "later poems," the major prophecies. As Paley puts it in his study of the development of Blake's thought, "Blake's concept of Imagination as symbolized by Los in the Lambeth books and in Vala is different from the conception we find in The Four Zoas. According to this later idea of Imagination, elaborated in Milton and Jerusalem, Los is not merely one of four faculties but is the creator of all human realities."⁹ Los in Lambeth is a creator of sorts--indeed his labour of binding Urizen in seven "Ages" (The Book of Urizen Ch.IV[b]) appears to parody the

4

Elohistic creation of Genesis 1. But the parody is self-consuming: Los's "Creation" amounts to an "Egypt" of "devouring darkness," "shrunk up from existence" (BU28.10,3 25.39). Damon was perhaps the first to differentiate between early and later texts on the basis of a changed attitude on Blake's part toward the Elohistic creation or World of Generation: "Blake had originally considered Creation as the lowest point of the Fall; now he insists that it is the first step upward from the nadir."¹⁰ On this view, Los in Lambeth participates in or consolidates the fall from Eternity to "Egypt" or the World of Death; while in the later poems, creating a World of Generation distinct from and superior to Ulro, Los initiates the movement to repair the damage of the fall, responsibility for which is shifted from Los to Satan. According to the argument of Fearful Symmetry, in binding Urizen and Orc, Los in Lambeth produces the "Orc-cycle" of unending recurrence, where frustrated desire and bewildered reason compose the terms of fallen experience; the major prophecies show us "the struggle of Los and Satan for the body of Luvah [i.e., Orc]," where Satan attempts to perpetuate the Orc-cycle and Los creates the conditions of possibility for breaking out of it.¹¹

Following the contours of this interpretation, Susan Fox in her commentary on Milton defines the Science of the Elohim as "the science of reconstruction after catastrophe";¹² practising this science, Los reorganizes the chaos resulting from Satan's usurpation of Palamabron's station as described in the Bard's Song. In his work on Blake's response to Newton, Donald Ault defines Los's science as a "visionary transformation of the repressive form of the Newtonian world"; in his six-thousand year labours "Los recreates nature from

its state of Newtonian Ulro."¹³ For Harold Bloom, Los's recreation or reconstruction is "a guard against chaos," a defence against aeism's encroachments; this guard is an "awakened vision of nature," that is, a "vision of all nature as existent under the fatherhood of Los."¹⁴ At the definitive center of "formalist" interpretations, Northrop Frye argues that the "Vision of the Science of the Elohim" we see at the end of Milton's first book is "the vision of time and space as the home, tent or tabernacle of man," where "the whole objective world is seen as a creation of Los."¹⁵

It seems possible to identify a consensus of opinion centering on the proposition that Los, practising the Science of the Elohim, reorganizes postlapsarian chaos by creating the objective world of nature. In more recent years, however (as Blake studies perhaps begin to reflect the growing desire in criticism to favour ironic readings based on the discovery or recognition of incoherence in texts), the formalist perception of Los as heroic creator has shown signs of stress.

In an essay on Milton, W. J. T. Mitcheli has argued that Los appears not as a hero but rather as a type of Narcissus, lost in a "bemused contemplation of [his] own creation"; that Los's labours merely perpetuate the Satan-perverted "system," "rather than freeing men from it"; and that what Los's creation of nature in fact reveals is "the dilemma of the active imagination creating its own prison."¹⁶ "Critics who admire Los," notes Leopold Damrosch Jr., "sometimes exaggerate the prophet's self-righteousness, and underestimate the importance of the enslaved Spectre of externalized creation."¹⁷ The

status of Los's creation is "deeply ambiguous," argues Damrosch, for "if Los has redeemed the creation of the Elohim, on the other hand he has inevitably participated in that creation by imposing form and limit."¹⁸ Los's oeuvre "points beyond its images to the truths which they symbolize yet petrify."¹⁹ Golgonooza is "put together with allegorical rigidity," and while it "represents the best that can be done with physical materials--with material materials--in using them at all it confesses its distance from Eden."²⁰

An obvious effect of such ironic readings is to erase the distinction between the early and the later Los. An "enslaved Spectre of externalized creation" aptly describes Los in Lambeth; but for Damrosch and Mitchell, Los in the major prophecies remains a type of Victor Frankenstein, practising a science which enslaves him to his own botched creation. This raises the question of why Blake took such pains to refine the theme of Los and his labours, and why he gave this theme such a prominent place in Milton and Jerusalem. For Damrosch, this is a central manifestation of the "serious inconsistencies" and "potent contradictions [which] lie at the heart of Blake's system."²¹ For Mitchell, the phenomenon of Los "creating his own prison" confronts us with "the basic dilemma of all Blake's poetry: if we create our nature, why do we botch the job, and how do we set things right? Los has no answer."²²

It should be observed that the ironic view of Los proposed by Mitchell and Damrosch serves to highlight an ambiguity quite apparent in the formalist, comic interpretation. The latter, as we have noted, appears to attribute to Los "of the Elohim" the power to create nature or "the whole objective world." However, as every reader of Blake is

aware, it is possible to cite many passages where Blake (or Los) appears to vilify nature, to repudiate "the Outward Creation" as "the Dirt upon my feet" (VLJ E565) or as "a corporeal & ever dying Vegetation & Corruption" (J90.42). Contradicting Wordsworth, Blake declares that "Natural Objects always did & now do Weaken deaden & obliterate Imagination in Me Wordsworth must know that what he Writes Valuable is Not to be found in Nature" (Ann. to Wordsworth's Poems E665). The formalist interpretation of such passages centers around the theme of what Frye calls the "dialectical opposition between imagination and nature."²³ According to this theme, nature is what imagination is not, is opposed to and less than imagination. Wordsworth's error is to mix or confuse what should be separate, to attribute to nature attributes of imagination. The telos of Blake's thought is an apocalypse, an unveiling or clarification of confusion, a Last Judgment vision in which the terms of the "dialectic" are once and for ever separated, so that it becomes possible, as Frye puts it, "to see the physical world as Satanic rather than divine."²⁴ It is the task of the prophetic imagination--that is, the labour of Los--to create the conditions of possibility for the Last Judgment, to awaken us to the apocalyptic knowledge that, to cite Frye again, "Everything we call 'nature,' the physical world around us, is sub-moral, subhuman, sub-imaginative."²⁵

But we can ask how this theme is to be reconciled with Los's Science of the Elohim, how, on the one hand, the need to reconstruct what has become chaos can lead Los to create "the whole objective world," while on the other hand and at the same time Los must labour

to identify "the physical world around us" as Satanic. For Thomas Frosch, the world of Los as focused in Golgonooza is "potentially the point of entry to a new world"; what Los creates, his "art," is "not an end but a way."²⁶ The end is Eternity, the home of the awakened imagination, a new world. The end is not to be confused with the way because the world of Los is not liberated from nature. Los's artefacts are imaginative forms, but they are "built in nature" and therefore must be regarded as forms of "fallen art."²⁷ Los represents the eternal imagination, but he works with and "in" fallen nature. That is, the imagination-nature dialectic, as it defines the theme of Los and his labours, undermines his achievement, situating Los in an "ambivalent position" where his oeuvre is "both fundamentally opposed to all our limitations and finally subject to them."²⁸

Harold Bloom's analysis of the Vision of the Science of the Elohim discovers Los in the same "ambivalent position," for the same "dialectical" reasons. "Nature, viewed from the perspective of Los," Bloom argues, "can after all be seen as imagination itself."²⁹ However, the "perspective of Los" is defined by the imagination-nature opposition: "The other term of Blake's dialectic, the expansive imagination that phenomenal nature cannot comprehend, enters inevitably at the passage's close, to remind us that even the awakened vision of nature gives us only the rem of the imaginative garment."³⁰ Los labours to create "an awakened vision of nature," but when imagination enters Bloom's analysis we are reminded that nature cannot after all be imagination, is always less than imagination. Again, Los's oeuvre is emptied or devalued by the terms which define it: the vision of nature--because it is a vision of nature, and because nature

is sub-imaginative--can only be a composition of "constructs [which] are never to be valued for their own sakes, but constantly to be created and destroyed by the imagination."³¹

It is but a short step from Bloom's pleasant but intrinsically worthless "constructs" to Mitchell's view that Los creates his own prison; or from Frosch's "ambivalent position" to Damrosch's view of the "ambiguous and difficult status of Los's art."³² This short step involves no new interpretative principles, but only a more rigorous application of the imagination-nature opposition already present in the formalist interpretation. If imagination is good, and nature is opposed to imagination, then it follows obviously that nature is "never good in itself"; and if Los must needs build his forms "in nature," then it follows that his forms are, at best, "useless unless we can look through them to the truth which, once apprehended, needs them no more."³³ If Los labours to create an objective world which, because it is natural, must be regarded as subhuman and "Satanic," then the Elohist labour of creation amounts only to what Mitchell calls "an absurd and paradoxical affirmation of the need to continue creating when creation seems to have become a cycle of oppression and destructive reaction."³⁴

For Damrosch, the way of Blake's argument contradicts the end: Los's effort to redeem the creation of the Elohim by imposing form on phenomenal nature cannot be reconciled with Blake's ultimate affirmation of imagination as a transcendent reality. Indeed, for Damrosch, contradiction is the very essence of Blake's thought: the career of Los expresses the "warfare of antitheses" which compose

Blake's text, and illustrates Blake's heroic-quixotic attempt to "reconcile the irreconcilable."³⁵ For Mitchell, the position of Los is absurd: he must create, in the knowledge that what he creates "giv[es] life even to the forces of evil, death, and destruction."³⁶ "The entire cosmos" is "the fabrication of the human imagination"--and it is a "botched job."³⁷ The problem--Blake's "real problem"--is therefore "to design a system that would self-destruct", in the hope that the botched fabrication will consume itself.³⁸

Neither Mitchell nor Damrosch wish to banish Blake from the canon of important poets; both continue to affirm that Blake's work has what Damrosch calls a "peculiar energy and value."³⁹ But it does not seem a great step from their affirmation of contradiction and absurdity as the central meaning of Blake's art to the view expressed by Tilottama Rajan, that the claims made by Blake for imagination are too contradictory of the real world to be of any genuine importance. Are we really prepared to credit the claim that the entire cosmos is a "fabrication of the human imagination"? We can ask if Damrosch's reading discloses anything more than the story of a desire negating itself and its milieu in the name of a lost origin, in a futile quest for some transcendental signified--that is, the familiar story of desire "craving the illusion of a transcendental truth," as Rajan puts it.⁴⁰ If by the very nature of his labours Los only defines and consolidates the gap between nature or things as they are and things as we desire them to be, by what authority does Los or Blake disparage the actual in favour of a world that is, after all, only imagined? For Rajan, "Blake's grandiose claims for the reshaping power of imagination" are to be regarded as transparent "naivete."⁴¹

We have traced the outlines of a movement from the affirmation of Los as the heroic center of Blake's thought, to a recognition that at the center disclosed by Los lies contradiction, and therefore deep ambiguity or absurdity or naivete. What remains constant in this movement from comic to ironic perceptions is the idea of an imagination-nature opposition. Earlier readings pictured Los as triumphing over a sub-imaginative nature; more recent views question or deny this triumph. But common both to formalist readings and to Tilotama Rajan is the idea that "imagination" (whatever it be: "the creator of all human realities" or the "intentional" repository of human unreality) is other than and opposed to "nature." We have attributed this idea to Blake, so that, on his authority, it has properly come to govern our critical episteme, shaping our reading of the prophecies and establishing the terms of our understanding of Los and the theme of his labours. But we can wonder why, if Blake's affirmation of imagination necessarily entails a rejection of nature, he insists in Milton on building Jerusalem "In Englands green & pleasant Land" (M1); or why, of "All Human Forms identified" at the close of Jerusalem, Blake chooses to name "Tree Metal Earth & Stone" (J99.1). It is precisely the idea of an imagination-nature opposition, the value of this idea as a principle of interpretation, and the claim that Blake himself authorizes or endorses this idea, that I shall now attempt to put in question.

Part 2 - The Cloven Fiction

"The Last Judgment," Blake argues, "is an Overwhelming of Bad Art

& Science" (VLJ E565). By "Bad Art & Science" he means, in a word, deism or Natural Religion, "the dominant system of Error in Blake's poetry," as Bloom puts it.⁴² Natural Religion may be defined as that art, science or religion for which the term "nature" signifies a reality external to the human mind or imagination. This includes the traditional account of nature as "the Art of God," the account given in Genesis or in Milton's Paradise Lost. And it includes the science of "Bacon, Newton & Locke," whose representation of nature earns them a special "Tabernacle" in the Building of Natural Religion (J66.14).

To the sense of nature as divine artefact Newton added the notion that the things or bodies which compose nature are themselves composed of tiny atoms or particles of "matter": "It seems probable to me," Newton suggests in his Opticks, "that God in the beginning formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, movable particles."⁴³ In his Principia, Newton argues that the "evidence of experiments" requires us to conclude that "the least particles of all bodies [are] also all extended, and hard and impenetrable and movable and endowed with their forces of inertia. And this is the foundation of natural philosophy."⁴⁴

This foundation is what Werner Heisenberg calls "the ontology of materialism": "the idea of an objective real world whose smallest parts exist objectively in the same sense as stones or trees exist, independently of whether or not we observe them."⁴⁵ Of these particles as defined by Newton, no one can predicate mind or intelligence; "nature" thus comprises an objective real world from which the human mind is by definition excluded. Newton's "foundation" thus implies

what Heisenberg calls the "Cartesian partition": "The old division of the world into objective processes in space and time and the mind in which these processes are mirrored--in other words, the Cartesian difference between res cogitans and res extensa."⁴⁶

It is precisely this "foundation," this ontology of materialism, which Blake singles out for criticism as an example of the "Bad Art & Science" which the Last Judgment must overwhelm: "Mental Things are alone Real what is Calld Corporeal Nobody Knows of its Dwelling Place [it] is in Fallacy & its Existence an Imposture Where is the Existence Out of Mind or Thought Where is it but in the Mind of a Fool" (VLJ E565). By definition--that is, according to the terms of the Cartesian partition which identifies mind and nature and determines their relation--Newton's material or "physical" nature is supposed to be an "existence out of mind." But we cannot perceive or know that which is, by definition, other than our capacity to perceive and know. Newton's "impenetrable" particles would be impenetrable to knowledge and to empirical observation; an order of things composed of such particles would be unknowable, "opaque," as Blake puts it. The idea of a "science of matter" is for Blake an "impossible absurdity" (M40.13), founded on "Fallacy."

Blake, of course, by no means stands alone in his opposition to the Cartesian partition or "Cloven Fiction" promulgated by classical physics. Berkeley had argued, "As to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that seems perfectly unintelligible. Their esse is percipi, nor is it possible they should have any existence out of the minds or thinking things which perceive them."⁴⁷ Kant, in his Critique of Pure

Reason, brought the Cartesian partition to the extreme conclusion that our knowledge of nature can be knowledge of appearances only, and that things as they are in themselves are in fact and necessarily unknown to us^{47a}. In his Biographia Literaria, Coleridge treats the "system of Dualism introduced by Des Cartes" and "materialism" as separate philosophical systems. But neither system, he argues, can explain how we could have knowledge of "things without us" if we conceive them as material existents; how "something essentially different from ourselves...could possibly become a part of our immediate consciousness (in other words, how that which ex hypothesi is and continues to be extrinsic and alien to our being should become a modification of our being)."⁴⁸

In What Coleridge Thought, Owen Barfield places Coleridge's critique of the the "Cartesian fiction," and his attempt to formulate an alternative to it, at the center of "what Coleridge thought"; one of the chief obstacles to our understanding of Coleridge, Barfield contends, is that the Cartesian partition is one of "the most cherished assumptions in which our present civilisation and culture are rooted."⁴⁹ This view of the stubborn persistence of Cartesian assumptions is supported by Richard Rorty, in Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. "Modern philosophers," suggests Leopold Damrosch, "also reject that kind [i.e., Cartesian] of dualism."⁵⁰ But Rorty questions whether this rejection has not been facile, whether the "frame of reference" and "imagery" instituted by Descartes, Locke and Kant does not persist even amongst modern philosophers who profess to have rejected Cartesian dualism:

It is pictures rather than propositions, metaphors rather than statements, which determine most of our philosophical convictions. The picture which holds traditional philosophy captive is that of the mind as a great mirror, containing various representations--some accurate, some not--and capable of being studied by pure, nonempirical methods. Without the notion of the mind as a mirror, the notion of knowledge as accuracy of representation would not have suggested itself. Without this latter notion, the strategy common to Descartes and Kant--getting more accurate representations by inspecting, repairing, and polishing the mirror, so to speak--would not have made sense. Without this strategy in mind, recent claims that philosophy could consist of "conceptual analysis" or "phenomenological analysis" or "explication of meanings" or examination of "the logic of our language" or of "the structure of the constituting activity of consciousness" would not have made sense. 51

Martin Heidegger sees the division of existents into self-conscious, mirroring, subjects and unthinking objects as an attribute of "technology": "Even this, that man becomes the subject and the world the object is a consequence of technology's nature establishing itself."⁵² "Only in modern times," Heidegger claims, "does this nature [of technology] begin to unfold as a destiny of the truth of all beings."⁵³ One does not simply reject technology, for we live in a world shaped by "the predominance of technological ideas whose development has long since been removed beyond the realms of the individual's personal views and opinions."⁵⁴ We believe, or act as if we believe, that "the essence of life is supposed to yield itself to technical production."⁵⁵ Man thinks and acts as if he were "forced to secure all beings that are his concern as the substance for his planning and calculating; and to carry this manipulation on past all bounds."⁵⁶ We have moved from the representation of nature as res extensa or material object to a point where "the earth and its atmosphere become raw material. Man becomes human material, which is

disposed of with a view to proposed goals."⁵⁷ In "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger argues that things no longer have even the superficial and bestowed dignity of "objects" but are simply indeterminate raw material or "stock" (Bestand). This new "objectless" world, in which nature is understood as a "calculable coherence of forces,"⁵⁸ arises not from a rejection of Descartes and Newton but from a relentless carrying forward of the mathematical project of their science, where the order of things is assimilated into the order of that which can be measured, compared and manipulated.

According to Werner Heisenberg, the "influence of the Cartesian division on human thought in the following centuries can hardly be over-estimated, but it is just this division which we have to criticize later from the development of physics in our time."⁵⁹ The development to which Heisenberg alludes is the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory, the "conceptual structure" of which "differs radically from that of classical physics."⁶⁰ This critique of Newton begins with the recognition that investigation of atomic events necessarily entails an intervention by the observer (or his instruments) upon the observed; this intervention cannot be ignored, for it forms an integral part of the observed event or process. "In other words, the observer and observed form an integrated unit that cannot be broken down into independent components."⁶¹ The Cartesian partition which divides known being and knowing being into independent components is thus "no longer a suitable starting point for our understanding of modern science."⁶² Nor is the Cartesian framework adequate for our understanding of "nature." The idea of a res extensa,

alien and extrinsic to our mind, an objective real world existing "out of mind," whether we observe it or not, is "meaningless": "an unobserved world cannot be measured or described and is therefore meaningless to an empirical scientist."⁶³

The foundation of Newton's nature is the concept of the atom as thing-in-itself, the unit of "matter," the "corporeal particle." For Blake, because mental things are alone real, Newton's "Atom" is "A Thing that does not Exist" (Letter to Cumberland 12 April 1827 E783). Newton claimed to have collected the concept of the material particle by general induction from phenomena, from empirical observation and the "evidence of experiments." According to Heisenberg, however, "the experiments have shown the complete mutability of matter. All the elementary particles can, at sufficiently high energies, be transmuted into other particles, or they can simply be created from kinetic energy and can be annihilated into energy, for instance into radiation."⁶⁴ In other words, the atom as conceived by Newton is a thing that does not exist: "Atoms are not hard little balls."⁶⁵ We cannot conceive atoms "as if they were so many bricks or grains of sand."⁶⁶ Atoms or elementary particles "form a world of potentialities or possibilities rather than one of things or facts."⁶⁷ "Atoms are neither things [Dinge] nor objects [Gegenstände]."⁶⁸

Taken together, Heidegger's notion that the "technological" process articulated and consolidated in the mathematical project of modern, Cartesian science has much to do with the shape of our ordinary world of experience, and Heisenberg's notion that the Cartesian foundation of classical physics rests not on the bedrock of empirical fact but rather on a wish that misconstrues the very nature

of empirical fact, provide, I think, a useful context for understanding Blake's critique of "Bacon, Newton & Locke" as Natural Religion. That Newton's "ontology of materialism" is a "Cloven Fiction" or "Fallacy" Blake considered a point worthy of emphasis in the ultimate paragraph of his commentary on A Vision of The Last Judgment. Within the Cartesian episteme of classical physics a fallacy or error is merely "theoretical": it may have serious consequences for our "model" of the objective world, but a theoretical model is after all only a "subjective" construct. For Blake, because mental things are alone real, because what exists cannot be divided into "mental" and "physical" categories, the mental errors of "Bad Art & Science" have more than theoretical implications. Newtonian science creates a vision, a mental form, an episteme, which determines the identity of man as a spectral subject, that is, as a being that is excluded from what is real by virtue of its identity. This spectre or "selfhood" has its corollary: Newton's science makes claims not only on man but also on nature, on the order of things, including the human body; things henceforth are to enjoy the career of objects, corporeal forms consisting of inert particles acted upon by mechanical laws of matter.

These Newtonian atoms do not exist. But Fallacy or Error is also "Creation" (VLJ E565). As in Heidegger's analysis, where technology appears as a "destiny" not because things consist of matter but because we believe that they do, so for Blake Natural Religion owes its status as significant "Creation" to the fact that Albion, in his state of sleep, believes the myth of external reality, and therefore thinks in terms of spectres and shadows. Natural Religion is both an

"impossible absurdity," and a vision or creation, the oeuvre of the idolatrous, solipsistic imagination of sleeping Albion. Natural Religion appears in the prophecies as a system which produces effects; as the phenomenon of "Bad Art & Science"; as an episteme or architecture or "Building"; as a "disease" which sickens man and things; as a regime, with laws, commands, punishments, victims.

The most salient of Natural Religion's effects is, in a word, negation. "Nature," conceived as a res extensa consisting of inert particles disposed in void space, would be, literally, a "World of Death," for no one can predicate life of Newtonian atoms. Intelligence or mental acts are also excluded from this nature, so that "man," as a thinking being, is by definition an alien or stranger, homeless. Excluded from what is real, the human mind becomes phantasmal, a source of illusion. Hence Nietzsche's vision of "truth" as a "mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms--in short, a sum of human relations": "truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are."⁶⁹

To "labour in Knowledge," Blake claims, "is to Build up Jerusalem" (J77). But knowledge in the universe conceived by Newton is "theoretical," "subjective," a representation of a presence that is elsewhere, a reality lacking its reality. What we know, argues Kant, are not the things themselves but appearances or objects formed by our unknowing minds. As Nietzsche puts it: "It is we alone who have devised cause, sequence, for-each-other, relativity, constraint, number, law, freedom, motive, and purpose; and when we project and mix this symbol world into things as if it existed 'in itself,' we acc once more as we have always acted--mythologically."⁷⁰

Part 3 - The Consensus

"Throughout his career," argues Damrosch, "Blake firmly opposed at least one form of dualism, the Cartesian distinction between mind (or soul) and body."⁷¹ No one will say that criticism has over-looked Blake's firm opposition to Cartesian dualism. Since the time of Fearful Symmetry, which began with Blake's "case against Locke" and the theory of mental acts as being some kind of "reflection" of "some kind of nonmental reality,"⁷² Blake's opposition to the cloven fiction promulgated by Bacon, Newton and Locke has been a commonplace theme in Blake studies. "There is a consensus nowadays," as Damrosch puts it, "that Blake has nothing to do with conventional distinctions between mind and body, subjective and objective realms."⁷³

Reflecting this consensus in her recent commentary on Jerusalem, Minna Duskow defines the major theme of that work, Albion's "fall into division," by saying that Albion "separates his immortal from his mortal self and lapses into Cartesian dualism, dividing mind from body and splitting into separate rational and physical parts, his male and female divisions."⁷⁴ Consistent with this sense of the fall is Duskow's view of Albion's "awakening" at the end of Jerusalem: "The original division based on the subject-object distinction is thus overthrown in imaginative unity."⁷⁵ Imaginative unity means that the "entire universe is humanized in the subjective identification of all creation within Albion."⁷⁶ That is, the subject-object distinction is overthrown, with the result that the "entire phenomenal world is now part of subjective existence."⁷⁷

One can surely be forgiven for thinking this analysis of Albion's

awakening somewhat confusing. How can the subject-object distinction be overthrown through an extension of human subjectivity? Were the Cartesian dualism in fact overthrown, what need would there be to modify the nouns "existence" and "identification" with the adjective "subjective"--a term which implies the "objective," which implies the Cartesian episteme? Were it "extended" to include the objective, would the subjective not be something more than "subjective"? The idea that the "phenomenal world" must be understood as subjective--that the phenomenon as we perceive it is not the thing itself but a mental and therefore subjective representation--is familiar Kantian doctrine. If this is what Albion's awakening means then we ought not to speak of overthrowing Cartesian dualism.

Whether or not this is what Blake means by Albion's awakening, it seems clear that, in this instance (and Doskow's commentary, let it be said, is an example of good contemporary criticism), we have not overthrown the Cartesian framework in our own discourse: the word "subjective" is not Blake's. Indeed it would appear that, in this instance, we on the one hand recognize the anti-Cartesian force of Blake's text, its intention to express an alternative to divided existence; while we on the other hand approach this text with a critical discourse whose concepts are shaped by and, however unwittingly, promulgate Cartesian assumptions--a discourse quite unable therefore to articulate an alternative to the Cartesian episteme. This in turn raises the question of whether "this instance" is exceptional, or rather typical and representative.

Blake's critique of Locke, according to Fearful Symmetry, is

based on "the fact that imagination creates reality."⁷⁸ This bold proposition certainly is incompatible with the Cartesian tradition, which reaffirms the ancient identification of imagination as phantasia, the creator of illusory images (phantasmata). Morton Paley seems to concur with Frye's proposition when, in a passage cited earlier, he defines Los's status in the major prophecies as symbolic of that imagination which is "the creator of all human realities." But what Paley has added to Frye's thesis--the adjective "human"--raises certain questions. Are there other realities which Los, no less than the orthodox Cartesian, does not create but must accept as given? What is the relation between human realities and the order of things? Are human realities, like Nietzsche's "truth," anthropomorphisms that we alone have devised, a sum of human relations, a sum of relations that, precisely because it is human, must be identified as illusory?

In a more modest definition of Los's function, Paley argues that Los creates "the imaginative constructs which give form to human perception."⁷⁹ But, again, we can question whether this formulation is not amenable to a Kantian interpretation, where the forms of human perception, because they are human constructs, must be understood as subjective. If perception is formed of such constructs, do we perceive things or constructed representations of things? Is Los's World of Generation a world of things or a world of perception-shaping constructs? Are imaginative constructs windows or mirrors or lamps? Do they disclose or illuminate existents, or do they disclose a sum of human relations--metaphors, metonyms and anthropomorphisms?

Thomas Frosch, also arguing that Los is "the shaper of our perceptions," locates this labour of shaping in Golgonooza, where

"natural objects are transformed into poetic percepts."⁸⁰ Taken literally, this proposition contradicts Cartesian assumptions, which identify natural objects as belonging to a res extensa from which both poetry and perception are excluded. But Frosch seems immediately to swerve from the literal force of his claim, explaining this transformation from nature to art by saying that, in Golgonooza, "things are seen in their relation to man."⁸¹ But it is precisely Kant's claim that things can be seen only in their relation to man, only in the form of appearances that we have devised, and not as they are in themselves. In which case the act of shaping perceptions involves no transformation or movement from nature to art, but rather confirms the impossibility of such a movement; so that the idea of such a transformation must be put down to poetic licence, to metaphor or metonym.

Harold Bloom, in a passage cited earlier, identifies the vision of Los's labours in Golgonooza as a "vision of all nature as existent under the fatherhood of Los."⁸² Again, taken literally, the idea that imagination "fathers" nature contradicts the Cartesian identities of imagination and nature. Again, however, we can detect a shift away from the original claim. Elaborating upon the vision, Bloom suggests that what Los creates are "constructs," "only an artifice of Eternity," a "sculpture."⁸³ That is, the sense of what Los fathers or creates shifts from "all nature" to "artifice" and "sculpture"--from nature to art, from things to "constructs." Certainly the proposition that imagination creates art will offend no Cartesian sensibilities, particularly when Bloom insists that imagination's artificial

constructs are "never to be valued for their own sakes."⁸⁴

The reason why what Los creates in Golgonooza is never to be valued for its own sake, according to Damrosch, is that "Golgonooza represents the best that can be done with physical materials--with material materials--but in using them at all it confesses its distance from Eden."⁸⁵ If the words "physical, material materials" mean something other than the "corporeal" substance or matter conceived by Newton, Damrosch does not say. These words come not from the prophecies but from their critical interpretation; and in using them at all the interpretation appears to confess its complete harmony with the discourse of classical physics.

Starting from the boldly anti-Cartesian claim that "imagination creates reality," we have observed this reality become "subjective," "human," a reality that is less than wholly real, an "artifice," an artificial reality consisting of "constructs" and "sculpture"--which is to say that imagination creates art, an ambiguous art whose formal constructs represent an intention or desire to escape from matter, but an art constructed out of "material materials." And what we have observed is a critical discourse in which there is a consensus that Blake firmly opposed the Cartesian dualism of classical physics.

In this context I would like to return to our earlier discussion of the "imagination-nature dialectic." This idea, we have noted, cannot be regarded simply as one theme among others in critical discourse: it has served as a key formal assumption for interpretation, shaping the perception both of Blake's overall prophetic argument and of the role of Los within this argument. According to the terms of this dialectic, imagination is good, "the

creator of all human realities," while nature is subhuman, sub-imaginative, "never good in itself." This contradicts--in fact, reverses--the values assigned to imagination and nature by Bacon, Newton and Locke. But this reversal of values does not overthrow the underlying idea of a partition or division. It remains that the identity of "imagination" is conceived in terms of an opposition to "nature." Imagination is that which nature is not--which is precisely how Bacon defines imagination: "being not tied to the laws of matter, [imagination] may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined; and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things."⁸⁶

One consequence of the imagination-nature dialectic we have already noted, namely that it seems to place Los in an "ambivalent position": if he builds his forms or constructs "in nature," and if nature is fallen or Satanic, then it would seem that Los's labours serve only to consolidate the fall. Underlying Los's dilemma is the principle that, within the framework of this imagination-nature opposition, to affirm imagination it is necessary to negate nature. The world around us in which we live must be identified as subhuman; the things amongst which we live must be conceived as "Satanic," their reality or existence repudiated as illusory. Hence Los's oeuvre is devalued precisely because it is "art within nature," "fallen art, built in nature."⁸⁷ But we can ask how this result, the negation of ordinary experience, differs from Kantian doctrine, where the world of things around us, that which we perceive, becomes a world of "phenomena," a shadowy realm of representations excluded from an in-

itself that abides elsewhere, beyond what we can know.

If nature is sub-imaginative, if the world of ordinary experience is illusory, then imagination must belong elsewhere, must originate "from outside" familiar experience. That is, to affirm imagination according to the terms of the dialectic it seems necessary not only to negate nature but also to affirm imagination as "exotic," as a strange, unfamiliar--perhaps "mystical" power. As a champion of imagination, Blake would be that which the post-Frygian tradition has always maintained he was not: an outsider, a mystic, an obscure poet of visionary margins. According to Mitchell, a key achievement of formalist criticism has been the idea of Blake as "the centrally English poet," "his assimilation into the canon of mainstream English literature."⁸⁸ And yet, Mitchell notes,

Every sophisticated formal analysis of [Jerusalem] in the last twenty years has tried to rescue it with some paradoxical and quasi-modernist formula of "form in anti-form," treating the failure of the poem to conform to any narrative or rhetorical scheme as part of a master design to disrupt our reliance on narrative, causal, and temporal order, and to replace it with a non-linear, visionary, diagrammatic and "eternal" aesthetic. 89

We can ask what this visionary aesthetic means, what content it organizes or shapes. According to criticism's dialectic, this content must be imagination: the poem's organization must imitate not illusory nature but the shaping spirit of imagination itself. But this imagination has been defined by its opposition to nature, to the "objective" world. A skeptical reader may well ask whether such an imagination is not "subjective," whether the content of the prophecies is not the solipsistic musings of an eccentric lost in a private mythology, whether Blake's claims for an "eternal" imagination are not

grandiose and naive.

We have noted how the idea of a reality-creating imagination becomes in critical articulation subjective, human and artificial-- that is, seemingly quite consistent with the Cartesian view of imagination. We have noted, too, that the imagination-nature dialectic, while it reverses Newtonian values, maintains the structure of division, and, no less than in Kant's system, seems to require that we identify the familiar things we perceive as phantasmata. We can ask, further, whether the idea of an exotic, unnatural imagination differs from Bacon's definition of an "extremely licenced" power that joins and severs "unlawfully," that is, from outside the "laws of matter." We can wonder if the "assimilation" of Blake has not been an assimilation into the central Cartesian tradition of European science and metaphysics, where the strange and exotic is tamed, or at least kept under control, governed, confined within the concept of phantasia.

Mitchell, at the conclusion of his lucid study of Blake's Composite Art, evokes as "the central meaning of Blake's art," Albert Camus's interpretation of the myth of Sisyphus and the existentialist concept of "absurdity."⁹⁰ Granted that "absurdity" names a modern concept and emotion, "the evidence seems overwhelming," Mitchell argues, "that Blake would have appreciated, if not used, this word in its modern sense."⁹¹ Thus the "work of Los, like that of Sisyphus," is "an affirmation in the face of absurdity," a "human affirmation of meaning in the face of a cosmos from which all transcendent, objective guarantees of meaning have vanished."⁹² This absurd absence of

transcendent meaning can be liberating, inasmuch as it affords imagination the freedom and space to create for itself its own world: "Blake transforms the potentially crippling sense of the absurdity of his work into a vision which resides on the perilous border between the sublime and the ridiculous, absorbing both these realms, and the viewer, into a larger, divinely comic world."⁹³

Whether or not this is what Blake means, there can be no question that what this means is in complete harmony with the Cartesian tradition, that the modern idea of absurdity is itself an interpretation of the Cartesian partition. For Descartes, the division between res cogitans and res extensa is rational because thinking and unthinking beings are alike the artefacts of a rational creator who intended that they be separate. For Sartre or Camus, accepting the partition but not the God who transcends it, absurdity names the relation between en-soi and pour-soi, between the human mind which affirms meaning and value and a world which has no meaning, transcendent or otherwise. "This world in itself," as Camus puts it,

is not reasonable, that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation of this irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depends as much on man as on the world. For the moment it is all that links them together. It binds them one to the other as only hatred can weld two creatures together. 94

Blake calls Natural Religion an "impossible absurdity," meaning among other things that we could not know either a transcendent "God afar off" (J4.18) or a nature conceived as a non-mental "in itself." Camus, accepting the premise of divided existence, accepts that science is impossible, which is to say, that science amounts to a human construction, to metaphor, to a work of art:

Yet all the knowledge on earth will give me nothing to assure me that this world is mine. You describe it to me and you teach me to classify it. You enumerate its laws and in my thirst for knowledge I admit that they are true...All this is good and I wait for you to continue. But you tell me of an invisible planetary system in which electrons gravitate around a nucleus. You explain this world to me with an image. I realize then that you have been reduced to poetry: I shall never know...So that science that was to teach me everything ends up in a hypothesis, that lucidity founders in metaphor, that uncertainty is resolved in a work of art. 95

One can praise the "human affirmation of meaning" in the work of art, but one should not forget that "meaning" can only be "human," that it consists of poetry, of metaphors that we alone have devised, that it is "for itself" and not "in itself." As Tilottama Rajan argues, given that mind is other than nature, we must accept that the images and metaphors our mind or imagination fabricates can only be "intentional," that which lacks the reality or "substantiality of things"; to refuse to accept that imagination "shares in the nothingness of consciousness," to claim anything more for imagination, is simply naive.⁹⁶

Damrosch rejects Mitchell's Sisyphean interpretation: "Blake is not Camus. The transcendent has not in the least vanished from his cosmos."⁹⁷ Because Blake will not "allow a merely subjective construction of reality," he "affirms his belief in the existence of a realm, very like that of Plato's Ideas, of which the world of empirical perception is but a shadow."⁹⁸ This belief, that imagination originates from and belongs to a transcendent reality, is for Damrosch the "plain meaning" of key Blakean passages which compose "the foundation upon which our investigation must be built."⁹⁹ To my mind, it is difficult to think of Jerusalem as a "Republic" from which

poets are excluded as liars; or to conceive Blake assenting to Socrates' claim in the Phaedrus that what is real (ousia) is that which reason alone can behold, "without colour or shape, that cannot be touched" (247c). On the other hand, some form of "Platonism" does seem to be an appropriate completion of the imagination-nature dialectic which repudiates nature as illusory and identifies imagination as a super-natural power. And certainly the belief in a realm of eternal forms "very like that of Plato's Ideas" seems incompatible with the materialist ontology of classical physics.

This does not mean, however, that we can look to Blake for a coherent alternative to the Cartesian tradition. The investigation that Damrosch builds does not disclose a "plain meaning," but rather a meaning that resists definition or articulation, a meaning that is plainly at odds with itself. Blake means what he says: his conviction is passionate, religious, not to be doubted. But he cannot say what he means: his attempts to define the transcendent reality of imagination inevitably lead to contradiction. Blake believes that "a deeper reality lies behind the linguistic structures that are our normal way of pointing to it";¹⁰⁰ but he has only our normal linguistic structures to work with. Los symbolizes this dilemma as he works with "physical, material materials" to express a belief in a mental reality. If this transcendent reality has not vanished from Blake's cosmos, it remains hidden, always already outside the boundaries of plain meaning, outside the space of transparent discourse, so that the artist-prophet cannot say but must "point," must say with a discourse which "points beyond its images to the truths which they symbolize yet

petrify."¹⁰¹

"We read Blake's myth," Damrosch concludes, "to know what it would be like to believe in man's spiritual power while fully recognizing the self-deluding tendencies of the imagination and its symbols."¹⁰² Blake is not naive, for Blake himself "encourages us to recognize...the groping and imperfect nature of the achievements available to the imagination."¹⁰³ So we are left with material materials, on the one hand, and a groping, self-consciously self-deluding imagination, on the other. Rajan is answered: Blake's claims for the imagination are not grandiose because, in the end, they do not differ from the Cartesian tradition's claims.

Part 4 - Desires of the Mind and the Nature of Things

"All Things Exist in the Human Imagination" (J69.25). This claim can, I think, be understood as the major premise or primary assumption of Blake's argument. It follows from this claim that "Mental Things are alone Real" (VLJ E565), that the concept of a "corporeal" substance external to imagination is a concept and an "error." If all things exist in the human imagination, then imagination is the containing form or circumference of all things: the "tradition, that Man anciently containd in his mighty limbs all things in Heaven & Earth" (J27), expresses for Blake a matter of fact. If all things exist in the human imagination, then it makes sense to say that "every thing is Human": "Cities / Are Men, fathers of multitudes, and Rivers & Mount[a]ins / Are also Men; every thing is Human" (J34.46-48). When Albion awakens from the sleep of Ulro, all things "Humanize" (J98.44),

that is, they appear as they are, as "Human Forms."

In relation to the Cartesian tradition--to what Blake calls "Natural Religion"--the vision of "All Human Forms identified" is exotic. That is, the premise that all things exist in the human imagination plainly and completely contradicts the assumption that things exist outside the human mind or imagination. But the exotic can be internalized, rendered familiar, domesticated: Blake's strange claims can be brought inside the Cartesian architecture, interpreted or translated into terms consistent with Cartesian assumptions. Thus Tilottama Rajan understands Blake's argument as a "radical idealism, which holds that the human mind is the source of vision, and that the external world can be reconstituted in accordance with patterns imposed by man's imagination."¹⁰⁴ That is, Blake's project is already understood in terms of a "human mind" and an "external world." We have already entered the space of Cartesian discourse, where the rules of Cartesian logic apply. Because the human mind and external world are mutually exclusive categories, and because an "idealism" does not originate from nature, Blake's project can be understood as mental fabrication or art: "Art, as the power to invent, is paradigmatic of man's capacity to take existence itself into his mind and rewrite it according to the images of desire."¹⁰⁵ Blake's idealism is an expression of the desire to humanize the world, to people the world with human forms. But because the external world and the human mind are exclusive terms, it must be understood that the desire of imagination to reconstitute the external world in a human pattern has nothing to do with the external world; so that the telos of desire, the vision of a humanized world, must be understood as illusion.

According to Bacon, imagination "may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined"; art or "poesy," as an expression of imagination, "doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind."¹⁰⁶ But we must not confuse the "shows of things" with the "nature of things," images of desire with the "laws of matter." Reason apprehends the laws of matter, "doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things"; but what imagination makes "at pleasure" are "unlawful matches and divorces of things."¹⁰⁷ According to Rajan, the "imagination can construct an ideal that does not exist, but it must then deconstruct this ideal from the vantage point of existence."¹⁰⁸ Blake's idealism is naive because it evades self-deconstruction, refuses to be buckled and bowed unto the vantage point of existence; because Blake refuses to recognize that his vision of human forms, originating from desire, projected and shaped by imagination, amounts to nothing more than a show of things, to an illusion that does not exist.¹⁰⁹

Understanding Blake in this way, assimilating him into the Cartesian episteme, we neutralize his vision, negate his argument, cause vision and its premise to dissolve into or appear as illusion. What is exotic, different--"other" in relation to Cartesian assumptions--is interpreted, grasped, determined so that it becomes familiar, the "same." Blake's words cannot mean what they say: what they say contradicts the Cartesian vantage point or truth; so an act of interpretation is required to put these errant words in order, to say what they must mean. Blake is put in his place, inside the

Cartesian house: that is, he is confined within the subjective space of naive illusion, committed, as it were, to the asylum of folly.

This understanding of Blake implies and requires something answering to Newton's or to Bacon's idea of "nature," some order of things that exists external to imagination that we can invest with the value of "objective reality." It can be a nature understood as "the Art of God," as Bacon or Newton understood nature. Or it can simply be an in-itself or en-soi, the "substantiality of things," Camus's "unreasonable world," Rajan's "world of primary fact."¹¹⁰ What matters is that this nature or reality compose an order of things from which imagination is excluded, so that, measured against this external reality, imagination can be identified as phantasia.

This identification requires that a further condition be met. Not only must there be a "nature of things," but also there must be something answering to Bacon's "reason," some means of buckling and bowing the mind unto an apprehension of that reality from which imagination is excluded. Nature must be external to reason also, else it would not be "objective," and we could not be sure that reason had not invented it. But if the nature of things is other than reason, how can we know it? Would not such an otherness be "opaque," as Blake puts it, or unknowable, as Kant confesses? In that case, would not the "empirical" project of Newtonian science amount, as Coleridge puts it, to the "assertion that there exists a something without [us], what, or how, or where [we] know not, which occasions the objects of [our] perception"?¹¹¹ If this question--the question implied in Blake's judgment of "corporeal" nature--was ignored by the advocates of classical physics, it was asked, and not only by Blake. Which is to

say that the issue opened by this question opens unto what Mitchell calls "the historicity of Blake's work, its place in a network of concrete and specific conditions."¹¹²

But we cannot say that the issue Blake raises in his critique of Newton is only historical. Mitchell's own Sisyphean interpretation of Blake's work implies and promulgates the Cartesian partition of mind and nature no less than does the "intentional structure" theory of Romantic imagery. Nor can we say that the problems posed by the Cartesian episteme have been resolved. It is clear that such expressions as "the substantiality of things" or "the world of primary fact" are intended to signify a reality external to imagination; but it is not clear beyond that what they mean, what facts qualify as "primary," for example, or what "substance" is supposed to inhere in things. As we have noted, according to the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory, the Newtonian idea of an external, unobserved nature is meaningless; and the "atom," the "corporeal" unit of "matter"--the foundation upon which we have built our ideas of the thing "in itself" and of the substantiality of things--is neither a thing in itself nor an object of perception. If, as Heisenberg suggests, the "energy" out of which elementary particles are formed can be understood as a potentia or dynamis in the Aristotelian sense, then the "substance" at the heart of things is not a substance, is that which only potentially exists.

In a wonderful reversal of the Cartesian pleasure-principle (which, as we have seen, identifies imagination with subjective, illusory "desires of the mind"), Heisenberg notes that while for

critics of the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory it would "be desirable to return to the reality concept of classical physics," it nevertheless "cannot be our task to formulate wishes as to how the atomic phenomena should be."¹¹³ Rajan speaks contemptuously of "craving the illusion of a transcendental truth";¹¹⁴ but what is the "vantage point of existence" whence we can deconstruct the desires of the mind as phantasmal cravings? From the vantage point of contemporary science it would seem that the notion of the "substantiality of things" on which the deconstruction of desire is based is itself the hypostatization of a desire to believe in that for which there is no empirical evidence--that is, a desire to believe in a "transcendental truth."

Part 5 - An Alternative

All things exist in the human imagination, Blake argues, meaning (among other things) that mental things are alone real, that we cannot know that which is supposed to be "other" or extrinsic to the human mind or imagination. The principle that we cannot know what is other has an obvious--and, for science or knowledge, important--corollary, that what we know is not other. Los's "Science of the Elohim"--Blake's science of "nature"--I am contending, is founded on this principle and its corollary. That is, as classical physics is founded on and expresses the proposition that nature is external to mind or imagination, so the Science of the Elohim implies and articulates the proposition that nature is not other, that "Nature is Imagination itself" (Letter to Trusler 23 August 1799 E702).

This proposition cannot be assimilated into the Cartesian

episteme. Nature, understood as imagination itself, does not compose an "objective" order of things, alien and extrinsic to our being. If the order of things is the order of imagination, then imagination cannot be abstracted from things and confined within a "subjective" space of unreality. To understand that nature is imagination itself we require terms other than res extensa and res cogitans.

Practising the Science of the Elohim, that is, building Golgonooza and creating a World of Generation, Los builds or creates an alternative to the Cartesian architecture and to the Newtonian concept of nature. We must now indicate in a preliminary way the terms that will articulate this alternative. For Blake, the claim that nature is imagination itself means that the order of things is the order of imagination. Things exist, by virtue of imagination. The forms of existents are the forms or acts of imagination. Things exist as Human Forms, as forms of imagination: "Every Thing['s]...Reality is its Imaginative Form" (Ann. to Berkeley's Siris E663-664). This imaginative or human or mental form of existence is alone real: what is called corporeal or physical is an illusion, a cloven fiction. A thing's reality, its imaginative form, is not other than our "vision," our capacity to perceive and know. "All that we See is Vision" (Laocoon E273): that is, what we see is the form or act of our capacity to see, a mental form, the act of imagination, which is alone real, which is the mental or imaginative form of existence. The idea that we can divide existence from vision, physical from mental form, the thing itself from perceived "image," is for Blake a "Fallacy."

We cannot know or perceive what is "other." Newton did not see

his corporeal particles of matter, did not infer their existence from empirical observation. What we do perceive and know, the order of things, is not other, is imagination itself. Thus, if we know that the sun is a star and that its light is a form of radiant energy generated by a fusion reaction, then we know that the terms "sun" and "star" signify mental things, that sunlight is a mental phenomenon, that fusion is an imaginative event. Or, if we know that the genetic code of an organism is inscribed in the double-helix chain molecules of deoxyribonucleic acid, then we know that these molecules are mental things, that the double-helix is a form of imagination. And, if we know that stars and molecules alike consist of elementary particles, and if we know that these elementary particles are not things, existents, but are rather forms of an energy that can be understood not as something that exists but as a potentia, a capacity or power to exist, then we know that this energy is potentially human, that the forms in which this energy achieves existence are mental forms, that the atoms formed of particles, the molecules formed of atoms, the cells formed of molecules, the bodies formed of cells--are mental forms, acts of imagination, human forms.

In this sense Blake can say that "every thing is Human" (J34.48), that "Rivers Mountains Cities Villages, / All are Human" (J71.15-16). In this sense Blake can speak of "Every...Atom / Of Human Intellect" (M25.18-19); that is, to speak of atoms is to speak of a mental structure or unit. And it is in this sense that Blake can attribute the power of "generation"--the power to achieve the definite and determinate identity of living form, the power by which the "various Classes of Men...born on Earth" are "markd out determinate"

(M26.37,39,37) so as to form "every Species of Earth, Metal, Tree, Fish, Bird & Beast" (M25.41)--to Los or imagination. In this sense, too, Blake can assert that the power of generation by virtue of which the potential becomes the actual order of things we perceive and know is a "Spiritual" and not a "Natural" power (M26.40); that is, not a power that can be explained in terms of mechanical forces acting upon miniscule grains of sand.

For Kant, too, what we know is not other than our capacity to perceive and know. But, for Kant, what is real, the in-itself, is other; so that science--knowledge of what is, knowledge of what is more than an objective projection (Entwurf) of what reason puts before itself according to its own rules--becomes impossible; so that science becomes a "work of art" within an absurd theatre of illusion. For Blake, science begins with the recognition that the idea of the opaque "in itself" is a fiction of the "rational power," and an unnecessary hypothesis. God is not "afar off." Newton's atom is a thing that does not exist. Nature is imagination itself. The substantiality of things is the substantiality of imagination. A thing's reality is its imaginative form, which is not other than the form or act of vision, so that science as a knowledge of things, of what is as it is and as it shows itself, becomes possible. The Science of the Elohim is at the antipodes of Kantian solipsism.

All that we see is vision, Blake argues, meaning not that what we see are only projections of what we alone have devised, but rather that the form of what we perceive is not other than--is identical with--the thing's imaginative form. The act or form which achieves the

thing's energy or power to exist is not other than--is identical with --the act or form of our power to perceive and know, our vision. The form of what we know, vision or science, cannot be separated except in abstraction from the things that we know. But it can be so separated in abstraction, as it is separated by Locke who understands the form of perception as a reflected representation of a presence that is elsewhere; or by Bacon who understands that knowing reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto an external nature of things governed by laws of matter. The abstraction of vision or science from things is perfected in the First Law of Motion of Newton's physics, which defines the principle of inertia in terms of the state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line of a body--of a body that, as Heidegger notes, no one has ever perceived, and that no experiment could ever bring to direct perception: "This law speaks of a thing that does not exist."¹¹⁵

For Blake, this abstract separation of vision from things is the labour of Natural Religion, of the abstract "Reasoning Power"; separation or division is the accomplishment of the science of Bacon, Newton and Locke; abstract separation is accomplished in the form of the Cartesian partition, the Cloven Fiction, the divided existence of reasoning spectre or selfhood and opaque "Mystery," that is, in the form of Natural Religion's myth of external reality. But if nature is imagination itself, then nature is imagined; that is, the myth of external reality is the product, the "Creation," of the sleeping, idolatrous imagination. Blake's critique of Natural Religion as idolatry is based on his claim that the concept of the alien and extrinsic "in itself"--the foundation of the myth of external

reality--is a creation of the selfhood, that which the rational power alone has devised and projected, put before itself according to its own rules. The vision or science of nature built or conceived on this foundation--Ulro--does not represent or reflect an external order of things but rather mirrors the state of the selfhood, defines the Archimedean vantage point of the spectre, outside separated from things, alone with its own abstractions in the "Void Outside of Existence."

It is this "nature," the creation of the selfhood, the oeuvre of Natural Religion, that Blake vilifies and refuses to follow or imitate: a nature beyond perception, opaque, beyond knowing, a "Mystery," a nature of unperceived bodies declining uniformly from the abstract idea of a straight line, a world where inert particles aggregate in void spaces, a world of death. This nature can be called "Satanic," but not because it exists and is "never good in itself," nor because it consists of "physical, material materials." It consists of the concept of such materials, of abstractions; it represents or mirrors or expresses the state of the selfhood, a state which Blake calls "Satan," a state which is not an "existence out of mind" but a state of that mind which has abstracted or divided itself from existence.

The myth of external reality, Blake argues, did not fall down from the heavens but is imagined, is a "Creation," the artifice of "Abstract Philosophy" and not of a "God afar off." It can therefore be "cast off," or "consumed," or "annihilated"; and an alternative episteme or vision can be created or built. This is precisely the two-

fold labour of Los: to explore the world of Albion's nightmare, to determine the pathology of his "disease," to identify the system of Natural Religion as that which originates from the selfhood, as that which can therefore be cast off; and to create an alternative episteme or architecture (Golgonooza) and an alternative vision of "nature" (a World of Generation). In building this alternative--practising the Science of the Elohim--Los does not articulate an "idealism" which holds that the "external world can be reconstituted in accordance with the patterns imposed by man's imagination." To create a World of Generation implies a recognition that the patterns of things that we perceive and know are always already the patterns of imagination. To build Golgonooza implies a recognition that the structural abstraction of mind or imagination from the "substantiality of things" and the invention of the concept of an "external world" as thing-in-itself is a pattern that is created and imposed by man's rational power, a pattern that defines the vantage point of the selfhood.

When the pattern of Natural Religion is identified and cast off, we can, Blake argues, begin to build Jerusalem, "to Labour in Knowledge." When the dark Religions are departed and sweet Science reigns, we can begin to seek out "Wisdom," "from Animal & Vegetable & Mineral" (M25.20-21), from the various classes of men born on earth, from the human forms of all things. Wisdom is a sum of human relations, knowledge the play of metaphor and metonym, "varying / According to the subject of discourse" (J98.34-35). But we build Jerusalem out of the ashes of a burned up creation, out of a recognition that the transcendental signified we have used to wound desire and to negate wisdom is something that we alone have devised.

NOTES

¹ The Book of Los Plate 5, line 56. Quotations of Blake's poetry and prose will henceforth be cited in the text. All quotations are from The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake, Newly revised edition, ed. David V. Erdman, commentary by Harold Bloom (1965; Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1982), abbreviated as E. Quotations of illuminated works are to title, plate and (where possible) line number. Other works are cited by title and/or page number in E. The following abbreviations of titles are used: Am for America a Prophecy; Ann for Annotations; ARO for All Religions are One; BA for The Book of Ahania; BL for The Book of Los; BU for The [First] Book of Urizen; Eur for Europe a Prophecy; FZ for The Four Zoas; J for Jerusalem; M for Milton, a Poem in 2 Books; MHH for The Marriage of Heaven and Hell; NNR for There is No Natural Religion; SE for Songs of Experience; VLJ for [A Vision of the Last Judgment].

² The Continuing City: William Blake's Jerusalem (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983) 234.

³ To complete this identification: the "World of Los," "Nature" understood as a "Vision of the Science of the Elohim," is the "World of Generation" that Los creates from the "World of Death."

⁴ A Blake Dictionary (Providence: Brown UP, 1965) 147.

⁵ Blake's Composite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978) 35.

⁶ Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake (1947; Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974) 14; Thomas R. Frosch, The Awakening of Albion: The Renovation of the Body in the Poetry of William Blake (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1974) 40; Edward J. Rose, "Los, Pilgrim of Eternity," Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on The Four Zoas, Milton, and Jerusalem, ed. Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1973) 83; Morton D. Paley, Energy and Imagination: A Study of the Development of Blake's Thought (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970) 57.

⁷ See in particular Donald D. Ault's Visionary Physics: Blake's Response to Newton (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1974).

⁸ W. J. T. Mitchell, "Dangerous Blake," Studies in Romanticism 21 (1982): 410; Frye, Fearful Symmetry 251.

⁹ Energy and Imagination 200.

¹⁰ William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols (1924; Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958) 194.

¹¹ Fearful Symmetry 390.

- 12 Poetic Form in Blake's Milton (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976) 123n.
- 13 Visionary Physics 136-137.
- 14 Blake's Apocalypse: A Study in Poetic Argument (1963; Garden City: Doubleday, 1965) 371.
- 15 "Notes for a Commentary on Milton," The Divine Vision, ed. Vivian De Sola Pinto (London: Victor Gollancz, 1957) 136.
- 16 "Blake's Radical Comedy," Blake's Sublime Allegory 300, 299, 306.
- 17 Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980) 336.
- 18 Damrosch 380, 334.
- 19 Damrosch 330.
- 20 Damrosch 321.
- 21 Damrosch 3.
- 22 "Radical Comedy" 299.
- 23 Frye, "Notes" 133.
- 24 Fearful Symmetry 336.
- 25 "The Road of Excess," Romanticism and Consciousness, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970) 130.
- 26 Awakening 156, 157.
- 27 Frosch 156.
- 28 Frosch 156-57.
- 29 Apocalypse 370.
- 30 Bloom 371.
- 31 Bloom 371.
- 32 Damrosch 323.
- 33 Damrosch 318, 380.
- 34 "Radical Comedy" 300.
- 35 Damrosch 349, 3.

- 36 "Radical Comedy" 306.
- 37 "Radical Comedy" 299.
- 38 "Radical Comedy" 307. In his study of Blake's Composite Art, Mitchell clarifies his perception of Blake's "affirmation in the face of absurdity" (217) by likening it to Camus's interpretation of "the myth of Sisyphus"; I will discuss this interpretation later, in a different context.
- 39 Damrosch 3.
- 40 Dark Interpreter: The Discourse of Romanticism (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1980) 265. I will examine the terms of Rajan's argument more fully later.
- 41 Rajan 238-39.
- 42 Apocalypse 15.
- 43 Cited by Fritjof Capra, The Tao of Physics (Boulder: Shambhala, 1975) 56.
- 44 Cited by Werner Heisenberg, The Physicist's Conception of Nature, trans. Arnold J. Pomerans (London: Hutchinson, 1958) 116-117.
- 45 Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958) 129.
- 46 Physicist's Conception 29.
- 47 Quoted by Damrosch 15, citing Principles of Human Knowledge, par. 3; The Works of George Berkeley, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (London, 1949).
- 47a Immanuel Kant, Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's, 1965).
- 48 Biographia Literaria, ed. George Watson (London: J. M. Dent, 1975) 147-48. Further to this critique, Coleridge denies that the "realism of mankind" is explained by "the assertion that there exists a something without them, what, or how, or where they know not, which occasions the objects of their perceptions....It is the table itself which the man of common sense believes himself to see, not the phantom of a table from which he may argumentatively deduce the reality of a table which he does not see" (148). The "system of modern metaphysics," Coleridge continues, "destroy[s] the reality of all that we actually behold," and "banishes us to a land of shadows" (148). We might compare this notion of the man of common sense banished to a metaphysical land of shadows to Blake's image of Albion, victim of "Abstract Philosophy" (J5.58), the "sleeper of the land of shadows" (J4.6). Coleridge's concern for the status of our "objects of

perception" and for "the reality of all that we actually behold," is, I will attempt to show, consistent with Blake's concern for "Jerusalem."

- 49 What Coleridge Thought (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, 1971) 142, 144. I am particularly indebted to this work for its analysis of what the "Cartesian partition" meant in Coleridge's or Blake's time and of what it continues to mean for us.
- 50 Damrosch 165.
- 51 Philosophy and The Mirror of Nature (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979) 12.
- 52 Poetry, Language and Thought, trans. Alfred Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) 112.
- 53 Heidegger, Poetry 111-112.
- 54 Heidegger, Poetry 112.
- 55 Heidegger, Poetry 112.
- 56 Identity and Difference, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1969) 35.
- 57 Heidegger, Poetry 111.
- 58 Basic Writings, ed. David F. Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 303.
- 59 Physics and Philosophy 79.
- 60 Physics and Beyond: Encounters and Conversations, trans. A. J. Pomerans (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) 243.
- 61 Roger S. Jones, Physics as Metaphor (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1982) 6.
- 62 Heisenberg, Physicist's Conception 29.
- 63 Jones, Physics 6.
- 64 Physics and Philosophy 160.
- 65 Jones, Physics 53.
- 66 Heisenberg, Physics and Beyond 243.

- 67 Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy 186. To further define this sense of "potentialities or possibilities," and to emphasize that particles are not existents, Heisenberg likens the "energy" out of which particles are formed to the Aristotelian notion of potentia (see, e.g., 160, 180).
- 68 Heisenberg, Physics and Beyond 123.
- 69 "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense," The Portable Nietzsche, trans. Walter Kaufmann (1954; New York: Viking, 1972), 46-47.
- 70 Beyond Good and Evil, sec. 21; in Basic Writings of Nietzsche, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1966) 219.
- 71 Damrosch 165.
- 72 Frye 17.
- 73 Damrosch 166.
- 74 William Blake's Jerusalem: Structure and Meaning in Poetry and Picture (London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1982) 44.
- 75 Doskow 167.
- 76 Doskow 168.
- 77 Doskow 169.
- 78 Frye 27.
- 79 Energy and Imagination 57.
- 80 Awakening 40, 156.
- 81 Frosch 156.
- 82 Apocalypse 371.
- 83 Bloom 371-72.
- 84 Bloom 371.
- 85 Damrosch 321.
- 86 The Advancement of Learning and New Atlantis, ed. with a Preface by Thomas Case (London: Oxford UP, 1956) 96.
- 87 Frosch, Awakening 157, 156.
- 88 "Dangerous Blake" 410.

- 89 "Dangerous Blake" 415.
- 90 Blake's Composite Art 217.
- 91 Mitchell, Composite 216.
- 92 Mitchell, Composite 217, 216.
- 93 Mitchell, Composite 216.
- 94 "An Absurd Reasoning," The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays, trans. Justin O'Brien (New York: Random House, 1955) 16.
- 95 "An Absurd Reasoning" 15.
- 96 Dark Interpreter 13-14. The major premise of this book's argument is the "intentional structure" theory of poetic language, formulated by Paul de Man, in "The Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image," in Romanticism and Consciousness 65-77. As Rajan notes, de Man's notion of intentionality "probably derives from Sartre" (14n).
- 97 Damrosch 322.
- 98 Damrosch 13.
- 99 Damrosch 13.
- 100 Damrosch 327.
- 101 Damrosch 330.
- 102 Damrosch 370.
- 103 Damrosch 369.
- 104 Dark Interpreter 220.
- 105 Rajan 13.
- 106 The Advancement of Learning 96-97.
- 107 Bacon 97, 96.
- 108 Rajan 252.
- 109 Damrosch, who sees self-deconstruction in Blake's text, nevertheless agrees that "Blake's myth chooses to deny essential facts of human experience" (70n).
- 110 Rajan 242.
- 111 Biographia Literaria 148.

112 "Dangerous Blake" 416. But what is a "concrete condition"? It can perhaps be said that what Blake and Coleridge address in challenging classical physics is precisely the way that science, transforming things into objects which can be understood only in terms of mathematical representation, renders the term "concrete" meaningless.

113 Physics and Philosophy 129.

114 Rajan 265.

115 "Modern Science, Metaphysics and Mathematics," Basic Writings 265.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BUILDING OF NATURAL RELIGION

Section A - Originating Error

Part 1 - Imagination and Error

We are accustomed to think of imagination as phantasia, as a power of constructing "images," metaphors and metonyms, fictions. The fiction is a reality lacking its reality: it appears, it can be the object of knowledge, as in a university course which teaches the "forms of fiction"; but a fiction is by definition unreal. That is, the definition, the concept which determines imagination as phantasia, implies that we can measure imagination against the reality it lacks, from which it is by definition excluded. There must be such a reality, and we must be able to know it.

For Blake, all things exist in the human imagination; no thing exists outside imagination; what is real, forms that exist, are forms of imagination. The idea of a reality external to imagination is therefore an "error," an idea or concept which has no content, a concept which exists only in the mind which conceives it. The mind which conceives this error, Blake calls the "selfhood," or "spectre," or "rational power." The order of words, the system of concepts, definitions, rules, the myth or religion or science which articulates and promulgates this error, Blake calls "Natural Religion."

As an example of what he means by Natural Religion, Blake cites

the oeuvre of "Bacon, Newton & Locke," the philosophy or science of nature which defines "nature" as an objective order of things, a physical reality external to the mind, a res extensa consisting of matter. The "foundation of natural philosophy," Newton asserts, is the concept of the atomic unit of matter, the idea that existents consist of "least particles" or atoms which are "extended, and hard and impenetrable and movable and endowed with their forces of inertia."¹ The table that I (a man of common sense) see is a physical object consisting of atoms or particles. The form that I see, the physical form, is an arrangement or disposition of particles in space (space being the void filled by particles, the space in which particles exist or stand-out as extended things). The physical form of the real table I see exists outside my mind, outside my powers of vision (my power to perceive and know). I can see the physical table because, as Bacon puts it, "God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass."² The mind reflects what exists outside it. What is "in" my mind, the form "in" the mirror, what is "in" the perception my mirroring mind forms, is a mental reflection of a physical reality. The content of vision (perception, knowledge) is a reflection, an image of something other; the "real" content of vision, the physical object, is outside the form of vision. The building of natural philosophy, the construction of a system of concepts which articulate the vision of nature as a physical reality consisting of matter, is, literally, the building of a house of mirrors; the concept, the rationally precise form of knowledge, is by definition a mirror, that which reflects, that which has for its content a reflection. The achievement of natural philosophy is the division of the form of existence (the real, physical form that exists

outside the mind) from the form of vision (the mental reflection that appears in the mind).

By "imagination" Blake means the identity of existence and vision. What exists, what is real, are the forms of imagination: a thing's "Reality is Its Imaginative Form" (E664); imaginative form is the form of vision, the form of our power to perceive and know. The table that I see is the table. The table that I see, the form of my perception, is the table, the form that exists. The table does not consist of "atoms," in the sense that Newton conceived atoms. Newton's atom, Blake argues, is "A Thing that does not Exist" (E783). That is, the concept of an extended, hard, impenetrable particle exists only in the mind which conceives it. Newton's atom is imagined. The form of vision, the concept, is what exists, a concept in the mind which conceives it, a concept which contains those attributes which the conceiving mind attributes to it, a concept which reflects not an external reality but the mind which conceives it.

The table that I see consists, according to the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory, of particles or atoms; but these atoms "are neither things nor objects."³ Atoms can be understood as forms of "energy", forms of a potentia or power to exist, suggests Heisenberg; but the atomic forms of energy do not exist, do not stand-out in space, do not appear as objects of perception, are not things-in-themselves. The table that I see can be understood as consisting of atomic particles which do not exist; of an energy or potentia or capacity to exist. But we cannot attribute to the atomic structures described by quantum theory the ontological status of an objective

reality external to the mind.

If atoms do not exist, Blake argues, what is built on the foundation of the concept of the existent atom is an error, that which can be "cast off." We are not required to conceive existents as "physical forms" existing outside the forms of vision. Nor are we required to conceive the mind as a mirror, the form of vision as a reflection, the content of vision as a phantasmal image of an external reality. The table I see is the table; the form of my perception is the form that exists; the form of the table that exists is the act of my power to perceive and know, the form of my vision. What exists, Blake argues, appears, shows itself, in the form of perception, as the content of vision. What appears, what is "discernd by the five senses," "that calld Body," is not a separate "existing principle," a corporeal or physical substance, a res extensa essentially distinct from res cogitans or "Reason" (MHH4). Physical forms, "bodies" consisting of corporeal "least particles," do not appear because they do not exist. That is, they exist only as empty concepts in the mind which conceives them, they appear only in the texts of natural philosophy; they exist as expressions or reflections of the selfhood, they appear in the Building of Natural Religion.

Part 2 - Before Error: "in Eternity"

Blake's critique of Natural Religion is a function of his understanding of imagination, an understanding expressed in the prophecies in large part through the figure and career of "Man" or Albion. Awake, in Eternity, Albion is identical with the Human Form

Divine or Divine Vision; the awakened or eternal form of Albion is the Human Imagination in whom all things exist. When Albion "away turns" (J4.22), "Turning his back to the Divine Vision" (J29.1), he "falls" from Eternity into the "Sleep of Ulro" (J4.1), where he is identical with Satan, "the Great Selfhood" (J29.17). Eternity is the content of the awakened mind, the Divine Vision. Ulro is the content of the sleeping mind, the selfhood. Natural Religion articulates the vision of Ulro, the dream-world imagined by the selfhood.

The eternal form of Albion is the Human Imagination, the Human Form Divine, in whom all things exist. In Eternity, Man, the human form of imagination, is the containing form or circumference of existence: "Man anciently containd in his mighty limbs all things in Heaven & Earth" (J27). Man contains "all things" not as a bottle contains pills, nor as a pill contains molecules of acetylsalicylic acid--which implies a division of formal and material causes, an extrinsic relation between form and content or matter, so that the containing form becomes an accidental effect (a pill or a capsule) or a separate "existing principle" (the bottle in relation to the pill). There is for Blake one existing principle, imagination, which is the identity of formal and material causes, of body and soul or energy and reason. What exists consists of imagination, not of a matter or corporeal substance appropriate to the category of "body" which excludes "mind."

The eternal form of Man contains all things not as a bottle contains pills but as the brain contains the cells of which it consists, or as the cell is the circumference or energeia of its power to exist as a determinate form. As the brain contains the cells of

which it consists, it is the principle of their identity, that which identifies each cell as a brain cell. For Blake, each thing, because it exists in the human imagination, is human: "For all are Men in Eternity. Rivers Mountains Cities Villages, / All are Human" (J71.15-16). Imagination cannot be divided into "mental" and "corporeal" substances; hence, the Human Form Divine, the eternal form of Man, is the "Divine Body." Each thing, because it exists in the Human Imagination, is a "member" of the Divine Body: "every / Particular is a Man; a Divine Member of the Divine Jesus" (J91.29-30).

The selfhood, whose identity is determined according to the Urizenic formula, "I alone, even I" (BU4.19), whose identity begins and ends with the "I" conceived as the atomic unit of res cogitans, can maintain its identity only in abstraction, only by withdrawing into itself, by turning away from others, by excluding the non-I as an otherness, alien and extrinsic. A "member" by contrast is a being whose being implies others--who are not "other," who are not aliens, who are also members, who belong together as members of "One Family" (J55.46). The identity of the member is determined according to the formula, "I am in you and you in me" (J4.7). Identity conceived as the integrity or belonging-together of the body's members--the sense of identity implied by the figure of Man who contains all things "in his mighty limbs"--does not require the member to surrender its individuality to an abstract totality or "General Good" (J55.61). The body's good is the mutual viability of its cells, the capacity of each cell to flourish in accord with its definite and determinate identity, a capacity accomplished not in abstract isolation but "in" the body,

as a "member." Only the selfhood finds its identity erased by belonging-together with that which is more than itself.

The claim, "every particular is a man," seems extravagantly anthropomorphic; and so it is. But as we are accustomed to understand anthropomorphism, it implies an attribution of "human form" to non-human "nature," or an appropriation of the objective non-human into subjective, human categories. To the notion of the non-human as an identification of species, Blake has no objection: "every particular is a man" does not mean that a fish has in reality two arms and legs and walks on land. "All are Human" means that there is no "reality" external to the human imagination; that a fish does not consist of a substance or res other than the human mind; that the specific form which distinguishes fish from mammal, or bass from pike, as well as the particular form which distinguishes this bass from that, are mental forms, acts of the power to exist in definite and determinate identity, acts of spiritual power, forms of imagination. The concept of the non-human as an ontological category is after all a concept, a human form; and we can ask what the content of this concept might be. The vision which identifies a fish as a "physical object," as a form whose extension can be plotted on a graph with x and y axes, is not less anthropomorphic than the vision which sees or identifies existents as human forms, as members of the Divine Body.

"Thought is Act" (Ann. to Bacon's Essays E623), a human act. For Blake, science no less than poetry is anthropomorphic, in the literal sense: the forms or acts of thinking are human forms. But, for Blake, so also are the forms of existents human forms, acts of mind or imagination, mental forms. "To know (noein) and to be (einai) is the

same," for Parmenides,⁴ and for Blake. That is, in contrast to the Cartesian framework which postulates the ontological separation of mind from an external reality or nature, thereby dividing the power to know from the power to exist, the subjective form of knowledge or perception from the objective form of existence, for Blake the form of existence, the act of the power to exist, is identical with the form of vision, the act of the power to perceive and know. The form of vision, the form in which thought is accomplished as a determinate act, is the circumference or containing form of determinate existence; the power to exist is realized as mental form, as the act of vision. "Actual knowledge is identical with its object," for Aristotle (De Anima III.5,430a), and for Blake. The oak I see is the achievement of its power to exist, its reality, its imaginative form; the acorn's energy, its "only life" (MHH4), is bounded and accomplished in the form of the oak, a mental form, the form I see, the act of my power to perceive.

As there is no reality external to imagination, the form of imagination is the outward circumference of existence, the containing form of "all things in Heaven & Earth"; and as vision cannot (except in abstraction) be divided from existence, the containing form of all things is the circumference of vision. The eternal form of Man, the Human Form Divine, is the Divine Vision. Man in Eternity is the circumference or bound, the act or energeia of the power to exist and of the power to know. What exists, exists as the content of vision. Eternity is the content of the awakened mind, the Divine Vision. The "immortal Eyes / Of Man" open "inwards into the Worlds of Thought:

into Eternity / Ever expanding in the Bosom of God. the Human Imagination" (J5.18-20).

"All that we See is Vision" (Laocoon E273), Blake argues: what we see are the forms which accomplish our power to see, our vision. In Eternity, for the immortal or awakened eyes of man, the forms of vision are the forms of existents, the human members of the Divine Body. Eternity is "translucent":

In Great Eternity, every particular Form gives forth
or Emanates
Its own peculiar Light, & the Form is the Divine Vision
And the Light is his Garment This is Jerusalem in every
Man
A Tent & Tabernacle of Mutual Forgiveness Male & Female
Clothings.
And Jerusalem is called Liberty among the Children of
Albion (J54.1-5)

In Eternity, what exists, shows itself, appears: every particular form emanates its own peculiar light. What exists are the forms of imagination, human or mental forms, the forms of vision: "the Form is the Divine Vision." What appears, the emanation of what exists, appears "in" the form of vision, as the content of vision, as what we perceive: the Garment, Male and Female Clothings, the body discerned by the senses.

Jerusalem is the "phenomenon": what appears, what is shown, the emanation of what exists; what is perceived, the content of vision. Jerusalem is that by virtue of which reality appears, such that appearances illuminate or reveal reality, the real forms of existents. Jerusalem is the liberty of things to appear, to show themselves as themselves; and the liberty of vision to perceive and know what is. The emanation of what exists "in every Man," Jerusalem is what the mind knows, knowledge. Hence, "to Labour in Knowledge. is to Build up

Jerusalem" (J77).

Part 3 - Into Error: the selfhood

In Eternity there is no Natural Religion, for Albion knows that the idea of a reality external to the human imagination is an illusion or error. But it is precisely to this error that Albion succumbs as he turns his back to the Divine Vision, away turns or withdraws from his eternal form, and falls into division, becoming what Erin calls "Albion the Vortex of the Dead" (J48.54).

The image of a vortex implies two simultaneous movements: the centripetal collapse of the circumference, and the centrifugal dispersion of what the circumference contained. Albion's circumference is the Divine Vision of the Human Form; what this circumference contains is "all things in Heaven & Earth." When Albion falls, "All fell towards the Center in dire ruin, sinking down" (M19.21). From this dire ruin, from Albion's collapse into "narrow doleful form" (J49.32), from his "narrowed perceptions" (J49.21), existents, Albion's "members," disperse or "flee":

First fled my Sons, & then my Daughters, then my Wild
 Animations
 My Cattle next, last ev'n the Dog of my Gate. the
 Forests fled
 The Corn-fields, & the breathing Gardens outside
 separated
 The Sea; the Stars: the Sun: the Moon: drivn forth by
 my disease (J21.7-10)

The "center" into which Albion collapses is the selfhood, the "Selfish Center" (J71.7), the "I alone," a self-consciousness encaverned within the skull, the "orbed skull around the brain"

(M19.52) being the limit of the centripetal collapse of Albion's circumference, the "mortal brain" being the "Seat / of Satan" or the selfhood (M20.36-38). The selfhood is the limit also of Albion's fall into division. As Albion sinks down into his center, existents are divided or "outside separated" from him: "They return not; but build a habitation separate from Man" (J66.73). The interior space within the orb'd skull is a "World of Loneness" (BA4.64), a "space undivided by existence" (BU13.46). What exists, exists outside separated from the "I alone." The "Selfish Center" is formed "Without" (J71.7), as a void outside of existence.

Albion's originating error is one of "abstraction," in the literal sense of drawing away or back: he "away turns," withdraws from his eternal form, "Turning his back to the Divine Vision." Albion's eternal form is the Human Imagination, the circumference or containing form of existence, the Divine Vision in whom existents appear as the members of the Divine Body. The selfhood is the achievement of Albion's originating error, the form of his abstraction. As an "I alone," the atomic unit or "least particle" of mind, the selfhood is that which can be achieved only in abstraction, by drawing away from things, by withdrawing into an interior space of abstraction from which existents are excluded as aliens. As a mind, a rational power, "self-exiled" (J19.13) from existents, the selfhood is a form of vision which contains abstractions, which has for its content that which is drawn away or abstracted from what exists. What appears for the selfhood, what the rational power perceives, what shows itself in the interior space of the I, cannot be the existent, must be a representation or sign, that which represents the thing in its

absence, that which signifies a reality that is elsewhere, that which stands-in for the thing itself which stands-out, ex-ists outside separated, in an outer space, afar off.

The achievement of Albion's originating error, the form of his abstraction, the selfhood, is the condition of possibility for Natural Religion. For the selfhood, what exists, what is real, is external. The myth of external reality is for Blake the discourse of the selfhood, the order of words appropriate to the I, the system of concepts and definitions commensurate with the rational power. The categories, "same" and "other," reflect the selfhood's principle of identity, "I alone, even I," a principle which requires the I to turn away into itself, to abide the same with itself, to maintain itself as itself by excluding all things not-I as "other." The idea of a res extensa stretching outward, "Away into the far remote" (J66.51), an "endless Abyss of space" (BU15.10) in which things stand-out as extended objects, is commensurate with the selfhood: the out-ness implied by the stretching-out of ex-tension implies an inward "center," the atomic I, the cogito. The idea of the thing as "object," a form set over against the mind or senses, implies the exteriorization of existence, the interiorization or abstraction of the mind, the division of "subjective" vision from "objective" existent. The idea of the mind as a mirror reflects the abstracted form of vision within which what appears appears as an image or representation or shadow.

The achievement of Albion's originating error is the selfhood. The selfhood is the foundation of the Building of Natural Religion,

the building of a myth, a discourse, a system, which articulates, defines, reflects the state of the selfhood. The achievement of Natural Religion is the transformation of Albion's error into the selfhood's "truth."

Section B - Error as Truth

Part 1 - Priesthood

"The ancient Poets," Blake argues, "animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses, calling them by the names and adorning them with the properties of woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged & numerous senses could perceive" (MHH11). The work of poetry does not consist of making phantasmal fictions, of adding illusion to what is really there, nor of withdrawing the mind into a space of unreality. What is made, the Gods or Geniuses, consist of what is perceived; poetry in this sense is the making or formation or shaping of perceptions. The attributes of what is made are the attributes or "properties" of things. To see the poets' oeuvre is to see what is there, the properties of woods, rivers, cities, nations. The poem accomplishes an act of making that is also an act of opening: the poem's metaphors or perceptions open unto what is there, the space in which things appear. The idea that poetry, the making (poiein) of perception, discloses or reveals or opens unto reality implies that things show themselves and are perceived as they show themselves--that the table I see is the table; and implies that the making of perception accomplishes that in which

things show themselves--that the table appears in the form of my perception.

The act of perception or vision accomplished in poetry can be perverted: "a system was formed, which some took advantage of & enslav'd the vulgar by attempting to realize or abstract the mental deities from their objects: thus began Priesthood" (MHH11). The poets' Gods or Geniuses are forms of perception in which the properties of things appear. The priesthood's deity is abstracted from what appears, from the things which show themselves in the forms of perception. Abstracted from what appears, the deity is a form of vision which has for its content that which is drawn away, an abstract. The deity appears in, opens unto, a space of abstraction: to see this deity vision must be withdrawn from the properties of things; to see this deity is to see that which realizes the power to abstract, the achievement of priesthood, an idol. The poetic Genius discloses the properties of things; the idol is the creation and property of the abstracted mind which conceives it.

The "system" of priesthood formulates or produces a division between the form of perception, the idol or abstract, and the forms of existents: who sees the idol only sees only that which is withdrawn and outside separated from what exists and appears. The production of this system follows or repeats the pattern of Albion's error: his originating act of abstraction, his fall into the "narrow house" (J19.14) of the selfhood outside separated from existents, where what appears are the creations or properties of the selfhood's rational power, signs signifying the absence or disappearance of what is real. But Albion has no reason to understand his fall into division as

anything other than "error." The achievement of deism is to produce and promulgate such a reason: "at length [the priesthood] pronounced that the Gods had orderd such things" (MHH11). That is, the system produces a revision of its own history, promulgates an interpretation in which the roles of creator and creation are exchanged, so that idols abstracted from poetic tales becomes forms of worship, so that the system which abstracts idols becomes a divine artefact, an expression of divine will, sanctioned by the highest authority. What is inside the collapsed center, the idol in the mind which conceives it, is now outside, a God afar off, the reality behind the appearances of things, the origin and end of "truth." Albion's vortex is reversed; his error is truth.

Part 2 - Abstract Philosophy

For Albion in Eternity, "Every thing...shines by its own Internal light" (M10.16). What exists, the forms of imagination, appear: "every particular Form gives forth or Emanates / Its own peculiar light" (J54.1-2). The form that Albion sees, the phenomenon, is the form that exists, that shines. The word "phenomenon" derives from phainein, "to bring to light, to make to appear, show or shine"; the phenomenon is "what shows itself in that which occurs out of itself."⁵ For Albion in Eternity existents are phenomena, appearances shining by their own light. The phenomenon is also that which is perceived, that which Albion sees, the content of his vision. The phenomenon is the "emanation": that which emanates from the thing, goes forth as light, to appear in the form of perception, as the content of vision, as what

is perceived. In Eternity, "every particular Form gives forth or Emanates / Its own peculiar Light, & the Form is the Divine Vision." The form which exists, and shines, is the form of Albion's power to perceive, the Divine Vision. Perception does not occur in a space outside the existent, in a form separate from what exists. To shine, to emanate, to appear "in" perception, is not a passage from one form to a second form across a gulf or void. The form of perception in which the phenomenon appears, in which the existent shines, is not other than the form which exists, the form of imagination.

For Albion who has sunk down from Eternity into the selfish center, for whom existents are "outside separated," it remains that things appear. The man of common sense sees a table; the table shows itself, appears in the form of perception. Fallen Albion's powers of perception are "withered," "shrunken"; what appears "in" his narrowed perceptions are only "small portions of the eternal world" (Euriii.4). Yet he remains able to perceive phenomena, to receive the light given forth by that which exists and shines: "Five windows light the cavern'd Man" (Euriii.1). There is no reason for caverned Albion to divide the properties of things he perceives, the phenomena which appear, from the things which emanate these properties, which shine, which sing or shriek, which taste sweet or bitter, which vibrate, burn, bloom, tower, exult. There is no reason for the man of common sense to suppose that the table he believes himself to see is the phantom of a table he does not see; to suppose that the form of his perception is other than the existent form.

The phenomenon, what appears, appears in the form of perception,

as the content of vision. The form of perception cannot be found "in" the skull. The content of vision, the phenomenon, is the emanation of what exists, a property of the thing given forth as a gift, a portion however small of something that is not the property of the selfhood. If the forms of vision are as windows through which the light of existents shines, they are also as windows through which cavered man may "pass out what time he please" (Euriii.5), windows opening out unto what appears, what exists and shines by its own internal light. To pass out is to go forth from the cave, the space of the selfhood's abstraction; to leave behind the selfhood and its properties, its idols, its definitions. To pass out is to rouse the faculties to act; to perceive, and so receive the emanation; to make or accomplish larger and more numerous forms of vision in which larger and more numerous portions of existence may appear.

Conversely, to maintain the I in the purity of its selfhood, in its proper truth, it is necessary to turn away from phenomena, to close the windows of perception, to put the faculties to sleep, and refuse to pass out. "I shall now close my eyes," writes Descartes, beginning a meditation that will allow the proposition, "God exists," to appear as a true statement, "I shall stop my ears, I shall call away all my senses."⁶ Abstraction, drawing away from phenomena, is here the "method" of truth, an ordered procedure to stop the senses from acting, from forming perceptions in which phenomena may appear. "I shall efface even from my thoughts all images of corporeal things, or at least (for that is hardly possible) I shall esteem them as vain and false."⁷ Having cleansed the interior space of the I from false distractions, the philosopher is at liberty to converse with himself

on the subject of his selfhood: "and thus holding converse only with myself and considering my own nature, I shall try little by little to reach a better knowledge of and a more familiar acquaintanceship with myself."⁸ Achieving familiarity with itself, the I discovers its truth, that it is a finite and imperfect being, that is, a being incapable of producing on its own the idea of an infinite and perfect Being; this idea must originate and emanate from elsewhere, from an infinite and perfect Being. "The idea, I say, of this Being who is absolutely perfect and infinite, is entirely true."⁹ That is, the idea of a God afar off, whose essence is perfection, a perfection of otherness, of what is not-I, a being who, because he is infinite, must abide elsewhere, outside separated from the finite I, is entirely true for the I, for the I that has turned away from phenomena, which has withdrawn into itself, into the center of its aloneness, where, in proximity to itself, it can converse with itself so as to discover its truth.

Five windows light the caverned man. The phenomenon, what appears in the form of perception, is the emanation of what exists and shines by its own internal light. Cartesian truth, what is true for the rational I, is that which can be grasped by the I in the intelligible form of a clear and distinct idea. What appears in the form of perception, what the windows of sense disclose, is sensible, appropriate to the senses, a corporeal image, that which, in the judgment of the I, can be esteemed as vain and false. The method of truth which informs the judgment of the I transforms the light of the phenomenon into the darkness of a false image, a shadow.

In practising a method of truth which separates the true from the false by separating the intelligible from the sensible, rational soul from corporeal senses, Descartes adheres to the discipline of an established regime of truth. As Socrates explains to Phaedrus, the apprehension of truth requires an ascent of reason to that place "outside the heavens," a place of which "none of our earthly poets has yet sung...It is here that true being [ousia] dwells, without color or shape, that cannot be touched; reason [nous] alone, the soul's pilot, can behold it, and all true knowledge is knowledge thereof" (247c). Ousia (in the vernacular, "that which is one's own, one's substance, property") is for Plato the eternal substance of what is real, that by virtue of which the real is what it is. The real forms of ousia are "intelligible" (noeton), appropriate to reason. What can be touched, what has color or shape, is "sensible" (aistheton). Reality, ousia, is defined by excluding from its definition what is sensible: ousia dwells "outside" (exo); it is exotic, outside what can be touched, outside the sensible realm disclosed by poets' song. Truth, true knowledge, requires the separation of the intelligible from the sensible, requires reason to go outside that which is appropriate to the body and its senses, to leave behind what is sensible and therefore false.

The regime of truth which divides the intelligible from the sensible divides the existent form from its phenomenal appearance. What exists in truth exists "in itself," "is always the same with itself" (Timaeus 28a). To appear as a phenomenon, that which the senses can apprehend, the existent must go outside itself, must depart from its proper place "outside the heavens" and enter the sensible

space of which earthly poets sing. But the existent that goes outside itself, departs from its ousia, is no longer the same with itself or in itself, is no longer itself, is rather an "image" (mimema, eikon) of itself, a sensible copy of the intelligible form, a repetition of itself in a space outside of itself. As an "image," the phenomenon is a reality lacking its reality, that which is other than itself, that which "has not for its own even that substance for which came into being, but is borne always as the phantasma of some other" (Timaeus 52c). The phantasma is that which is appropriate to phantasia, "imagination." Whether phantasia is identified with aisthesis (perception of the sensible, sense-perception, "sensation"); or whether phantasia is conceived as the representation of sensible images in their absence, as in dreams or as in the work of poets who make images of images; it remains that "imagination" conjures "images," forms of phantasy, images of a reality that is elsewhere, forms that signify their own emptiness, signifiers, shadows, phantasmata. The words phantasia, phantasma, derive from the same root as do phainein, and "phenomenon." The "light" of these words is in truth darkness. The phenomenon which shows itself, the perception in which the phenomenon shines, the poet's song which shapes the perceptions which open unto what shines by its own light, are in truth as the shadows of a puppet-show flickering on a cavern wall.

There is reason to regard what the man of common sense sees as the phantom of a reality he does not see. But this reason is not for the man of common sense: "of nous only the gods partake and a small class of men" (Timaeus 51e). Nous is the reason of philosophers, that

small class of men who conceive true knowledge as knowledge of a reality that has no emanation, that does not appear, a reality afar off, outside, "in impalpable voidness, not to be / Touchd by the hand nor seen with the eye" (J22.26-27).

Part 3 - Bacon, Newton & Locke

1 "We are to admit no more causes of natural things," admonishes Newton, "than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearances."¹⁰ Nature, the order of natural things, appears; a science of nature will explain nature's appearances. A true science is the knowledge of the true causes of appearances, a "cause" being that which explains appearances, a principle of explanation stated in the form of a mathematical proposition. "We are certainly not to relinquish the evidence of experiments for the sake of dreams and vain fictions of our own making."¹¹ A true science must be empirical, founded on the evidence of experiments, on observation, on what appears as it appears. To be true, a true explanation of phenomena, the proposition must be derived from the phenomena themselves: "In experimental physics we are to look upon propositions collected by general induction from phenomena as accurately or very nearly true, notwithstanding any contrary hypotheses that may be imagined, till such time as other phenomena occur, by which they may either be made more accurate, or liable to exceptions."¹² As a true science of nature, experimental physics will be a "phenomenology," a logos or true discourse of phenomena.

The system of Platonic truth will not serve as a framework for

the project of an empirical science. For Plato, the truth of phenomena, a true explanation of what appears, can be summarized in the proposition which identifies phenomena as phantasmata, unreal images of a reality that does not appear. Science or true knowledge is knowledge of that which exists always the same with itself; whereas the phenomenon "is always in a process of becoming and perishing and never really exists," and is therefore the object not of knowledge but of "opinion" (doxa, Timaeus 28a). Experimental physics requires a new framework, one that will allow phenomena to appear in such a way that from their appearances reason can infer true propositions and thus establish the foundation of a true discourse concerning phenomena. Platonic truth recognizes an absolute, unbridgeable distance between the intelligible existent and the sensible phenomenon. An empirical science must somehow erase this distance; an experiment, for example, must permit the phenomenon to appear as intelligible, so that what is perceived in the experiment, what the experiment discloses, can be grasped by reason. Platonic truth discovers ousia--the intelligible property or substance of existents, that by virtue of which existents exist in themselves--"outside," outside the sensible space in which appearances appear as phantasmal images. An empirical science must as it were bring ousia down to earth; a true natural philosophy must discover the truth of nature "in" nature; an empirical science that will explain the truth of the appearances of natural things must find that this truth appears "in" the phenomenon. The substance or property by virtue of which natural things exist in truth cannot for a true experimental physics abide outside the space of perception opened by the experiment.

For Descartes no less than for Plato, the sensible is other than the intelligible: mind and body "are really substances essentially distinct one from the other."¹³ Res extensa, the order of unthinking, corporeal things--"nature"--exists outside separated from res cogitans. To sensible phenomena Descartes refuses to ascribe the status of clear and distinct ideas, which are the proper forms of true knowledge. To be sure, Descartes is not an empiricist. On the other hand, Plato would not say that the body, the "corporeal," the sensible, is a "substance." Descartes concedes that material things exist; res extensa is after all a res. Descartes as it were preserves ousia in its intelligible purity by dividing it into "essentially distinct" substances, so that it is possible to acknowledge a reality inherent in sensible things, while excluding this reality from the truth discovered by the I after it has closed its eyes and stopped its ears.

For Bacon, nature is the proper object of true science, "true and fruitful natural philosophy."¹⁴ Nature exists, is inherently real, because nature is the art of God: "certain it is that God worketh nothing in nature but by second causes"; but it is equally certain that "the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair."¹⁵ While "we do not presume by the contemplation of nature to attain to the mysteries of God", it remains that "God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, capable of the image of the universal world, and joyful to receive the impression thereof"; so that human knowledge, in the form of true natural philosophy, "may comprehend all the universal nature of things."¹⁶

What for Descartes or Plato is other than, outside separated from, the order of intelligence, is for Bacon a "chain" descending from but linked to the author and perfection of intelligence; as the art of God, "nature" is a manifestation of divine wisdom. What for Plato is "becoming and perishing, and never really existent," an illusory order of shadows, is for Bacon a "universal nature of things," the proper object of science. Nature is intelligible and sensible, comprehensible by reason, apparent to the senses. Science, by definition intelligible, can therefore be empirical, experimental: "all true and fruitful natural philosophy hath a double scale or ladder, ascendant and descendent, ascending from experiments to the invention of new causes, and descending from causes to the invention of new experiments."¹⁷ The experiment is the means by which "reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things"; the experiment is the focus of "the severe and diligent inquiry of all real and physical causes."¹⁸

The real and physical causes of nature, revealed and demonstrated by the experiment, are the "laws of matter."¹⁹ "Matter" is that by virtue of which nature is "real and physical." It is the substance or property by virtue of which res extensa is a res. The "essences" of which "all creatures do consist" are "upheld by matter."²⁰ True and fruitful natural philosophy "should contemplate that which is inherent in matter," those "forms" which are "confined and determined by matter."²¹ Matter is the "sensible" substance in which intelligible "forms" or "essences" or "causes" inhere; by virtue of their inherence in matter the intelligible forms are "upheld" as the real and physical existents of which nature consists, and as the true objects of

empirical science.

With the concept of matter as a real and physical substance in which the intelligible inheres and becomes sensible, ousia is brought down to earth. What is real can be contemplated in what appears, in what the experiment demonstrates. Science may open its eyes and unstop its ears, as it pursues the severe and diligent inquiry of physical nature. Indeed the concept of matter not only establishes the foundation for a true empirical science, but also it enables Bacon to identify Plato's error: Plato was not wrong to assert that "forms were the true object of knowledge; but [he] lost the real fruit of his opinion, by considering of forms as absolutely abstracted from matter."²² Matter is the material cause of nature; nature consists of matter; the forms and causes of nature which it is the business of a fruitful philosophy to elucidate are inherent in matter. Nor was Plato wrong to regard imagination as phantasmal, as outside separated from what is real; but imagination is phantasmal because it is not real and physical, "not tied to the laws of matter," and therefore "may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined; and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things."²³

To the concept of matter as the substance or property by virtue of which nature exists and appears as the real and physical object of empirical science, Newton adds the notion of the atomic particle as the unit of matter. These "least particles of all bodies" are "extended, and hard and impenetrable and movable and endowed with their forces of inertia. And this is the foundation of natural

philosophy."²⁴

2 The "Tabernacle of Bacon, Newton & Locke" (J66.14), Blake argues, forms a part of the Building of Natural Religion. The building or achievement of deism is the transformation of Albion's originating "error"--his abstraction and fall into division--into "truth," a truth appropriate to the selfhood, a system of concepts and definitions, a science or philosophy, commensurate with the rational power. A measure of the achievement of Natural Religion, an effect of its truth, is the "destruction / Of Jerusalem" (J7.63-64), the transformation of Jerusalem into Vala, the "Shadow" of Jerusalem "builded by the Reasoning power in Man" (J39.40). To labour in knowledge is to build up Jerusalem; the labours of deism "build / Babylon the City of Vala, the Goddess Virgin-Mother. / She is our Mother! Nature! Jerusalem is our Harlot-Sister" (J18.28-30). Albion, sinking down in dire ruin, is caught in the "Net & Veil of Vala" (J42.81), shrouded in a "land of shadows"; he becomes a slave of Babylon, the "victim" of a cruel goddess, a "Shadowy Female."

As Vala is the Shadow, Jerusalem is the Light of the Human Imagination. She is the phenomenon: the light emanating from what exists and shines; what shows itself, appears, in the Divine Vision, the content of vision; what is perceived and known--knowledge. As the phenomenon, the emanation of what exists, the content of vision, Jerusalem is that by virtue of which imagination is the identity or belonging-together of existence and vision, being and knowing, what is real and what is known.

3. Eternity Jerusalem is Albion's emanation, his liberty, his

light, the light of things which shine for him, his liberty to know that all things exist in and as themselves and as his "members," in his mighty limbs, as the content of his vision, in the forms he perceives and knows. Jerusalem is Albion's phenomena, what shows itself and appears for him, his "fruition," his "fruit of golden harvest" (J19.5), his knowledge, "Mental Studies & Performances" (J77), the "delights / Of age and youth and boy and girl and animal and herb, / And river and mountain, and city & village, and house & family" (J18.16-18).

When Albion away turns from Eternity, withdraws from the content of his vision, from the forms which shine by their own internal light, he falls into division: "his Emanation is divided from him" (J12.6). He is "self-exiled from the face of light & shine of morning" (J19.13). In his shrunken circumference, for Albion in the narrow house of his skull-orbed center, existents appear "outside separated" from him. But yet existents appear: "five windows light the caverned man." Jerusalem is divided from him, but not destroyed. The table he sees is "out there"; but it is the table he sees.

For the selfhood, for Albion's deist sons, Jerusalem is in truth a harlot, the "Shadow of delusions" (J18.11). This truth, that Jerusalem is a shadow, is the effect of the exercise of the rational power, a truth "buildd by the reasoning power." To conceive or imagine a "substance" and to esteem this substance as that by virtue of which what is real is real; to abstract or draw this substance away from phenomena, to conceive it as other than or external to what appears; and to build an episteme or science of "truth" upon the foundation of this substance; is to build a framework of truth within

which it will be true that what appears appears as a shadow, a phantasma, an "image" of something other. What shines, shows itself, appears (Jerusalem), becomes a shadow (Vala). The reality of all that we actually behold is destroyed--in truth, by the system which defines and produces truth--in the name of a true substance that does not appear, that we do not behold. The effect of truth, the destruction of Jerusalem, will, Blake argues, be the same whether the imagined true substance is conceived as an intelligible ousia or as a corporeal matter.

The natural philosophy of Bacon and Newton presents itself as an alternative to Platonic truth. For this new science, truth appears, in phenomena, in the evidence of experiments, in such a way that reason can take up or collect from phenomena the propositions and concepts, the episteme, of a true empirical science or knowledge of what exists. What reason can take up from appearances is the real and physical truth "inherent in matter." This truth Plato overlooked or scorned, considering as he did only forms "absolutely abstracted from matter."

But the "matter" conceived by the new science is conceived as existing outside separated from the mind. "Physical" means non-mental, "corporeal." For Descartes matter is extension, and extension is space; but a space essentially distinct from the mental space of res cogitans. Of Newton's particles, no one can conceive intelligence or mind as an attribute. Indeed, the "nature of things," what is physical and real, must be non-mental, not of the mind's own making; must be "objective," outside separated from what is "subjective"; or true science could not be distinguished from mere imagination. God has

framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, to reflect not vain fictions of our own making but a physical reality external to the mind.

This mirroring mind is "capable of the image of the universal world." The mind is capable of an image. What is in the mirroring mind, its content, is a reflection, a form which has no content, a form whose content is elsewhere, a phantasma. The propositions of empirical physics, the forms of true knowledge, knowledge of what is inherent in matter, are not themselves material, are intelligible, mental forms. Matter is by definition outside the mind; the forms of our knowledge of matter are therefore by definition forms abstracted from matter. The propositions collected from material phenomena are not material: they are mental reflections; they propose, set before the mind, the mental form of that which has no mental form, the material reality external to the mind. The propositions of science propose reflections, representations of what is inherent in matter; but the real and physical presence, because it is inherent in matter, is by definition absent from its mental representation. What is in the mirror or glass, the content of knowledge, is by definition--according to the terms of the mirroring mind's own self-definition--a "reversed Reflexion in the Darkness / And in the Non Entity" (J17.42-43).

The concept of the mind as a mirror reflects the mind which conceives this concept, reflects the mind which conceives the real as that which is external to the mind, reflects the myth of an external reality. Natural Religion, Blake argues, transforms error into truth, Albion's originating error of abstraction into an order of words which say what is true for the selfhood, an ensemble of concepts and

definitions that reflect and define the selfhood's rational power of abstraction, its capacity to maintain itself in abstraction as a "reason" or "I" outside separated from what exists and appears. A primary example of error as truth, a "truth" of "All Bibles or sacred codes," is the idea "That Man has two real existing principles Viz: a Body & a Soul" (MHH4). For Plato, the body strictly speaking is not a real existing principle; but the difference between the sensible and the intelligible is a central principle of Platonic truth, a principle central to the technique of reducing phenomena to the status of phantasmata. The achievement of natural philosophy, the transformation of Platonic ousia into "matter," is an achievement based also on the "true" division of sensible from intelligible: matter is by definition outside, external to, divided from, the mind. As a repetition of the same "truth," the new science not surprisingly reproduces the old effect, the reduction of what appears, what we actually behold, to the status of the phantasmal image or shadow.

For Descartes it is true that the sensible body and the intelligible mind "are really substances essentially distinct one from the other." This truth implies that material things exist, outside the mind, and that we can know that they exist. I can be sure that material things exist because God has given me "a very great inclination to believe that [the ideas of sensible things] are conveyed to me by corporeal objects," so that "I do not see how He could be defended from the accusation of deceit if these ideas were produced by causes other than corporeal objects. Hence we must allow that corporeal things exist."²⁵ This argument does not establish a

foundation for empirical science, for an articulate knowledge of the material world, but only the principle that material things exist. It remains that corporeal things "are perhaps not exactly what we perceive by the senses, since this comprehension by the senses is in many instances very obscure and confused."²⁶ It remains that the ideas I have in my mind may not resemble their objects outside my mind: "On the contrary, I have noticed that in many cases there was a great difference between the object and its idea."²⁷ What we perceive by the senses, the phenomenon, the content of perception, the content of the idea in my mind, cannot in truth be the material thing itself which exists outside my mind; what appears to my senses, the phenomenon, is by definition an image of something other, a phantasma, that which can rightly be esteemed as "vain and false."

For Locke, knowledge consists of ideas, simple or complex. But the mind has no "innate ideas"; it is of itself a blank slate, an erased tablet. Real knowledge originates from external reality: our ideas of what is real have for their content what emanates from elsewhere, from what exists outside the mind and appears to the mind's senses. The concept of the "senses" is required to mediate between the blank mind and external reality; the senses are that by virtue of which the emanation or effect of what is real is inscribed on the tablet. External reality exerts some kind of pressure on the passive senses, which the senses transform into "impressions" or "sensations"; the sensation is passed on to the mind, where it is transformed into the mental form of the idea. This is to say, an idea, the form of knowledge, is a representation of a sensation, which is a representation of an external cause. The idea is an image or

representation of a presence (the sensation) which is absent from the idea; the sensation is an image or representation of a presence (the external cause) which is absent from the sensation. An idea is doubly absent from its real cause; the reality is doubly absent from its effect, the idea. The external reality, the active agent, the real cause, the "substance" by virtue of which the real is real, can be called "matter." But we cannot say that we have knowledge of "matter." We have "no other idea or notion of matter but something wherein those many sensible qualities which affect our senses do subsist."²⁸ There must be such an external substance, causing our sensations; but it is unknowable, "being nothing but the supposed, but unknown, support of those qualities we find existing, which we imagine cannot subsist sine re substante."²⁹ Our knowledge consists of ideas, which are insubstantial, the effect of the effect of a substantial cause we can name but cannot know. The "empirical" phenomenon upon which our knowledge or ideas is founded is a shadowy effect, the representation of a presence we cannot perceive or know.

3 The "foundation of natural philosophy," argues Newton, is the idea of the atom or "least particle" of matter. On this foundation natural philosophy builds a vision of nature as a physical reality external to the mind. Blake calls Newton's hard, impenetrable particles "rocks": these "Atomic Origins of Existence" (J67.12) are "opake hardnesses" (J67.5), "hard opake substances" (J9.1). Out of these rocks Albion's sons build the "stupendous Building" of Natural Religion: "with chains / Of rocks round London Stone: of Reasonings: of unhewn Demonstrations"; "Labour unparallelld! a wondrous rocky

World of cruel destiny / Rocks piled on rocks reaching the stars"
 (J66.2-3;6-7. The "stars," as all things natural in natural
 philosophy, consist of rocky particles). Out of these rocks Albion's
 daughters draw out the "Fibres" with which they weave the "Veil" of
 illusion which stands between and separates, holds apart, spectral man
 and Jerusalem: "hiding Albions Sons within the Veil, closing
 Jerusalems / Sons without" (J67.2-4,17-18).

Jerusalem is the emanation of what exists and shines; that which
 appears in vision, the content of vision, knowledge; the knowledge of
 what exists, the liberty to know what is real. The image of a spectral
 mind unable to know what is real, held apart from Jerusalem, enfolded
 in a veil of illusion woven by shadowy female "Fates," is not
 inconsistent with the image of the mind imagined by Locke: a mind
 utterly passive, utterly dependent for its ideas on sensations
 received from an external reality; a mind capable of knowing only that
 the pattern of impressions acting on it, causing its experience, is
 phantasmal, a fabric of shadowy effects emanating from an unknown,
 opaque cause.

Nor is the image of the illusory veil's "Fibres" being "drawn
 out" from atomic rocks inconsistent with the fruits of natural
 philosophy. The paradox--impossible absurdity, Blake would say--
 inherent in the project of an empirical science which posits as its
 foundation the idea of matter, is simply this: matter does not appear.
 No hand has touched this substance, no eye has seen these particles.
 Indeed, matter cannot appear: what appears, the phenomenon, appears in
 the form of perception or vision, as what is perceived or known; the

form of vision or perception is mental; but matter is that which--ex hypothesi, because it is "physical"--is supposed to exist as an otherness outside separated from the mind. If matter is the foundation, the substance, of what is real, then what appears, the phenomenon, is unreal, a reality lacking its reality. Reason knows that nature consists of matter; but the eye cannot see this matter. Reason knows that what the eye sees is an insubstantial image, a "secondary quality." Reason knows that it cannot trust its senses, that what the senses report or represent are representations, that what appears in the forms of sense-perception are phantasmata. Reason --in the Tabernacle of Bacon, Newton and Locke--can draw out from the rocks of its foundation the idea that nature as it appears appears as a land of shadows.

Committed to empiricism, to the idea that the true propositions of science must be collected from phenomena, natural philosophy discovers that reality does not appear, that appearances are unreal. But the idea of the phantasma or representation or secondary quality implies the idea of a reality or presence or primary quality which stands behind the veil of illusions. There are as it were two natures, one real and physical, primary and objective, the other sensible and illusory, secondary and subjective. There are "the shows of things," and there is "the nature of things." "Truth" requires that reason have access to the presence of real nature. The commitment to empiricism requires that real nature appear: behind the vain and false appearances there must be a true phenomenon, that which emanates from real nature and shows itself to reason in an intelligible form.

The experiment is the means by which reason gains access to the

true phenomenon, and fulfills its commitment to empiricism. The experiment is an event, an adventure, in which reason ventures forth into the physical world, in an attempt to penetrate the veil of sensory illusions and discover the truth, the primary qualities of nature. Lest reason be seduced by harlot appearances, the experimental adventure is carefully controlled, conducted according to rules established in advance by reason. In sense-perception the mind is passive, forced to receive appearances as they appear. In the experiment, reason is able to assert control, to project a regime, to establish the conditions of possibility for the appearance of true phenomena.

By means of the experiment Galileo was able to discover or demonstrate the truth that "motion" is in itself "uniform": "I think of a body thrown on a horizontal plane and every obstacle excluded. This results in what has been given a detailed account in another place, that the motion of the body over this plane would be uniform and perpetual if the plane were extended infinitely."³⁰ All motion is in essence the same, "uniform," of one form. This one form of motion can be expressed mathematically. The experiment is that in which the truth of the physical world appears in such a way that from the true appearance reason can collect and grasp the mathematic form of nature.

"Mathematic form" is the intelligible form in which phenomena appear in their truth, the form in which the truth of nature shows itself to reason. The idea of mathematic form achieves a transformation of the phenomenon, from that which appears to the senses as a phantasmal secondary quality, into that which appears to

reason as an objective expression of what is real. "We must," as Descartes puts it,

allow that corporeal things exist. However, they are perhaps not exactly what we perceive by the senses, since this comprehension by the senses is in many instances very obscure and confused; but we must at least admit that all things which I perceive in them clearly and distinctly, that is to say, all things which, speaking generally, are comprehended in the object of pure mathematics, are truly to be recognized as external objects. 31

The truth of the external world, as opposed to its sensible appearance, shines by its own mathematical light, appears in forms transparent to reason, as the object of pure mathematics. In Cartesian analytical geometry, spatial form or "extension" appears in the form of an algebraic equation.³² The truth of res extensa, of the space outside the mind, appears to res cogitans in the clear and distinct form of the mathematical proposition.

The "foundation" of natural philosophy for Newton is the concept of the "least particles" or atoms of matter. These particles are not mathematical. But from these particles Newton can collect or draw out the concepts which compose a vision or episteme of nature in which the truth of all nature, the earth and heavens, appears in mathematic form. The least particles of all bodies are "extended, and hard and impenetrable and movable and endowed with their forces of inertia."³³ As the least particles, the smallest units, atoms which are by definition indivisible, these hard and impenetrable beings are the real and physical things in themselves, that without which nature would be insubstantial, that without a concept of which a science or knowledge of nature would be foundationless. By virtue of their "extension," particles (or the objects composed of particles,

"bodies") have dimensions or magnitudes which can be measured and assigned numerical values. The idea of the extended particle implies a notion of space as an emptiness or void which contains particles, that in which particles exist or stand-out as extended beings. This space, res extensa, has mathematical properties, by virtue of which particles (or bodies) show an aspect that can be quantified, by virtue of which the "position" of a body can be determined as a mathematical relation to other particles or bodies. Space, the containing form of physical existents, is a mathematic form. The attribute of being "movable," and the endowment of "inertial force," is a recognition of the truth discovered by Galileo: by virtue of their inertia, the motions of particles are uniform; the concept of inertia enables the mind to grasp that all motion is in essence the same, of one form. Uniform motion appears in mathematic form, as a change in position over time, as that which the mind can express in a mathematical proposition. Time also is mathematical: that by virtue of which the one form of uniform motion can be determined and expressed mathematically.

4 "Mathematic Form," Blake argues, "is Eternal in the Reasoning Memory" (On Virgil E270).

In the Meno, Socrates demonstrates how a knowledge (episteme) of mathematic form is eternal in the rational soul. The slave boy, upon questioning, shows that he has this episteme: he can reason mathematically, he understands certain principles of mathematic form. Whence came this knowledge? The boy has not been taught mathematics; he did not acquire the episteme from a teacher; nor did he collect the knowledge he has demonstrated he has from experience, from the

illusory realm of sensible images. It must be the case that he has recollected or remembered a knowledge which he already has. What has been demonstrated in Socrates' experiment with the boy is the manner in which the rational soul has "taken up itself from itself the episteme" (analabon autos tou autou ten epistemen, 85d). What reason takes up itself from itself is a truth eternal in the reasoning memory: "if the truth about reality is always in our soul, the soul must be immortal, and one must take courage and try to discover--that is, to recollect--what one doesn't happen to know, or, more correctly, remember, at the moment" (86b).

The achievement of Newtonian science is an objective, mathematical description of "nature," the building of an episteme or knowledge within which the truth of nature appears in mathematic form. The mathematic forms of knowledge, the propositions which set the mathematic form of the truth of nature before the mind, are, Newton claims, collected from phenomena, from the evidence of experiments. What the mathematic proposition sets before the mind is taken up by reason not from itself but from "nature," from the physical reality external to the mind. Knowledge is a discovery, a setting forth into the great ocean of truth out there, not a Platonic odyssey where reason takes up what it already has and so returns unto itself.

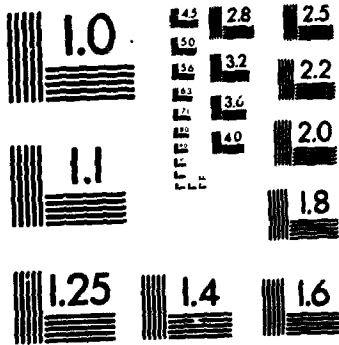
But nature is conceived by natural philosophy as a physical reality, an order of physical forms or bodies consisting of atomic particles of matter. The mind is conceived as a mirror or glass, capable of the image of nature. If reason is a mirror or glass, what it can take up and set before itself can only be a reflection. But a

reflection of what? No experiment demonstrates that the least particles of all bodies are extended, hard and impenetrable; no experiment demonstrates that these particles, the foundation of the idea of nature as an order of physical forms, exist. Were they to exist, they could not be taken up and set before the mind in a mental form. The mathematical proposition does not consist of material particles.

What the mathematical proposition sets before the mind, what reason takes up from the evidence of experiments, is the quantum, that which answers to the question "how much?" The truth of nature expressed in mathematic form, what nature means, what reason comprehends or grasps as the truth or meaning of nature, is that which can be measured, quantified. Thus the truth or meaning of a physical "force" is stated in the form of a concept which defines the force as the product of mass times acceleration, "mass" being comprehended as the amount of matter a body contains, that which can be weighed or quantified, "acceleration" being grasped as the time rate of change in velocity, as the amount of change, that which can be measured. The force, the "cause" of motion (that which acts upon particles and causes them to be mutually impelled towards each other, or to be repelled so as to recede from each other) is determined as a quantum, as the amount of motion it causes.

A curious circularity appears in the project of mathematical physics. "The great success and fame of physics," notes a contemporary physicist, Roger S. Jones, "rests primarily on its claim that the most useful knowledge about the physical world is obtained by measuring or quantifying that world. Herein lies the objectivity of physics and the

2



basis of our objective view of the world."³⁴ But this claim would make no sense were it not established that "nature" is that which can be quantified. The basis of the mathematically objective vision of physics is thus the "fundamental assumption of a separate, quantifiable, objective world."³⁵ A definition of nature is laid down from which reason takes up meaning. What nature means is collected from the definition, from the concepts which articulate the definition: "The question of meaning in the exact sciences boils down to how space, time, and matter are defined. And they, in turn, are defined operationally in terms of their measurement."³⁶

Heidegger's analysis of classical physics in "Modern Science, Metaphysics, and Mathematics," notes the same circularity, the same re-collection of what is projected. Modern (post-Cartesian) science begins, Heidegger argues, not with the observation or experience of things, but rather with the projection of axioms, concepts, which define or determine in advance how things shall appear. Science begins by "skipping over" things, projecting in advance of experience or experiment or demonstration the "basic blueprint of the structure of every thing and its relation to every other thing."³⁷ "Nature" is defined before it is observed, as "the realm of the uniform space-time context of motion"; so that, for the scientific eye, "Things now show themselves only in the relations of places and time points and in the measures of mass and working forces. How they show themselves is prefigured in the project."³⁸

The achievement of mathematical physics is the transformation of "nature" into that which can be grasped and represented in mathematic

form. This recognition of external objects as the objects of mathematics is, Heidegger argues, a re-cognition: what is "to be recognized" is that which is first projected, the cognition expressed in the definitions, axioms and laws which compose the scientific episteme. "Nature" is defined as that which can be quantified; thereafter the experiment measures; thereafter reason compares and judges, counts and numbers, and develops techniques for the manipulation or calculation of numbers, techniques which, in turn, expand the capacity of reason to project its definitive cognitions. Mathematics in the narrow sense, that which pertains to numbers (analytical geometry, for example, or Newton's infinitesimal calculus), is, Heidegger argues, only a secondary part of the larger mathematical project, which is a "taking cognizance of something, what it takes being something it gives to itself from itself, thereby giving to itself what it already has."³⁹ That is, for Heidegger, the mathematic form of modern science is mathematical in precisely the sense of mathesis defined by Plato in his doctrine of recollection, where reason takes up its knowledge "itself from itself," recollecting or remembering what is eternal in the reasoning memory.

5 The task of natural philosophy is to collect from phenomena the truth of nature and to set this truth before the mind in the form of mathematical propositions. The foundation of natural philosophy is the concept of the atom or least particle of matter. But no eye has seen such particles; no experiment has demonstrated that such particles exist. Blake calls these rocky particles "condensed emanations" (J8.42-43, 9.1, 19.25, 28.10). The emanation is the phenomenon: what

appears, what is perceived, the content of vision. The mind which conceives the Newtonian atom conceives an anti-phenomenon: that which emanates no light, which does not appear, which ex hypothesi exists outside separated from the forms of vision, as an opaque density of otherness. The Newtonian atom is a limit of contraction: the mind which conceives the least particle conceives the least that can be conceived. The atom is a limit of opacity: the most opaque, that in which the capacity to appear has disappeared. In themselves, in their "physical" otherness, atoms are "stone walls of separation" (J90.12), "opaque hardnesses" excluding the mind, intelligence, light.

The mind which conceives the atom as the real form of existence conceives itself as outside separated from existence; and conceives its own content, what it perceives and knows, as "secondary," outside separated from the "primary," physical forms of reality. The mind which, seeking the "truth" of real and physical nature, arrives at the atom, arrives at a barrier, a stone wall, a limit beyond which it cannot go. It is impossible for light to penetrate the impenetrable atom, for the eye to see the interior of the extended particle. The eye that would see, the mind that would know the atom, must see and know from outside. The mind that arrives at the atom arrives at an "outside surface" (J83.46), which can perhaps be measured, but measured from outside. The measurements, the quanta, the determinations of height, length, breadth, weight, are expressions of the mind's incapacity to do otherwise than measure from the outside. The magnitudes of extension measure a silhouette; weight is an expression or measure of opacity. Knowledge based on reason's capacity to measure, knowledge of quanta, has for its content not the thing

itself but a literal expression or measure of reason's incapacity to know. The mathematic form which expresses the quantum expresses or reflects or represents reason's ignorance, its inability to penetrate the stone wall of matter, to reach the supposed, but unknown, real and physical substantiality of things.

6 The foundation of natural philosophy, Newton asserts, is the concept of the least particle or atom. By virtue of these particles, nature is what it is, an order of things in themselves, a physical reality external to the mind. But the particle, the physical thing in itself, does not show itself, does not appear. What appears are the "shows of things," a veil of illusory secondary qualities, images of something other. What exists in truth, the particle, the primary nature consisting of particles, exists outside the mind and its forms of vision. Reason can measure and quantify this primary nature; while knowing that what it measures is an outside surface, that what it quantifies and expresses in mathematic form are expressions of its ignorance, of its abstraction from what is real.

The mind which conceives the atom conceives it as existing "withoutside," outside the mind. The mind which conceives the atom conceives that which cannot be the content of its concept in the mind. The mind which conceives the atom conceives itself as a mirror or glass, as a form of vision or knowledge outside separated from its content, a mental power capable only of reflections, representations, images. The mind which conceives the atom as the objective form of existence conceives itself, its knowledge, as a subjectivity always already withoutside the objective, a subjectivity condemned to know

that what it knows, what can be grasped in the subjective forms of knowledge, is an image of something other, a representation of a presence absent from its representation. The mind which conceives the atom as the real form of existence achieves the abstraction of vision from existence, the division or outside separation of what is real from what is known.

By virtue of its foundation, the concept of the atom, Newton's vision of nature is what it is: a vision of abstractions, a rational description of a "nature" that does not appear, that appears only in mathematic forms which are by definition abstracted from the reality they represent. The achievement of this vision, what can be drawn out from the foundation it posits, is the concept or definition of nature as a reality which does not appear, an opaque otherness; and the concept of the phenomena, what appears, as a reality lacking its reality, a shadow.

For Blake, what exists emanates its own peculiar light, shows itself, appears, in the form of vision, as what is perceived and known. What is real can be known because what exists appears. Newton's atom does not appear because it does not exist. That is, it exists as a concept, an ens rationis, in the mind which conceives it. "Matter" exists as a concept, and appears, shows itself, as a concept, in the texts of natural philosophy which propose the vision of "nature" as a physical reality external to the mind. The least particles of matter exist and appear as the "rocks" which form the foundation of the Building of Natural Religion.

The mind which conceives the atom as the real form of existence

and as the foundation of external reality is, for Blake, the selfhood or rational power. The selfhood is the achievement of Albion's originating error, the form of his abstraction, a rational power abstracted, outside separated from existence. The concept of matter appears as an expression or reflection of the rational power's desire for a "foundation and certainty and demonstrative truth" (J28.11). The concept of matter, which requires the mind which conceives it to conceive itself as withoutside existence, in a void outside of existence, reflects the selfhood's truth, expresses what is true for the selfhood, the truth that reality is opaque, that phenomena are shadows of delusion.

The atom exists as a concept, as that which is conceived, created, by the selfhood. The mind which conceives the atom recognizes the selfhood's cognition, recollects what the rational power has created and projected as the foundation of its vision of an external reality. The atom does not exist outside the mind which conceives it: the mind which conceives the atom as the real form of existence is idolatrous to its own shadow, to a concept which the rational power takes up "itself from itself," a concept which reflects nothing outside of itself, which expresses its own emptiness, which represents the solipsism of its creator.

NOTES

- 1 Cited by Werner Heisenberg, The Physicist's Conception of Nature 117.
- 2 The Advancement of Learning 8.
- 3 Heisenberg, Physics and Beyond 123.
- 4 Fragment 3: "to gar auto noein estin te kai einai." G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, The PreSocratic Philosophers (1957; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977) 269.
- 5 This is Heidegger's definition, Basic Writings 258. According to Owen Barfield, in Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), "The middle voice of the Greek verb suggests neither wholly 'what is perceived, from within themselves, by men' nor wholly 'what, from without, forces itself on man's senses,' but something between the two. This is also fairly suggested by the English word 'appearances'..." (48).
- 6 Meditations on First Philosophy, The Philosophical Works of Descartes, trans. by E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (1911; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975), Vol. I, 157.
- 7 Descartes 157.
- 8 Descartes 157.
- 9 Descartes 166.
- 10 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 115.
- 11 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 116.
- 12 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 118.
- 13 Descartes 141.
- 14 Advancement of Learning 106.
- 15 Bacon 11.
- 16 Bacon 9, 8, 9.
- 17 Bacon 106.
- 18 Bacon 97, 113.
- 19 Bacon 96.
- 20 Bacon 111.

- 21 Bacon 108, 110.
- 22 Bacon 110.
- 23 Bacon 96.
- 24 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 117.
- 25 Descartes 191.
- 26 Descartes 191.
- 27 Descartes 161.
- 28 An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. and abridged by J. W. Yolton (Don Mills: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1965) 134.
- 29 Locke 132-33.
- 30 Cited by Heidegger, Basic Writings 266-67.
- 31 Descartes 191.
- 32 "By means of a simple and elegant representation, the now famous graph-grid with its perpendicular "X" and "Y" axes, Descartes was able to show that any algebraic equation in two variables (x and y, for instance) is a precise description of a figure in plane geometry... Thus any figure in two-dimensional plane geometry can be transformed into a mathematical or logical statement, and vice versa." Roger S. Jones, Physics as Metaphor 72.
- 33 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 117.
- 34 Jones 18.
- 35 Jones 17.
- 36 Jones 17.
- 37 "Modern Science, Metaphysics, and Mathematics," in Basic Writings 268.

CHAPTER THREE

SCIENCE

Section A - Cartesian Science

Part 1 - The Other and the Gap

1 "All men desire to know," said Aristotle, presumably meaning that, as no one wishes to be the dupe of illusion, we desire to know what is real. Science would be the expression of this desire, our chief defence against illusion and naivete, the architecture of our lucidity. To science man looks for "ever wider knowledge and ever deeper understanding of the world in which he finds himself."¹

It does not seem possible to think of science without confronting the legacy of classical physics. The Newtonian idea of science was embraced, it is said, because it worked: the appearances of natural things are explained with mathematical precision; the multiplicity of nature is reduced to the order of laws which are clearly and soundly demonstrated. Henceforth science will open the mind unto the real in the truth of its objective manifestations.

Newtonian science conceives the real as a physical nature, consisting of matter. Accepting this science we accept the idea that the real is that which we as thinking, knowing beings are not. Remarkable lucidity: we know that the real excludes us. Henceforth the knowing mind will grasp itself as subjectivity, as that which lacks the being or substantiality of the real, as--in Sartre's expression--nothingness. Venerable or otherwise man's mind will grow in the unreal, for--strange architectural effect--where but in the unreal

could the mind be at home and build its dwelling place?

2 Western science has most often been what Blake calls Natural Religion, an "Abstract Philosophy warring in enmity against Imagination" (J5.58). Science for Plato is the knowledge of what is real attained by a reason which has freed itself from, or banished, imagination; what is imagined is as a shadow when measured against the intelligible forms or ideas of being, the proper objects of true knowledge. For Nietzsche, Plato's ideas are merely imagined: metaphors and metonyms, idols of an effete will to power, illusory units in the sum of human relations; but this critique of "truth" as imagined illusion implies, no less than does Plato's critique of imagination, an appeal to something that is not an illusion, some order or anarchy of non-human relations, some otherness outside the unreal of imagination's making.

When, as in Blake's day, "science" becomes classical physics, the term "nature" comes to signify the proper object of knowledge, the real that we ought desire to know, the reality external to imagination. The advancement of learning for Bacon requires that we eschew imagined idols so as to allow scientific reason properly to reflect the real and physical nature of things. "Realism," for George Eliot, designates "the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature, and not by substituting vague forms, bred by imagination on the mists of fancy, in place of definite and substantial reality."² An "aesthetics which claims the identity of beauty and truth or mind and nature" is for Tillotoma Rajan a naive expression of the illusory "belief in the

unity of consciousness and nature which, in turn, leads to an organic view of poetry as a natural and therefore real construct."³ In truth, however, imagination lacks "the substantiality of things"; poetry is an unnatural ("intentional") and therefore unreal construct. In truth --in the light of knowledge of the real--nature is the measure of substantial reality and of imagination's unreality.

But in an era of quantum theory--when the objectivity of our knowledge of nature is framed by Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle-- it is not a rhetorical question to ask what aspect of nature the phrase, "the substantiality of things," is supposed to signify. The foundation of classical physics, the Cartesian identity of nature, is precisely what is put in question by quantum theory. The "new mathematical formulae no longer describe nature itself but our knowledge of nature," Heisenberg insists. "We have had to forego the description of nature which for centuries was considered the obvious aim of all exact sciences."⁴ No "nature itself" shows itself, appears as an object of observation; the idea of nature as an "unobserved universe," a "physical" principium essendi outside separated from the principium cognoscendi, a "definite and substantial reality" external to the mind, is a hypothesis confirmed by no observations, no empirical evidence. What Bacon and Newton and Rajan assume or posit as the real object of knowledge is, in the context of that knowledge disclosed by quantum theory, an unconfirmed hypothesis, an object not of knowledge but of speculation.

3 The question of the identity of nature is for Blake the question of the identity of imagination: "Nature is Imagination itself" (E702).

This thesis is the foundation of Blake's science of nature: to know what nature is, is to know that "Nature is a Vision of the Science of the Elohim" (M29.65). This thesis does not dissolve the substantiality or reality of nature into vague forms, bred on the mists of fancy. The question of the identity of imagination for Blake is not to be resolved through an appeal to a hypothetical "nature itself," that is, within the architecture of Natural Religion.

The claim, nature is imagination itself, as it contradicts deism's definitions of nature and imagination, does not, Blake argues, erase an intelligible conception of science. Natural Religion, conceiving imagination as phantasia, posits a reality that imagination lacks, an external substance or nature; to know that imagination is unreal, this external nature must be known, an object of knowledge. But how, Blake asks, is this possible? How can the external be known, the content of knowledge, without surrendering its otherness, erasing its alterity? How can the grasp of comprehension touch the other while remaining outside separated from it? How can the distance between the same and the other be respected and at the same time violated? Science, what we know, our knowledge, is not other; how, were the real other, could we know that what we know were an accurate reflection or an egregious misrepresentation of this otherness? How can the real-other manifest itself and remain "in itself," show itself without this appearance being taken as a sign, a phantasma?

The thesis, nature is imagination itself, means that nature is not "other," that the oeuvre of Natural Religion, the concept of an external nature, is a cloven fiction, an error. This error has for its effect, Blake argues, the nihilation of science: as other, nature is

not an object of knowledge, but the unknown, that which does not show itself, which has no emanation. The emanation, what is shown, what we can know--what the labour of knowledge builds up--becomes a shadow, a representation of a presence which is elsewhere, afar off, "in itself." The mind which does not know the unknown, which knows shadows, is not a knowing being but a spectre.

4 Blake criticism has recognized the intention of the prophecies to articulate through the theme of Los and his Elohist labours an alternative to Natural Religion. But this alternative has most often been defined in terms of an imagination-nature opposition. Nature cannot be the measure of imagination, Frye argues in Fearful Symmetry, for "Nature is miserably cruel, wasteful, purposeless, chaotic and half dead."⁵ No country for old or young men, nature is subhuman, sub-imaginative, "Satanic"; we can imagine better, a world out of nature, from which the chaotic and miserably cruel would be excluded. But the idea of imagination as that which nature is not, does not as such contradict Bacon's notion that imagination is unnatural, "being not tied to the laws of matter." Nor does the idea of a chaotic, "Satanic" nature seem to differentiate Blake from Milton, who sees nature as the once-good art of God now permeated with sin, corruption and death, an Eden perverted into a Gaza. The imagination-nature dialectic, as it inscribes the concept of nature-as-other into the definition of imagination, would seem to leave Blake no option but to disagree with Bacon or Newton by following Milton or Plato, nihilating what we perceive and experience in the name of a supernatural, transcendent being. Blake, argues Damrosch, is in essence a Platonist, who in the

end "deliberately cuts himself off from the phenomenology of lived experience," who "cannot come to terms with 'the very world which is the world'."⁶

Among Robert Hunt's view of Blake's work as a "farrago of nonsense...the wild effusions of a distempered brain," and Tilottama Rajan's view of it as a naive exposition of "grandiose claims for the reshaping power of human imagination," and Damrosch's view that it "chooses to deny essential facts of human experience," there is no fundamental disagreement.⁷ It is agreed that Blake contradicts reality, is contradicted by reality. His vision, his idea of imagination, is unrealistic, unscientific, not aiding but hindering our comprehension of what is real. It is agreed that what is real, "the very world," is an external world; and that it is an illusion to think that "the external world can be reconstituted in accordance with patterns imposed by man's imagination."⁸ Los's Elohistc labours represent for Damrosch the attempt to impose imaginative patterns on matter; Golgonooza, built with "physical materials--with material materials," confirms the existence of a physical nature; and confirms that the "Platonic" idea of a world out of nature can be conceived only as an ideal by an imagination that remains in nature, an imagination that cannot substantiate nor even articulate its ideals except by using the material materials of nature. For Rajan, "the fact that the unreal is created to free us from the world by a consciousness which stays in the world, makes of art a dialogue between illusion and its deconstruction."⁹ Blake fails to participate in this dialogue, as, in his grandiose naivete, he fails to

acknowledge or chooses to deny the essential fact that art is in essence illusion, that imagination creates only the unreal.

Thus it is agreed that what Damrosch calls "the groping and imperfect nature of the achievements available to the imagination"¹⁰ do not afford a basis for thinking that imagination is anything more than what Plato or Newton claimed it to be. The question of the identity of imagination has been resolved. We know the "nature" of imagination: it is phantasia; its achievements are fictions, the unreal, phantasmata. This knowledge has for its foundation nothing less than the external world, the very world, the substantiality of lived experience, the real, the real that we know, that we know imagination lacks. It is as if Blake, wishing for an alternative to Natural Religion, wishing to conceive of an imagination that would not dissolve into unreality when measured against material materials, is doomed in advance to fail. And, having failed to formulate an alternative to Natural Religion, he must be judged in the terms of Natural Religion, and judged a failure.

5 Blake "invented Los," Damrosch argues, "precisely in order to express the complexity of a fallen imagination whose materials are a fallen world."¹¹ As Los discovers that Golgonooza can be built only with "physical, material materials," Blake is forced to concede the necessity of introducing the idea of physical matter into our vision and experience of life. Thereafter--after discovering that Newton is right, that the "foundation" of his science is sound--Blake "deliberately cuts himself off from the phenomenology of lived experience."¹² The "modern reader cannot join him in that exclusion"

cannot accept Blake's "rejection of life."¹³

Blake rejects life only after he conceives it as "entrapment in materiality."¹⁴ Blake on this view is a Newtonian before he is a Platonist. Los cannot express an alternative to classical physics because Los is a classical physicist. We can ignore Blake's critique of Newton, since in the end Blake ignores it. If there are contradictions in Newtonian science, they are absorbed into the meaning of the prophecies. That Blake rejected not life but that science or phenomenology which insists on mixing the concept of physical matter with our lived experience, we are precluded from considering by an interpretation which conceives Blake as one who rejects life after promulgating such a science or phenomenology.

6 Romantic poems, argues Tilotoma Rajan, are "works that are trying to come to terms with the status of their own discourse, and hence with the function of man's imagination in relation to external reality."¹⁵ This does not mean that the terms which define the status of poetic discourse, or the relation of imagination to reality, are open to question. Dark Interpreter argues perhaps but one thesis: there is a "gap" between mind or imagination and nature or reality; reality is external, other than the mind; the mind, being other than the real, is unreal, a nothingness. It is unequivocally the case that "Poetic language...is intentional in structure: because it is a product of consciousness...it shares in the nothingness of consciousness rather than in the substantiality of things."¹⁶ The terms being known, a matter of knowledge, the struggle of Romantic poems "to come to terms" can only be a decision to accept, or a futile

attempt to evade, these terms, this knowledge: it is "against this knowledge that we must read the Romantic attempt to deny the gap between fiction and actuality through an aesthetics which claims the identity of beauty and truth or mind and nature."¹⁷

But we can ask whether "this knowledge"--the intentional-structure thesis which determines the status of imagination as nothingness--has itself the status of knowledge. To know that mind (consciousness, imagination) lacks the substantiality of things, we must know what this substantiality is. How is this possible, if we have posited a "gap" between substantial reality and the knowing mind? If the dwelling place of the real is external, in itself, on the "other side" of a gap, how could it be known by a mind conceived as outside separated, a mind forbidden access to this other side by definition, according to its own terms?

The thesis which posits a gap between the human mind and an external reality must traverse the gap it posits. To know that truth is an illusory army of metaphors and anthropomorphisms the knowing mind must have abandoned its army, set forth for and reached a foreign shore, a country of non-human relations. In which case the mind would no longer be outside separated, there would be no gap, no substantiality external to the mind. But what foundation for science could be gained from such an adventure? Knowing a truth that is more than human truth, knowing that what he knows cannot be known by the human world, knowing that no human words can account for his absence, Odysseus on his return must wrap himself in silence.

7 The thesis which posits a gap between the human mind and a

somewhat external to the mind must find a way to traverse the gap it posits. The Cartesian mind which knows that mind and body are essentially distinct substances must know what this other, corporeal substance is. But the cogito which cannot without contradiction doubt its own existence can doubt whether the extended objects it perceives outside itself are real or illusory. I know that I have ideas of sensible things, but how do I know that there are sensible things which correspond to these ideas? For Descartes, it cannot be doubted that "God possesses the power to produce everything that I am capable of perceiving with distinctness"; and God has given me "a very great inclination to believe" that the ideas of corporeal objects "are conveyed to me by corporeal objects," so that "I do not see how He could be defended from the accusation of deceit if these ideas were produced by causes other than corporeal objects."¹⁸

It is doubtless not by accident that the Meditations defer the demonstration of the "existence of material things" until after the demonstration that God exists. Nature is conceived as "the order and disposition which God has established in created things."¹⁹ God has created the order of sensible things such that they show themselves, convey the idea of themselves to the cogito. God has created res cogitans such that it has the assurance it is not deceived in its belief that a nature other than the mind exists and that its existence corresponds to the cogito's ideas of nature.

So, also, the nature conceived by Newton or Bacon is not conceived independently of the traditional view of nature as "the Art of God." The "highest link of nature's chain," argues Bacon, "must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair."²⁰ "It seems probable to

me," argues Newton, revising the creation myth of Genesis One, "that God in the beginning formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, movable particles, of such sizes and figures, and with such other properties...as most concuded to the end for which he formed them."²¹ God formed matter in particles, from which he wrought nature; and He created mind to reflect his material creation: "God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, capable of the image of the universal world."²² The mind "is framed," is part of a framework which holds mind and nature apart and yet holds them together in a relation intelligible to human reason, a relation which unfolds as science. The framework which frames the mind has a divine architect. The idea of nature as a corporeal otherness which can yet be the object of knowledge, the idea of knowledge as the reflection of this external nature, the idea of science as the intelligible relation of mental and corporeal terms, are ideas originating not from human reason but from divine wisdom--are ideas, therefore, beyond reproach.

The notion of "reflection" answers to that ideal of science which conceives knowledge as "a relation with being such that the knowing being lets the known being manifest itself while respecting its alterity and without marking it in any way by this cognitive relation."²³ If the alterity of the known being is to be respected, unmarked, the cognitive relation, the framework of science, must hold apart the terms it relates or frames. The framework frames, institutes, a gap, the difference separating known from knowing beings. The mind is passive: it acts only to receive, to let the other make itself manifest (as, for example, in the experiment). The mind

does not traverse the gap: it receives, reflects, reflects what it receives. Nor does the known being traverse the gap: it is other, an otherness absent from its representation; its alterity must be respected. But the gap must be traversed: there must be a relation such that the known being manifests itself, so that the knowing being can lay claim to knowledge. In itself, in its difference, in the space opened by its self-determination of itself as an I alone--in its supreme helplessness--the cogito requires to be given not only the ideas of sensible things but also an assurance of the veracity of these ideas. So it is necessary to appeal to a being who transcends the gap separating res cogitans from res extensa; an authority or power which from afar off ensures that substances essentially distinct one from the other shall stand together in an intelligible relation while maintaining their separate identities; a third term which mediates between the mental and corporeal terms held apart in their relation of antithesis from a position outside this antithesis.

8 To conceive nature as the art of God, and to conceive nature as a clock-like mechanism of forces acting on particles, is to conceive God as a clock-maker--as the reflection of a single and perversely narrow aspect of our capacity to perceive and know. "I am God O Sons of Men! I am your Rational Power!" (J54.16) A God who in the beginning forms matter in particles would seem transparently to be a construct of the theory which postulates particles of matter as the foundation of its concept of nature. The theory of matter gains nothing from the claim that its God exists elsewhere, afar off, external to the human mind. Another gap is produced, and it has to be explained how human reason

could know what such a God did or did not make in the beginning. The ideas a God afar off conveys or causes to be conveyed to the cogito will have to be understood by the cogito as significations; from such signs the cogito might take hope, but not assurance--other than an assurance of the absence of the God who gives signs. One cannot predicate intelligence of corporeal particles: the divine wisdom that is external to human reason is external to corporeal nature; which is to say that nature is outside separated from the real, an order of secondary causes, the ensemble of the effects of a first cause that is elsewhere; which is to recognize that Plato was not wrong to refuse to the corporeal the status of a fit object of knowledge for a science that aspires to know the real.

To himself Newton seems "like a boy playing on the sea-shore; and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."²⁴ A God who creates human reason to reflect an external ocean of truth ensures that the science of this mirroring reason will consist of reflections, will have for its content images of something other, phantasmata. The cogito's ideas of sensible things are not sensible things. The knowledge of matter is not knowledge of matter: classical physics does not know its particles but rather the forces acting on the particles; and not the forces themselves but their effects, motions; and not the motions themselves, but their mathematic form, the principia mathematica of these motions. But how, Blake asks, can we infer or deduce from mathematic form an "existence out of mind"? Without this inference knowledge must remain on the sea-shore; the ocean of truth will be not undiscovered, not yet

discovered, but undiscoverable; the pebble or shell will be an emblem not of reason's humility before God and his creation but of reason's humiliation before a truth it has not the capacity to know.

9 Newton believed that nature, the ocean of truth, consists of matter; that matter is determined by, obeys, certain forces or laws; that these laws of nature are amenable to mathematical description. Since Newton mathematics has been the primary language of natural science. But to conceive a nature consisting of matter is to conceive a gap between the knowing mind and its object, between mathematical signifier and physical signified. "As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality," Einstein argues, recognizing this gap, "they are uncertain; and as far as they are certain, they do not refer to reality."²⁵ Here again, however, the gap must be traversed before it can be recognized: how can we know that mathematical laws refer only uncertainly to reality without knowing what this extra-mathematical reality is, without appealing to an extra-mathematical vision or knowledge?

For Thomas Aquinas, "divine wisdom is the efficient cause of every thing, insofar as it brings things into existence."²⁶ We know the artist through his art: from the effects we infer the cause. For Descartes, the effects of divine wisdom, the order and disposition which God has established in created things, appear to human reason in the clarity and distinctness of mathematical ideas. There is "no doubt that God possesses the power to produce everything that I am capable of perceiving with distinctness"; what I am capable of perceiving with distinctness are the mathematical forms of the objects produced by

divine power:

we must allow that corporeal things exist. However, they are perhaps not exactly what we perceive by the senses, since this comprehension by the senses is in many instances very obscure and confused; but we must at least admit that all things which I conceive in them clearly and distinctly, that is to say, all things which, speaking generally, are comprehended in the object of pure mathematics, are truly to be recognized as external objects. 27

For Newton, also, the mathematical principles of natural philosophy are derived from the phenomena themselves, the phenomena being the art of God, the manifestation of divine wisdom. We know the artist through his art. From the knowledge of the mathematical principles of nature we derive or infer knowledge of the the existence of a superhuman intelligence, that which ensures the intelligibility of the framework which holds mind and matter together in a cognitive relation. The gap between physical signified and mathematical signifier is bridged by an appeal to a third term, a God afar off, divine wisdom. But we know the artist only through his art; and as our knowledge of the art becomes increasingly and exclusively mathematical, our capacity to know the divine artist becomes a mathematical capacity. We can ask whether the appeal to a being or intelligence outside the antithesis of mathematics and matter goes outside the antithesis; whether we have not simply identified the divine wisdom that is supposed to bridge the gap between mathematic signifier and physical signified with mathematic form; whether the third term outside is anything other than the mathematical term inside.

"He who sees the Ratio only," Blake argues, "sees himself only"

(NNRb E3). He who sees only what the rational power builds up, achieves, the architecture of Natural Religion, the structure of mathematic forms built up by classical physics, sees nothing--no substance, intelligence, power--external to the rational power.

This, also, is Kant's conclusion. From the achievements of natural philosophy, from the order and disposition described by the mathematical principles of classical physics, we cannot, Kant argues, infer the presence or the effects of a divine wisdom, an intelligence external to human reason. The object of knowledge derives its intelligibility for reason from the patterns or categories of reason's understanding. The phenomenon derives its status as an object of perception from the manner in which reason orders and disposes the manifold of its sensations. Who sees what reason knows sees the architecture of reason. For a human reason defined as the ensemble of the conditions of possibility for knowledge in a Cartesian universe, the adventure of science becomes an odyssey which traverses no gaps, reaches no foreign shores, and returns with no cargo that can be construed as knowledge of a somewhat external to or other than reason.

But if the "in itself" names that which we cannot know, an other shore that reason cannot reach, it will follow that we cannot know this other shore exists. For Derrida the "in itself" names a name, a sign, which signifies other names, other signs. Here at last we catch sight of what it means to posit a "gap." There will be no sea-shore by the ocean of truth, but an ocean of significations without shores in which everything signifies and no thing, no God, no substantiality gives signs. There will be no knowledge that reason or consciousness or imagination lacks the substantiality of things. Reason itself will

go the way of the in itself as it comes to understand that the terms which articulate its story and define its status are written terms, elements of writing, names naming names.

Part 2 - Induction, Speculation, and Observed Facts

1 For Newton the phenomenon, the object of knowledge, does not derive its intelligibility, its objectivity, its status as known being, from human reason. Rather we are to understand that the mind of man is framed as a mirror or glass; that the phenomenon is the aspect of physical nature which manifests the intelligence of divine wisdom; that science, as it derives its concepts by general induction from the phenomena themselves, reflects the objectively intelligible order and disposition established by a God afar off. But he who sees the mathematical principles of natural philosophy sees only a mathematical architecture; and cannot therefore say whether he sees the expression or manifestation of a super-human intelligence.

Without an appeal to a God afar off, the claim of classical physics to know the material materials of nature, to be a valid expression of a cognitive relation between mind and a substantiality of things external to the mind, rests upon its claim to have derived its explanatory principles from the phenomena themselves "by general induction." Induction is conceived "as a method that leads, by means of mechanically applicable rules, from observed facts to corresponding general principles."²⁸ The method of inductive inference will permit the observed fact to manifest to human reason an intelligibility which

reason can describe but does not create. By virtue of induction the physical is to become mathematical, the non-mental mental, without ceasing to be non-mental, while retaining the density of its physical otherness.

We may note the absence of humility in the claims made for Newton's method of "general induction." The general principles of natural philosophy are not to be regarded as mere hypotheses, Newton suggests; since they originate from the phenomena themselves, they cannot be in error. By virtue of induction the concepts of classical physics are to be regarded not only as correct but also as necessary: "Were this conception of the relation between the physicist's experimental observations and his theory correct, Newton's theory would never have required modification, nor could it ever have implied consequences which experiment does not confirm. Being implied by the facts, it would be as indubitable and final as they are."²⁹

2 Today it is accepted that many experiments do not confirm the consequences implied by the general principles of classical physics. The theory of relativity and quantum theory both imply a recognition that Newtonian concepts are in certain cases neither correct nor necessary, and therefore imply a different idea of the relation between experimental data and scientific theory. "Scientific hypotheses and theories," argues Carl G. Hempel, "are not derived from observed facts, but invented in order to account for them. They constitute guesses at the connections that might obtain between the phenomena under study, at uniformities and patterns that might underlie their occurrence."³⁰ The theoretical structure of physics is

abstract, "speculative," argues F. S. C. Northrop: "the physical scientist only arrives at his theory by speculative means. The deduction in his method runs not from facts to the assumptions of the theory but from the assumed theory to the facts and the experimental data."³¹ In contrast to the claims of classical physics, it is today widely accepted that the architecture of science is built up not from necessary concepts but from hypotheses: "Scientific knowledge...is not arrived at by applying some inductive inference procedure to antecedently collected data, but rather by what is often called 'the method of hypothesis,' i.e. by inventing hypotheses as tentative answers to a problem under study, and then subjecting these to empirical test."³²

3 If we do not underestimate the authority and influence of classical physics, we shall not belittle the revisionary effort implied by the renunciation of the magical virtues of Newtonian induction. But we can question whether acceptance of "the method of hypothesis" ought to be regarded as a revolution in scientific thought; or whether it ought to be regarded as a return to the foundations of classical physics, a confrontation with the fundamental problem which the method of general induction was supposed to resolve. What is the recognition that scientific theory is not implied by the facts, that the status of theory is speculative, but a recognition of the Cartesian partition? The gap between mind and nature appears as gap between subjective, speculative theory and objective facts, experimental data; or as a gap between the laws of mathematics and an extra-mathematical "reality." If we continue to conceive of science

within the framework of the Cartesian partition, then the problems posed by that framework will persist. In particular, it seems unclear how it can be said that the "method of hypothesis" helps to clarify the possibility of a cognitive relation between the human mind and a "nature" conceived as a "reality" external to or other than the mind.

In the contemporary formulation of this cognitive relation it is understood that "the object of scientific knowledge is never known directly by observation or experimentation"--as Newton alleged--"but is only known by speculatively proposed theoretical construction or axiomatic postulation, tested only indirectly and experimentally via its deduced consequences."³³ The object of knowledge--nature, the physical reality of nature--is known only by speculative construction, that is, by means of speculation. To know that what we know, the object of knowledge, is known only by means of speculation, is to know that what we know, our knowledge, consists of speculation. A "guess," constituted in mathematical language, is a mathematical "guess." A hypothesis tested only indirectly, in the absence of direct observation, remains a hypothesis: "even extensive testing with entirely favourable results does not establish a hypothesis conclusively, but provides only more or less strong support for it."³⁴ An indirect confirmation via deduced consequences does not bridge the gap which suspends speculative construction in the realm of hypothesis apart from certain knowledge; even extensive testing with entirely favourable results must be understood as indirect confirmation, and therefore as an admission of the failure to attain certain knowledge.

Knowing that the object of knowledge is known only by speculative

construction tested only indirectly, we can ask by what authority we could ascribe the value of "ever wider knowledge and ever deeper understanding of the world"³⁵ to our speculative guesses. What does the expression, "knowledge of the world," signify in a context where the object of knowledge is not known but guessed at, and where no amount of testing could alter the hypothetical status of the guess? Are we to understand the claim that the planet earth is several billions of years old as a fact in the classical sense, a known certainty; or are we to understand this claim as a hypothesis, a theoretical construction proposed in terms of the concept of "billions" which has significance only in a narrow and abstract mathematical context, a concept which derives its intelligibility from the laws of mathematics which do not refer with certainty to reality? In the absence of direct observation, in the presence only of a speculative theoretical construction we have proposed, we can ask--it is Blake's question--by what authority we could ascribe the value of "reality" or "substantiality" to the unobserved somewhat that we suppose (that is, speculate) exists outside our speculated constructions. If we cannot know physical nature, the external world, the in itself--if our knowledge consists of speculations which constitute guesses--then we cannot know that such an external reality exists.

4 Newton's theory of general induction was proposed as a solution to the problem of how to bridge the gap between mind and nature--the gap that is posited in the act of conceiving nature as a corporeal or physical reality external to the mind. To recognize that the theory of

induction is fallacious, that hypotheses or theories are not implied by or derived from observed facts, is to recognize that the gap is not bridged, that the possibility of a cognitive relation between mind and physical nature has not been established.

For Hempel, the task of inventing hypotheses that will account for observed facts--the task of a science of nature--must confront the problem that

scientific hypotheses and theories are usually couched in terms that do not occur at all in the description of the empirical findings on which they rest, and which they serve to explain. For example, theories about the atomic and subatomic structure of matter contain terms such as 'atom,' 'electron,' 'proton,' 'neutron,' 'psi-function,' etc.; yet they are based on laboratory findings about the spectra of various gases, tracks in cloud and bubble chambers, quantitative aspects of chemical reactions, and so forth--all of which can be described without the use of those "theoretical terms." 36

The solution to this problem, Hempel argues, is the formulation of "bridge principles" that "will indicate how the processes envisaged by the theory are related to empirical phenomena with which we are already acquainted, and which the theory may then explain, predict, or retrodict."³⁷ Bridge principles mediate the difference between theoretical terms and empirical findings, by "connecting, for example, the energy released in an electron jump with the wavelength of the light that is emitted as a result."³⁸ By virtue of this connection the theoretically assumed process, the electron jump, can be said to explain the phenomenon, the wavelength of the light. "Without bridge principles," Hempel argues, "a theory would have no explanatory power."³⁹

But we can surely question whether the explanatory power afforded

to a theory by its bridge principles does not fall short of explaining the possibility of a cognitive relation between mind and a physical, non-mental structure of matter or nature. The explanatory power of theory is such that "quantitatively precise and comprehensive explanatory principles can be formulated in terms of underlying entities such as molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles."⁴⁰ But precise and comprehensive explanatory principles formulated in terms of entities such as atoms and subatomic particles, are explanatory principles formulated in terms of hypothetical entities, in terms of speculatively proposed theoretical constructions. Such explanatory principles are in relation to physical nature speculations, constituted guesses.

Bridge principles do not justify a movement from "theoretical entity" to "physical entity"--a somewhat external to the mind. Bridge principles empower a theory to claim that its explanatory principles explain the results of laboratory findings, experimental data. The theory "explains" the phenomena of laboratory experiments to the extent that it "construes those phenomena as manifestations of entities and processes that lie behind or beneath them, as it were."⁴¹ Explanatory principles explain empirical phenomena "by exhibiting the phenomena as manifestations of common underlying structures and processes."⁴² But these entities, structures and processes underlying the phenomena, as it were, are, precisely, the theoretical entities proposed by the theory. Thus: explanatory principles proposed in terms of speculative theoretical entities explain the phenomenon by identifying the phenomenon as the manifestation of those theoretical

entities--entities that are not derived from phenomena, "but invented in order to account for them." Bridge principles--connecting phenomena to hypothetical constructions invented in order to explain them--enable Odysseus to return to Ithaca, but not to reach a foreign shore: they do not bridge the gap between mind and external nature, between hypothetical speculation and a "structure of matter" outside the speculation.

5 The concepts of science which express and articulate our knowledge of nature, Newton claimed, are derived from the phenomena themselves. The phenomenon is understood--assumed--to be an aspect of physical nature, a "fact": in the phenomenon the physical structure of nature shows itself to reason. Reason, practising the scientific method of general induction, is able to reflect or represent what is shown, the fact, in the form of a concept or explanatory principle. The mathematic form of the concept, being derived from the facts, is as indubitable as the facts it represents; being a representation, constituted in mathematic form, it is a form of knowledge which respects the alterity of the object of knowledge. The physical structure of nature shows itself in the phenomenon; but the being or reality of the phenomenon remains outside its mathematical representation, remains "in itself," in the external world, in the corporeal substantiality of physical things themselves.

Today we understand that it is simply not the case that the gap between knowing mind and physical object of knowledge is traversed by "general induction." The concepts of science are not derived from the facts or phenomena, but invented in order to account for them. There

is no "direct observation" of the physical structure of matter, as Newton alleged. In the absence of direct observation, it is understood that the "object of knowledge" can be known only by speculative theoretical construction, tested only indirectly via its deduced consequences.

For Blake, the act which posits a physical nature as the object of knowledge is an act which posits a hypothesis, an act of speculation. The consequences that can be deduced from the hypothesis that nature--the reality or being of nature--consists of "what is called corporeal" are two-fold: such a nature would be unknowable, unobservable, "opaque"; and any idea we conceive of such a nature would be an unconfirmable speculation, a "shadow" of knowledge, an abstraction that reflects or expresses its status as abstraction. The experiment that would test the hypothesis of a non-mental reality cannot be conceived, would have to accomplish the absurd feat of transforming the non-mental into the mental, the unobservable into the observed. The "corporeal" cannot be an "object of knowledge"; what is by definition external to the mind cannot be a known being, the content of knowledge. For Blake the act of positing a physical nature as the object of knowledge posits an "impossible absurdity": an object of knowledge that cannot be known; an object that is not an object, a phenomenon that does not show itself. It is not simply the case that the Newtonian concept of physical nature is not implied by the facts or derived from the phenomena; it is the case, Blake argues, that there is no such thing as a "fact" in the classical sense, a phenomenon which manifests or shows an aspect of a reality or substance or structure external to the human mind.

6 For Newton, because the mathematical principles of natural philosophy are derived from the phenomena themselves, the authority of scientific knowledge--the validity of the claim that the mathematical concepts accurately and truthfully describe or represent physical nature itself--derives from "the authority of empirical fact." This appeal to empirical authority makes two assumptions: that the manner of derivation, the method of induction, is valid; and that the "phenomenon" or "empirical fact" is what it is alleged to be, an aspect of physical nature, that in which the physical structure of nature shows itself to reason.

The recognition that the theoretical knowledge of nature is not derived from the observed facts erases the first assumption. As a corollary of the rejection of the method of induction, the meaning or status of theoretical knowledge has changed from Newton's "known certainty" to "hypothesis" or "speculatively proposed theoretical construction." But what of Newton's second assumption: has the meaning or status of the "phenomenon" or "empirical fact" also been transformed?

According to Hempel, "theories about the atomic and subatomic structure of matter" are not derived from, but invented in order to account for, observed facts. In and of themselves such theories have only a hypothetical status: they "constitute guesses." But insofar as such theories accomplish their function--account for the observed facts--they can be regarded as "comprehensive explanatory principles" which afford an "ever wider knowledge and ever deeper understanding of the world." The capacity of theory to achieve "knowledge of the world"

rests on its capacity to account for or explain observed facts.

Blake, confronting the claim that a theory concerning the "Atomic Origins of Existence" (J67.12) afforded "knowledge of the world," wondered what was meant by the terms "knowledge," and "the world," in this claim. If "the world" signifies an "object of knowledge" external to the subject of knowledge, the mind that knows, then "knowledge of the world" must have traversed the "gap" separating subject from object, the world from the mind that has "knowledge of the world"; in which case there is no gap, no external world. In any case, Blake argues, there is no "knowledge" of an external world or nature--the hypothesis of a corporeal structure of matter must remain an unconfirmable speculation--because no external world shows itself, because there is no such thing as a corporeal phenomenon, a Newtonian "empirical fact."

If we wish to claim that a theory which accounts for observed facts affords knowledge of the world; and if by "knowledge of the world" we mean knowledge of an external world--if by "the world" we mean an object of knowledge external to the subject of knowledge; then it must be the case that the term "observed facts" signifies Newtonian phenomena. A theory can explain the external world by explaining observed facts only on the assumption that the external world shows itself or appears in the observed facts.

Newton made this assumption, along with the assumption that the concepts of theory which explain the phenomena are derived from the phenomena by general induction. For Hempel, however, it has to be recognized that the method of induction is fallacious. It has to be

recognized that in and of itself a theory is a speculative construction. A theory couched in terms such as "atom" and "electron" in and of itself has no connection with observed facts such as the spectra of various gases, tracks in cloud and bubble chambers, and so forth. By generating "bridge principles" a theory can establish connections with observed facts--can indeed explain or account for them. But bridge principles empower a theory to explain observed facts as manifestations of the theoretical entities invented or proposed speculatively by the theory as a means of explaining observed facts. Bridge principles which connect hypothetical explanatory principles to phenomena construed as manifestations of those explanatory principles, do not establish connections between the theory and a "world" external to theory; nor do they establish connections between the phenomena--the "observed facts"--and a world or structure of matter external to the mind and its speculative constructions. A theory empowered to construe phenomena as the manifestations of speculatively proposed, hypothetical entities invented to explain the phenomena, is not empowered to construe the phenomena as the manifestation of a structure of matter external to the structure of the matter posited--as a constituted guess--by the theory. The explanatory power of theory--its capacity to account for "observed facts"--is not a power or capacity to account for or explain the concept of the Newtonian empirical fact, the concept of a corporeal phenomenon.

7 The electron-microscope, by projecting a beam of "electrons" upon "atoms," enables us to observe images on a screen which represent "x-rays" which signify the atom's response or reaction to the electron-

beam; so that in the phenomenon we observe, the image on the screen, we observe the representation of an effect that is caused by the manipulative process of observation; in the phenomenon, the observed fact, we observe an image which represents an "event" we have in part created. The "atom" as it is "in itself"--apart from the process of observation--does not appear or show itself in the phenomenon.

The claim of classical physics to know nature itself, to know the physical structure of matter--to know that by virtue of which nature is what it is--was based on the assumption that empirical phenomena are manifestations of the corporeal substance or physical identity of nature; hence, to know or account for the phenomena or observed facts would be to know the external world of nature, to know the things themselves. But it is precisely this assumption underlying the classical claims for knowledge that quantum theory forbids us to make. "We can no longer," argues Heisenberg, "speak of the behaviour of the particle independently of the process of observation."⁴³ The Uncertainty Principle means in part that, with regard to the "structure of matter," there are no "facts" in the classical sense, no revelations or manifestations of things as they are in themselves. "Observed facts" are observed facts: aspects of a state or event that shows itself only in such a way that it must be recognized that what is shown, what we can observe, necessarily owes its observed-form in part to the process of observation.

Within the horizons of "knowledge" disclosed by quantum theory, the meaning of the term "phenomenon" has been transformed. Observing observed facts we do not observe a classical "empirical fact," a corporeal phenomenon. In the absence of a corporeal phenomenon, it

makes no sense to speak of the difference between the laws of mathematics and an objective reality external to the laws of mathematics which articulate and shape our theoretical constructions; for we have no "facts," no evidence, no "knowledge" that would entitle us to speak of such an objective reality: "the objective reality of the elementary particles has been strangely dispersed, not into the fog of some new ill-defined or still unexplained conception of reality, but into the transparent clarity of a mathematics that no longer describes the behaviour of the elementary particles but only our knowledge of this behaviour."⁴⁴

In the absence of corporeal phenomena, mathematically articulated theoretical constructions that account for "observed facts" cannot be said to account for a Newtonian "nature," for the "mathematical formulae no longer describe nature itself but our knowledge of nature."⁴⁵ Our knowledge of nature is not knowledge of nature-- knowledge of an external reality, a physical structure of matter consisting of material particles--for "basically it is always our knowledge of these particles alone which we can make the object of science."⁴⁶ The object of science is not the particles themselves but "our knowledge of these particles." What we know is not nature itself but "our knowledge of nature." Within the horizons of knowledge disclosed by quantum theory, in the absence of a corporeal phenomenon, our knowledge is knowledge of our knowledge.

8 Within the horizons of "knowledge" disclosed by Cartesian science--by the act of positing as the object of knowledge a nature or reality external to the subject of knowledge; and in the absence of a

corporeal phenomenon--of that in which the external object of knowledge shows itself; "knowledge"--what knowledge is, what we know, the conditions of possibility for knowledge, the cognitive relation between subject and object of knowledge--must be construed in terms of a relation between speculatively proposed theoretical constructions--hypotheses, guesses--and phenomena conceived as "observed facts"--phenomena which reflect the process of observation, phenomena in which there appears the effects of our acts of manipulation, phenomena which show the inability of the knowing mind to bridge the gap between theoretical construction and a reality external to that construction, the gap between knowledge of nature and knowledge of our knowledge of nature--knowledge of our knowledge.

Section B - Blakean Science - "for Jerusalem's sake"

Part 1 - The Being of the Phenomenon

1 The table that the man of common sense believes himself to see, Coleridge argues, is the table itself, and not the phantom of a table he does not see. What exists (what is there, every thing that lives, the real that we desire to know), Blake argues, can be known, can be an object of perception and knowledge, because what exists shows itself, appears: "every particular Form gives forth or Emanates / Its own peculiar light, & the Form is the Divine Vision / And the Light is his Garment This is Jerusalem in every Man" (J54.1-3). This claim, "what exists, appears," is a central premise of Blake's idea of

science.

The Newtonian idea of science can be summarized not unfairly in the proposition, "nature appears." What exists, physical nature or res extensa, shows itself; nature acts upon our senses, causing our sensations or perceptions, from which reason derives its ideas of objective reality. Nature appears; reason (the organ of science, fashioned as a mirror or glass) reflects what appears, the objective manifestations of nature. Nature itself shows itself; from what is shown, the phenomena themselves, science infers or derives knowledge of the substance which stands under the appearance, the being of the phenomenon, nature itself, the subject of the verb "to appear."

This proposition, nature appears, is necessarily also a premise of that criticism which interprets Blake in terms of an imagination-nature opposition. Such an opposition would be meaningless unless it can be assumed that a nature opposed to imagination exists and shows itself such that it can be known. The theses, "Nature is miserably cruel, wasteful, purposeless, chaotic and half dead" (Frye), and "nature is never good in itself" (Damrosch), each predicate attributes of something called "nature." It would make no sense to say that Los builds Golgonooza with "physical, material materials," if we had no way of knowing--and therefore did not know--that such materials are there and at (Los's) hand.

2 What exists, appears, Blake argues, and can therefore be known. What exists and appears, Newton argues, is "nature itself," the art of God, a calculable coherence of forces acting on particles of matter, striking our senses. But Newtonian nature--nature as conceived by

Newton, what is called corporeal or physical--does not, Blake observes, appear. Newtonian matter is not at hand: no one has seen or touched a Newtonian atom. There are appearances; but from what appears, Blake argues, it is not possible to derive knowledge of a nature, a structure of matter, a substantiality of things, external to vision (our capacity to perceive and know). The Newtonian explanation of nature leaps over precisely that which calls for an explanation: how that which is by definition external and extrinsic to the mind could become a phenomenon, a perceived being, an object of mental contemplation; how what is called corporeal could show itself to the mind, could traverse the gap separating the non-mental from the mental.

What Newtonian science overlooks or leaps over is, as we have seen, precisely what quantum theory confronts: the absence of corporeal phenomena, the fact that here are no empirical facts in the classical sense. The "facts"--the evidence of experiments, laboratory findings, the results of measurements, that which scientific explanation explains--are "observed facts," the results of manipulative acts, acts which effect the observed as it is observed, such that what is observed owes its observed-form to the process of observation. "Nature itself," a nature independent of the process of observation, does not appear, cannot be observed, measured.

What does not appear, Blake argues, cannot be an object of knowledge, cannot be known. Theoretical explanations may indeed explain phenomena by construing them as manifestations of underlying entities such as atoms or subatomic particles. But our "knowledge" of

these entities is not derived from the phenomena; the "entities" enjoy the status of speculatively proposed theoretical constructions; and the phenomena such hypotheses are invented to account for are observed facts. Knowledge conceived as a relation between speculatively proposed theoretical construction and observed facts cannot be construed as knowledge of a nature external to the mind, of a reality external to the capacity for speculative construction. Knowledge gained or built up from the labour of accounting for observed facts is not knowledge of nature itself. Quantum theory, confronting the fact of the absence of corporeal phenomena, confronts the fact that its object of knowledge is not nature itself, the fact that its knowledge is not knowledge of an external being of the phenomenon, not knowledge of a substance underlying the phenomena which can be said to exist "in itself."

The classical claim, "nature itself shows itself," ignores or leaps over the fact that nature itself does not appear; that from what appears we have no way of knowing that appearances emanate from a source external to our vision. The claim, "nature appears," attributes the capacity to appear to a subject or somewhat that we do not perceive or know. The claim, "nature appears," implies a leap of faith, an act of leaping over what appears, what is perceived, what is known, the empirical facts, an act which exceeds knowledge, which goes beyond science, Blake argues, and arrives at a religion of nature, "Natural Religion."

3 There is no Natural Religion, Blake argues: there is no "nature" or reality external to or other than imagination. But the belief in an

external reality has flourished: there is a "religion" of nature. The principal effect of this belief is both the principal theme of the major prophecies: the loss of the emanation ("What do I here...without my Emanation?" M14.28); and the principal phenomenon, what the prophecies show, cause to appear: "Man divided from his Emanation is a dark Spectre / His Emanation is an ever-weeping melancholy Shadow" (J53.25-26).

Newtonian nature--nature itself, the physical substantiality of things--does not appear. If we believe that this nature exists, then we believe that what exists does not appear. If what exists does not appear, then, as Plato (the most famous promulgator of the doctrine which posits a gap between real existence and appearance) argues, what appears does not exist. What appears, what is perceived, the phenomenon, is a phantasma, a shadow. Hence the doctrine of A. S. Eddington, who argues in The Nature of the Physical World, that the table "which lies visible to my eyes and tangible to my grasp" is not "really there"; whereas what is really there is a "scientific table," which is "mostly emptiness," sparsely scattered with "numerous electric charges rushing about with great speed."⁴⁷

What exists, appears, Blake argues: appearance, what we perceive, what is visible and tangible, is the "garment," the "emanation," of what exists. Platonism, as it achieves articulate expression of the true reason for dividing what exists from what appears, achieves the nihilation of the emanation in the name of a reality "which has no colour or shape, that cannot be touched" (Phaedrus 247c). What appears in Samson Agonistes is the corruption of Gaza, the harlotry of Dalila. Knowledge of what appears, what is corrupt and phantasmal, is corrupt,

phantasmal knowledge; for his error, apostasy, in trusting this knowledge, Samson is blinded and imprisoned. Real knowledge, knowledge of what is real, that Sabaoth sight, must leap over the sphere of Mutabilitie, cast off phantasmata, leave behind what appears and our knowledge of what appears.

So, also, Eddington's doctrine--which, by refusing to what appears the status of reality, nihilates, reduces to unreality, what has colour and shape, what can be touched, the table that the man of common sense believes himself to see--requires that we leap over what appears and our knowledge of what appears. In order to believe that the "scientific table" is really there we must ignore what we know, that our knowledge of the "rushing electric charges" cannot be construed as knowledge of what is "really there." The mathematic formulae which express the scientific meaning of rushing electric charges do not describe nature itself, the nature of electric charges; they rather express the meaning of the relation between hypothesis and observed facts, between speculatively proposed theoretical construction and the "large disturbance"⁴⁸ created by our efforts to produce measurements or data that are amenable to mathematical description. As it ascribes the status of reality to theoretical entities, Eddington's doctrine exceeds what we know, the oeuvre or emanation of quantum theory: "the transparent clarity of a mathematics that no longer describes the behaviour of the elementary particles but only our knowledge of this behaviour."⁴⁹ As it substitutes electric charges rushing through emptiness for Newton's hard impenetrable least particles, Eddington's doctrine overlooks the fact that the knowledge

which discloses the new idea of particles deals not "with the elementary particles themselves but with our knowledge of them."⁵⁰ As we substitute the particles of quantum theory for Newtonian atoms, we necessarily "forego the description of nature which for centuries was considered the obvious aim of all exact sciences."⁵¹

What exists, what is really there, Blake argues, "shines by its own Internal light" (M10.16), gives forth or emanates its own peculiar light, appears, shows itself; and therefore can be known. Newtonian nature does not appear (and therefore is not perceived, is not known, is not an object of knowledge), Blake argues, because this nature does not exist.

The "foundation" of Newtonian nature is the concept of "matter," conceived as "a reality of its own independent of the mind,"⁵² as a physical or corporeal substance consisting of atoms or least particles. "What is important for the materialistic world-view is simply the possibility that such small building-stones of elementary particles exist and that they may be considered the ultimate objective reality."⁵³ Classical physics assumes "that what has existence is exclusively the unchangeable corpuscles, and that the form under which they present themselves"--the phenomena, that which appears--"is exclusively their arrangement in space."⁵⁴ The corporeal atoms "constitute the 'identity' of Newton's reality, the ultimate fabric out of which all real things are made."⁵⁵ The least particles of matter are Newton's ousia, that by virtue of which the real is what it is, that by virtue of which nature is itself.

Newton's "Atom," Blake argues, is "A Thing that does not Exist"

(E783). This claim, which erases the foundation, the identity, the principium essendi of Newton's "nature itself," is, I believe, entirely consistent with Heisenberg's thesis, "atoms are neither things nor objects";⁵⁶ and consistent with the findings of quantum theory.

Quantum theory "provides us with no ultimate unit of matter and no way of even picturing what we mean by matter."⁵⁷ The theory enables us to make "precise macroscopic predictions on the basis of microscopic probabilities"; but no one "has seen or will see probability. It is a mathematical abstraction, and any picture of it is also an abstraction."⁵⁸ Quantum theory enables us to

foretell the chances of finding an electron at some particular location in space, but we are expressly forbidden by the Uncertainty Principle from using this information to construct any kind of picture of how an electron exists in and travels through space...

We cannot, according to the Uncertainty Principle, simultaneously measure the position and velocity of an electron. But knowing the instantaneous position and velocity of a particle and inferring from them, step by step, the future course of its motion is central to Newtonian mechanics and to the Newtonian picture of particles as entities existing in and moving through space. We have given up our picture of matter in space. 59

Mathematic formulae which define the "probability distribution of the electron in the space of the atom" do not define the "nature" of an entity, do not determine what an "electron" is: the "probability cloud, or wave as it is often called, which quantum theory does describe for us, is not in any sense the same as the electron, which quantum theory does not describe."⁶⁰

For Newtonian science the atom is a "least particle" possessed of such primary qualities as extension, hardness, impenetrability and

inertial force; the definition of the particle states the attributes of a thing, something that exists. Quantum theory also offers definitions of particles: the term "electron," for example, means "elementary particle of rest mass 9.107×10^{-28} , charge 4.802×10^{-10} statcoulomb, and a spin of one-half unit."⁶¹ But such a definition defines a "theoretical entity"; it does not state the attributes of a thing. The terms which express what an electron means are themselves theoretical--speculatively proposed theoretical constructions. The term "electron" means nothing, is meaningless, outside of the abstract context disclosed by such terms as "mass" and "charge"--terms which are not derived from observed facts but are invented in order to account for them. Such terms as "mass" and "charge" are

a kind of convenience--a shorthand way of referring to a collection of macroscopic measurements that we associate with some abstraction called a particle. No one has ever seen an electron or directly observed its mass or charge. But certain procedures carried out in the large-scale physical world will consistently result in a set of measurements that we associate through a long abstract argument with a thing called an electron. We have no way of visualizing how an unpicturable electron can possess a mass and a charge or how it can be present in space. We use such terms by analogy with our classical Newtonian models of matter, for we have no other pictures to use. 62

But the question arises as to the wisdom or justification of the strategy whereby we use the classical Newtonian model of matter to understand by analogy the oeuvre of quantum theory which, as it "demolishes our idea of matter as a substance,"⁶³ as it erases the identity of Newtonian matter, erases the credibility of the Newtonian "model." The Newtonian model represents a "physical world," a res extensa consisting of atoms which exist in and move through a space external to the mind; the motions of the existent particles comprise

"nature itself," the physical world which shows itself; understanding the motions of particles, science understands or knows the being of the phenomena, the physical reality and "cause" of what appears. But the mathematical formulae of quantum theory do not represent or describe or explain a nature itself, an external, non-mental structure of matter, a being of the phenomenon. Atoms, as understood by quantum theory, are neither things nor objects. Particles do not appear, are not objects, Gegenstände, phenomena; they are theoretical terms invented--speculatively proposed--to account for observed facts. The theoretical entity--the electron, atom, quark--is not a thing, an existent something that can be conceived as the subject of the verb "to appear." Atoms do not show themselves. The definition which states what the elementary particle means defines that which does not appear, that which is not a thing.⁶⁴

Part 2 - Imagination Appears

1 There is no Natural Religion: the idea of a reality external to imagination is a "cloven fiction." What exists, Blake argues, appears; what exists are the forms of imagination: imagination appears. What appears, what imagination emanates, is what is perceived, the phenomenon. What is perceived is the product of the act of perception, the oeuvre of vision or imagination: imagination perceives, knows. Science is a labour and achievement of imagination: "to Labour in Knowledge. is to Build up Jerusalem" (J77). Jerusalem, the emanation, is what we perceive and know, our knowledge.

2 "Every thing," Blake argues, "shines by it own Internal light" (M10.16). What exists shows itself, "Emanates / Its own peculiar Light" (J54.1-2), emanates a "Garment" (J54.3), an appearance. Contrary to Plato, who posits a gap between what exists and what appears, for whom the "being" of the phenomenon is outside separated from its appearance, for whom existent forms do not emanate light but are rather illuminated by the light of the "intelligible sun situated outside of the eye that sees and the object it illuminates,"⁶⁵ for Blake the existent form is a phenomenon, that which shines by and emanates its own light, "what shows itself in that which occurs out of itself."⁶⁶

"By the form every thing is what it is," Berkeley writes, expounding Platonic doctrine. "This is my Opinion," Blake agrees, "but"--he adds, marking his difference from Platonism--"Forms must be apprehended by Sense or the Eye of Imagination" (Ann. to Berkeley's Siris E664). What exists, the form, appears. What appears, the "garment," is what is apprehended by sense. What appears, what the existent form emanates, is what is perceived, what is seen, touched, heard, experienced, the object of perception. Sense apprehends the garment, the emanation: "This is Jerusalem" (J54.3). For Plato, what appears does not exist, is excluded from the real; existents have no emanation; the emanation is a shadowy phantasma.

For Blake, existents are phenomena: they show themselves, emanate an appearance, appear. An unperceived appearance is an abstraction: what appears is what is perceived. What is perceived, what sense apprehends, implies a sense that apprehends. What is seen is what the eye sees. Appearance implies a percipient, a perceiving being or mind,

who has eyes to see and ears to hear. For Kant, the form of the appearance implies that capacity of reason to form appearances described in the "transcendental aesthetic." For Husserl, the "object" of perception, the cogitatum or noema, implies a "subject," the cogito which performs the noetic or perceiving act. For quantum theory, "facts"--the results of measurements--are "observed"; what is measured or observed implies the act or process of measuring or observing.

For Blake, the perceiving "subject" is imagination. The eye which sees is the "Eye of Imagination." "Man is All Imagination" (Ann. to Siris E664). Imagination or "vision" is the human capacity to see, hear, touch, experience. Imagination is that which perceives, that which apprehends by sense the emanation or appearance of existent forms. As for Coleridge, imagination for Blake is the "agent of perception."

3 What exists and appears, for Newton, are corporeal forms, a "nature" which is "itself" as it consists of matter. The notion of matter entails the Cartesian partition: to posit matter is to posit a gap between non-mental nature and the mind that perceives and knows. The Cartesian partition means that we must conceive the subject of the verbs to exist, to appear, as being different from the subject of the verbs to perceive, to know. What appears is other than what perceives; what exists is other than what knows.

For Blake, the idea of a non-mental object of perception or knowledge is absurd. We do not know what is called corporeal. We do not derive knowledge of corporeal nature from phenomena, for no such nature appears, there are no corporeal phenomena. Newton's nature does

not appear, because it does not exist. We do not perceive Newtonian atoms because there are no hard impenetrable least particles to perceive. We do not see bodies or objects consisting of least particles because no such bodies exist. Los does not build Golgonooza from physical, material materials because no such materials exist.

The Newtonian idea of matter entails the Cartesian partition. If there is no evidence to support the hypothesis which attributes real existence to matter, if there is no reason to suppose that atoms are things or objects, there is no reason to conceive nature, or the mind, or science, or imagination, in terms of the Cartesian architecture. There is no reason to suppose that the term "nature" signifies a non-mental reality; that res extensa is a res; or that existent forms exist in a three-dimensional space from which the mind is excluded. There is no reason to suppose that what exists exists by virtue of being composed of non-mental particles; that the Newtonian idea of a physical "nature itself" is not meaningless. There is no reason to suppose that the term "mind" signifies a "subjectivity," that which is excluded from "nature," from objective reality. There is no reason to suppose that science must traverse a "gap" that separates the knowing mind from a non-mental known being. There is no reason to suppose that from the order of things we perceive it is possible to derive knowledge of a reality that the mind lacks. There is no reason to suppose that the "being" of the phenomenon is a non-mental reality; or to suppose that what appears appears as the image of a reality or substantiality of things external to the mind. There is no reason to suppose that appearances have anything to do with--or that perception

can be explained in terms of--the acts of forces operating on least particles of matter.

Newtonian nature does not show itself, is not perceived, is not an object of perception. In the absence of corporeal phenomena, there is no reason to suppose that the subjects of the verbs to exist, to appear, can be explained in terms of Newtonian matter. In the absence of the hypothesis of matter, there is no reason to suppose that the subjects of the verbs to perceive, to know, can be explained in terms of the Cartesian-Newtonian rational power. The Cartesian architecture posits an external, corporeal res; but the science built up on this foundation discloses no "object of knowledge" external to the "subject"--the rational power--which posits the concept of the object as "other." Cartesian science discloses no reason to suppose that it is necessary to conceive what exists as being other than what knows.

4 For Blake, what exists is (not other than) what knows.

Imagination for Blake is "vision": the prime and only agent of perception, the subject of the verb to know, what perceives and knows. By virtue of imagination we are empowered to perceive and know.

"Actual knowledge is identical with its object," argues Aristotle: "the mind which is actively thinking is the objects which it thinks."⁶⁷ Coleridge similarly argues that "the principium essendi does not stand to the principium cognoscendi in the relation of cause to effect, but both the one and the other are co-inherent and identical."⁶⁸ Imagination for Blake means, I am arguing, the co-inherence and identity of what exists and what knows, what appears and what perceives.

Imagination is "the Infinite in all things" (NNRb E3), "the infinite in every thing" (MHH12). But the "Infinite alone resides in Definite & Determinate Identity" (J55.64). What exists, every thing, has an "Outline of Identity" (J18.3), an "Imaginative Form" which is the "Reality" of "Every Thing" (E663-664). Imaginative Form is the principium essendi, that by virtue of which every thing is what it is, that by virtue of which the infinite in every thing resides in definite and determinate identity.

The principium essendi for Newton is the atom: by virtue of its atomic constituents the physical form or body or thing is what it is. But if atoms do not exist, are not existent things, the Newtonian conception of a thing as a "physical form" is a cloven fiction. Imaginative Form is mental form. But "mental" for Blake does not refer to a mind conceived as a res or consciousness outside separated from an objective reality--such a conception of the mental merely repeats the cloven fiction. Reason is not a "separate existing principle," a thinking res opposed to an unthinking, non-mental res. Existents are mental forms. The mind thinks, knows; but mind also exists: the definite and determinate forms of mental existence are existents, things, what exists. Imagination means the co-inherence of Energy ("the only life," the power of imagination to live, to achieve existent form) and Reason (the power of imagination to think, the mind that perceives and knows). Imagination means the co-inherence of Form (the act of Energy, what has definite and determinate identity, what exists and appears) and Vision (the perceiving mind, the subject of the verb to know): "every particular Form gives forth or Emanates / Its own peculiar Light, & the Form is the Divine Vision" (J54.1-2). In

the "Outline of Identity," the act of vision (mind, reason) and the act of energy (what lives, living form) co-inhere.

5 Cartesian thought conceives science as the cognitive relation between subject and object, where "object" denotes a being or substance or res other than the "subject." The identity of subject and object is conceived on the foundation of the assumption of an ontological difference: res cogitans or reason is what it is by virtue of being other than res extensa, which is what it is--nature itself--by virtue of being other than the knowing mind. How then is the object knowable, how is it possible for reason to know that an external nature exists, unless knowing is able to traverse the gap or difference which constitutes the identity of the knowing being? For Descartes and Newton, God makes nature such that it will manifest its mathematical form to reason; the problem posed by the gap is resolved by appealing to a third term to whom is attributed the capacity to resolve such problems. For Kant, who renounces such an appeal, the problem is unresolved: reason does not know the things themselves. Quantum theory also renounces the aim of describing "nature itself."⁶⁹

To labour in knowledge for Blake is to build up Jerusalem. Building up Jerusalem is not the building of a Cartesian architecture. Jerusalem is built on the foundation of imagination, not on the foundation of the idea of a reality external to imagination. Imagination for Blake means the co-inherence and identity of Form, what exists and appears, and Vision, what perceives and knows. Identity for Blake is a function not of Cartesian or Platonic difference but of co-inherence: the Outline of Identity, the

Imaginative Form, is the act of the power to exist and the act of the power to know. Vision is what it is--the agent or subject of perception, the knowing being--as it is (not other than) existent form. Imaginative Form is what it is--a phenomenon--as it appears, shows itself, makes itself known, emanates a knowable manifestation or garment. The table that I see is what is there and shows itself, and is what I see, the act of my power to see, a particular form of my vision.⁷⁰

For Blake, the problem of conceiving the possibility of a cognitive relation between a subject of knowledge and an object conceived as "other" is unresolvable; but this "problem" is internal to the Cartesian architecture, is the product of the act of the rational power which posits the idea of the "other," the fiction of an external reality. For Blake the man of common sense can see the table and know that what he sees is really there because the table is not "other," has no identity or being external to the Eye of Imagination. The question of the identity of thing and of the sense that apprehends the thing is transmuted into error so soon as we introduce the fiction of the "other." Classical physics for Blake is the expression of this error. The project of Cartesian science consists of the projection of the rational power's concept of the other on that which is not other. The history of Natural Religion for Blake is a history of violence--violence against things, against vision, against phenomena, against imagination. The fundamental act of violence is the misconstruction of the identity of things, the acts or forms of imagination. Platonism reduces things to phantasmata, in the name of rational ideas--the

abstractions of the rational power. Newtonian science, seeking to restore the "reality" of things by projecting upon them its abstract concept of "matter," reduces vision, science, to an order of speculatively proposed, mathematically constituted guesses concerning the unknown "nature" of an opaque reality. Sartre, giving "being" its due, its reality or identity as "other," reduces the knowing being to nothingness.⁷¹

6 Imagination for Blake means the co-inherence and identity of Form and Vision. The emanation, Jerusalem, is the manifestation and achievement of this identity. Jerusalem (for whom the prophet, Blake, Los, labours) is light, garment, appearance. Appearance is the emanation, achievement of existing: what exists, shines, appears. An unperceived appearance is an abstraction: appearance is what is perceived, the emanation, oeuvre, achievement of vision.

The emanation is what is imagined, the product of imagination's acts. The acts of imagination are existent forms, definite and determinate identities, what exists and appears. The emanation is appearance, what the existent form "gives forth or emanates," what is shown, what is expressed, what is made apparent, the garment, the "object" of perception. The acts of imagination are the acts of vision; existent forms are mental forms, forms of vision; the emanation of existent form is the emanation of vision. The object of perception, what is given forth or emanated, appearance, is what is perceived, what the perceiving mind in the act of perception perceives, the product or oeuvre or emanation of vision.

The emanation is what is imagined. Imagination for Blake has no

Cartesian identity, nor does its emanation. The emanation is what it is--appearance--as it is emanated from what exists, and as it is perceived, as it is shaped and built up by the perceiving mind. The emanation is the object of perception; but it is not a Cartesian object, a Newtonian phenomenon, an identity external to vision. There is no principium essendi other than the principium cognoscendi, Blake argues: there are no Cartesian objects, no corporeal forms, no physical beings. The emanation is a mental construct, what the labour of knowledge builds up; but it is not a Kantian phenomenon, a subjective construct of a subjective mind, which has no relation to existent forms, which shows no aspect of things themselves. Vision for Blake is not Vernunft, the mind is not a Cartesian "subject"; mind exists, the things themselves are mental forms, the things themselves show themselves in what appears, what is perceived. The ontological difference posited by Cartesian thought, which determines the "object" as an existent otherness and the mind as a "subject" outside separated from existent form, is for Blake a cloven fiction, an expression of the rational power's abstraction, its self-assertion of itself as a separate existing principle. The rational power is not vision, is less than vision, is vision abstracted and therefore diminished. Vision is what it is by virtue of its co-inherence with existent form. The rational power is what it by virtue of its self-abstraction from existents. That the rational power has for its emanation only the Kantian phenomenon, a self-reflecting shadow, is for Blake precisely the point: the rational Cartesian "subject" is a spectre, a self-contemplating shadow.

7 Jerusalem, the emanation, is for Blake the condition of possibility for science. What exists, appears. By virtue of the emanation, appearance, existents are phenomena: they show themselves, they are objects of perception and knowledge. By virtue of the emanation, existents are more than Platonic ideas, rational abstractions, mathematic forms. By virtue of the emanation, what exists can be perceived, known: there are "facts" to be observed, there appears that which the eye sees, that which the measuring instrument measures. By virtue of the emanation the real shows itself, as what we see, hear, touch, experience; as what fascinates, delights, appalls; as "the fresh wonder of real things" and as the ugliness of industrial landscapes; as what the hand caresses or strikes; as the sweetness of the fruit that the tongue savours, the chemist analyses, or the worm feeds on.

What exists, appears; what appears is what is perceived, what the eye sees, the tongue savours, the mind in contemplation contemplates. To labour in knowledge is to build up Jerusalem. The emanation, Jerusalem, is the product of our capacity to perceive and know, the oeuvre of our acts of vision, what is known, the achievement of science, what we perceive, our knowledge of things, the garment, manifestation of the things we know. Jerusalem is: what the eye, seeing, sees, what thinking thinks; what in the act of singing is sung, what listening hears; what our stories say, our narratives relate; what is written and read; what our acts of making make, poems, films, discursive formations, ideologies, toxins, shrapnel.

Jerusalem is what is imagined, the achievement of the acts of imagination: what appears, what we cause to appear, our truth; what is

expressed, what we manifest, our appearance, garment; what we perceive and know, our knowledge.

8 The real we desire to know, Blake argues, is not "other": not other than the knowing mind, not other than what appears. Blakean science--the building up of Jerusalem--is the antipodes of Cartesian science and of Platonism. The real shows itself, in what we perceive, as what we perceive. What exists, what is really there, appears, meets the eye. Knowledge--science--begins not with the idea of the corporeal opposed to the mental, not with the idea of the intelligible opposed to the sensible, not with the idea of the "other," but with "an improvement of sensual enjoyment" (MHH14) which, as it improves our capacity to know the real that appears, expands the capacity of the real to appear.

"Science reigns" when the "dark Religions are departed" (FZ E407). The task of casting off dark Religion, of separating from things the opaque abstraction of the "other," brings us to the labours of Los.

NOTES

- 1 Carl G. Hempel, Philosophy of Science (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966) 2.
- 2 From her Review of Modern Painters, vol. 3, Westminster Review (1856); cited by George Levine, The Realistic Imagination (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1981) 258.
- 3 Dark Interpreter 14.
- 4 The Physicist's Conception of Nature 25.
- 5 Frye 39.
- 6 Damrosch, Symbol 368.
- 7 Hunt (from his Review in the Examiner of Blake's 1809 Exhibition) is cited by Frye, Fearful Symmetry 411; Rajan, Dark Interpreter 238-39; Damrosch, Symbol 70n.
- 8 Rajan 220.
- 9 Rajan 261.
- 10 Damrosch 369.
- 11 Damrosch 11.
- 12 Damrosch 368.
- 13 Damrosch 368, 366.
- 14 Damrosch 14.
- 15 Rajan 16.
- 16 Rajan 13-14.
- 17 Rajan 14.
- 18 Meditations, The Philosophical Works of Descartes 185, 191.
- 19 Descartes 192.
- 20 The Advancement of Learning 11.
- 21 Cited by Fritjof Capra, The Tao of Physics 56.
- 22 Bacon 8.
- 23 Emmanuel Levinas, Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff,

1979) 42. I have borrowed the idea of an appeal to a "third term" as a means of bridging the gap between the opposed terms of an antithesis from Levinas's critique of Western philosophy as "an ontology: a reduction of the other to the same by interposition of a middle and neutral term that ensures the comprehension of being" (43).

- 24 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 115.
- 25 Cited by Capra, Tao 41.
- 26 Cited by Paul Grenet, Thomism 94.
- 27 Descartes 185, 191.
- 28 Hempel, Philosophy of Science 14.
- 29 F. S. C. Northrop, from his "Introduction" to Physics and Philosophy 3.
- 30 Hempel 15.
- 31 Northrop 3-4.
- 32 Hempel 17.
- 33 Northrop 5.
- 34 Hempel 18.
- 35 Hempel 2.
- 36 Hempel 14.
- 37 Hempel 72-73.
- 38 Hempel 75.
- 39 Hempel 74.
- 40 Hempel 81.
- 41 Hempel 70.
- 42 Hempel 83.
- 43 The Physicist's Conception 15.
- 44 Heisenberg, Conception 15.
- 45 Heisenberg, Conception 25.
- 46 Heisenberg, Conception 24.

47 "One of [my tables] has been familiar to me from earliest years....It has extension; it is comparatively permanent; it is coloured; above all it is substantial...Table No. 2 is my scientific table. It...is mostly emptiness. Sparsely scattered in that emptiness are numerous electric charges rushing about with great speed; but their combined bulk amounts to less than a billionth of the bulk of the table itself. [Nevertheless, it] supports my writing paper as satisfactorily as table No. 1; for when I lay the paper on it the little electric particles with their headlong speed keep on hitting the underside, so that the paper is maintained in shuttlecock fashion at a nearly steady level....It make all the difference in the world whether the paper before me is poised as it were on a swarm of flies..., or whether it is supported because there is substance below it, it being the intrinsic nature of substance to occupy space to the exclusion of other substance....I need not tell you that modern physics has by delicate test and remorseless logic assured me that my second scientific table is the only one that is really there... On the other hand I need not tell you that modern physics will never succeed in exorcising that first table--strange compound of external nature, mental imagery and inherited prejudice--which lies visible to my eyes and tangible to my grasp." A. S. Eddington, The Nature of the Physical World (New York: Cambridge UP, 1929) ix-xii; cited by Hempel 78.

- 48 Heisenberg, Conception 15.
- 49 Heisenberg, Conception 15.
- 50 Heisenberg, Conception 15.
- 51 Heisenberg, Conception 25.
- 52 Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy 148.
- 53 Heisenberg, Conception 14.
- 54 Grenet, Thomism 15.
- 55 Ault, Visionary Physics 5.
- 56 Heisenberg, Physics and Beyond 123.
- 57 Jones, Physics as Metaphor 120.
- 58 Jones, Physics 118, 119.
- 59 Jones, Physics 119-120.
- 60 Jones, Physics 119.
- 61 Hempel 99.
- 62 Jones, Physics 120.

63 Jones, Physics 117.

64 More appropriate for the purpose of understanding the ontological claims of quantum theory than the Newtonian model of matter, suggests Heisenberg, is the Aristotelian idea of matter as a potentia: "In fact, I believe that the language actually used by physicists when they speak about atomic events produces in their minds similar notions as the concept 'potentia'" (Physics and Philosophy 180-181). Aristotelian matter, argues Heisenberg, does not exist: it is "in itself not a reality but only a possibility, a 'potentia'; it exists only by means of form. In the natural process the 'essence,' as Aristotle calls it, passes over from mere possibility through form into actuality" (147-148). The notion of matter not as a hard, impenetrable res but as a dynamic potential is for Heisenberg comparable to quantum theory's conception of "the complete mutability of matter": "All the elementary particles can, at sufficiently high energies, be transmuted --to other particles, or they can simply be created from kinetic energy and can be annihilated into energy, for instance into radiation....All the elementary particles are made of the same substance, which we may call energy or universal matter; they are just different forms in which matter can appear.

"If we compare this situation with the Aristotelian concepts of matter and form, we can say that the matter of Aristotle, which is mere 'potentia,' should be compared to our concept of energy, which gets into 'actuality' by means of the form, when the elementary particle is created" (160).

"In the experiments about atomic events we have to do with things and facts, with phenomena that are just as real as any phenomena in daily life. But the atoms or the elementary particles are not as real; they form a world of potentialities or possibilities rather than one of things or facts" (186).

65 Levinas, Totality and Infinity 74.

66 Heidegger, Basic Writings 258.

67 De Anima, III, 7.

68 Biographia Literaria 155.

69 The problem re-appears (persists?) in the dispute between Husserl and Sartre. By "executing phenomenological reduction"--by putting aside the question of the identity of the subject of the verb to appear--Husserl's phenomenology achieves a description of phenomena: "I, the transcendental phenomenologist, have objects (singly or in universal complexes) as a theme for universal descriptions: solely as the intentional correlates of modes of consciousness of them" (Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology, trans. Dorion Cairns [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977] 37). But Sartre "is dubious about the ontological status of the phenomenon, especially since Husserl reduces it to unreality and eventually to a construct of consciousness," argues Klaus Hartmann in Sartre's Ontology (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966) 30-

31. As a construct of consciousness, Husserl's intentional object is nothing more than a Kantian phenomenon. In Husserl's phenomenology, "Being has not been given its due," Sartre argues in Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (1966; New York: Washington Square Press, 1973) 21. Consciousness is not "constitutive of the being of its object" (21). The "first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness" (11). Husserl's phenomenology nihilates the "being of the phenomenon"; Sartre will restore to objects their being or reality, but at the expense of the "subject": consciousness for Sartre is néant, a "shell of nothingness" (791). The cognitive relation resolves into a relation between the known being and knowing being which is not a being, which has "no reality save that of being the nihilation of being" (786). Science is a relation between the in-itself and the for-itself, between the "other" and the spectre.

70 In his essay on "The Principle of Identity," in Identity and Difference, Heidegger proposes the idea that "identity" is a function of the co-inherence or "belonging-together" (zusammen-gehören) of Being and thinking. Being is what it is, thinking is what it is, by virtue of their belonging-together or co-inherence. Being thus is not "other" than thinking: it co-inheres with thinking in "the same," in the relation of belonging-together. This essay seems to me to offer an important contribution to the task of thinking of "identity" in terms different from the traditional logic of "same" and "other"--a logic unsuited for understanding Blake's "imagination"; but it is not clear --to me--what Heidegger means by Sein.

71 Western ontology, Levinas argues in Totality and Infinity, is an "imperialism of the same" (39): "The relation with Being that is enacted as ontology consists in neutralizing the existent in order to comprehend or grasp it" (45-46). The Being of ontology is a concept deployed as a means to accomplish "a reduction of the other to the same" (46). But "no concept lays hold of exteriority" (295). The other, who "remains always the source of his own presence" (296), is exterior to the philosophical systems which represent "Being." This powerful critique seeks among other things to deliver individuals from the philosophical, political, and economic regimes that would require the individual to surrender his identity to the "Whole," to the totalitarian system of rationality.

Vision--science--for Blake does not have to fail to recognize that "Each thing is its own cause & its own effect" (Ann. to Lavater's Aphorisms on Man E601). To be the source of its presence, the existent does not have to be "other"--at least in the sense of the "other" as defined by Natural Religion. In relation to the "I alone," every thing is other; but no thing is other by virtue of its corporeal identity or by virtue of ousia. For Blake, Natural Religion is an imperialism of the same--solipsism: He who sees the Ratio only sees himself only. This Empire will be no more when we recognize that the "other"--the "reality" external to what appears and what knows--is a concept of the rational power projected upon what is not other. The fiction of res extensa yielded the conclusion that animals cannot experience pain, an absurdity useful for a fur-trading economy. The

Newtonian idea of "matter," of no use for understanding what exists and appears, the world, "nature," continues to be a useful if not necessary fiction for those industrial economies which require the "raw materials" of "natural resources" to function. Comprehended as corporeal or physical objects, things are indeed neutralized, reduced to that which we can "grasp." In our concern for the "environment" we perhaps begin to catch sight of the need for an alternative manner of comprehension. Seeing that toxins in our lakes and streams find their way into our veins and tissues, we perhaps begin to see that "nature" is not "other"--that nature is us--which is what Blake's proposition, "Nature is Imagination itself," after all, means.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE LABOURS OF LOS

Part 1 - Introduction

1 There is no Natural Religion, Blake argues: there is no reality external to or other than imagination. But the belief has persisted since Plato that imagination is phantasia or illusion as measured against a "reality" conceived as "otherness"--ousia or being or the substantiality of things, nature itself or the external world. The world--the order of things--is "external," Blake argues, only for the "I alone," for a being alone with itself, a spectral being who alienates things as it abstracts itself from them, a selfhood. For the "I alone" and its rational power--its power to comprehend existents as physical forms or as objects set over against itself--what exists and appears is outside separated, "other." The belief in an existent-otherness, an external reality, Blake argues, expresses what is true for the "spectre," the "truth" of the selfhood.

That this truth--Natural Religion--is error, is for Blake obvious from its achievement: the history of Natural Religion is a history of violence, a field strewn with "Victims" (M4.22, J63.9, J90.48). The victims include: existents, what exists, "all things"; what appears, the emanation, Jerusalem; and man, Albion, the knowing being, the man of common sense. The "Wheel of Religion," moving "against the current of / Creation," "devour[s] all things in its loud / Fury & thundering course" (J77). As the "Starry Wheels" revolve, Jerusalem is drawn

"into Non-Entity," "scatterd abroad like a cloud of smoke thro' non-
entity" (J5.46,51,13). Divided from his emanation, shrouded in dark
Religion, Albion is a "dark Spectre" (J53.25), a "sleeper of the land
of shadows" (J4.6).

The theme of Los's Elohistic labours serves as a principal focus
for the prophet's agon with Natural Religion. Los labours in the
context of Albion's fall into division, where Albion, "Turning his
back to the Divine Vision" (J29.1), having set the Wheel of Religion
in motion, has become the principal victim of the error he originates.
Amongst the ruins of Albion's fall, in the land of shadow, Los labours
against Natural Religion: against "the Starry Wheels of Albions sons"
(J6.1); "Tirzah and her Sisters" (J5.40); "These hypocritic Selfhoods"
(J8.16); "thou my Spectre" (J8.14); "the Holy Reasoning Power"
(J10.15); "Laws from Plato & his Greeks" (M22.53); "Bacon & Newton &
Locke who teach Humility to Man" (J54.17).

Knowing that "Albion is dead! His Emanation is divided from him!"
(J12.6), Los labours "for Albions sake" (J8.17), building Golgonooza
"That Man may live upon Earth till the time of his awaking" (M27.61).
And he labours "for Jerusalems / Sake" (J11.9-10), "To Create a World
of Generation from the World of Death" (J58.18), that "the Religion of
Generation which was meant for the destruction / Of Jerusalem, become
her covering, till the time of the End" (J7.63-64).

2 In the context of Albion's fall into division, a central issue
for the prophet opposed to Natural Religion concerns the identity of
"Nature." Los "of the Elohim" (J73.24) labours for six thousand years,
building Golgonooza and creating a World of Generation, to show that

"Nature is a Vision of the Science of the Elohim" (M29.65). Nature is a "Vision": the identity or reality or substance of "nature" is not other than or external to our capacity to perceive and know; the identity of nature appears in, shows itself as, what we perceive; what we perceive, what meets the eye, is the oeuvre of vision.

For Bacon, Newton and Locke, chief English architects of the ascendant form of Natural Religion in Blake's day, "nature" signifies an external world, a res extensa, an object of knowledge other than the knowing mind or reason. Nature is what it is by virtue of its corporeal identity; the being or ousia or substance of nature is matter. Imagination--immaterial, not tied to the laws of matter--is at home in subjective, theatrical space, where it produces "dreams and vain fictions of our own making," where it manifests its identity, produces and shows itself as illusion. For the scientist who would get beyond the "shows of things" to an understanding of the real and physical "nature of things," "it is not good to stay too long in the theatre."¹

"I am convinced there is more to the world than meets the eye," Paul Davies explains his "motivation" for writing about the "new physics."² The distinction between what "meets the eye" and something "more" is Bacon's distinction between the "shows of things" and the "nature of things." The desire to know something "more" led Plato to comprehend the world of appearances--genesis or generation--as an order of "sensible" illusions; the mind that would know more must begin with the conviction of the unreality of what meets the eye.

The "more," the nature of things, the real, must--according to the logic of Western philosophy and science--be "other"; truth is not

--cannot be--a construct of reason's own making. The policies of kings and priests are commensurate with the real nature of things, which is "other," which is not a fiction of the ruling class's own making. The man of common sense, who knows only what meets the eye--who grasps only what he can touch, what has colour and shape, who does not know that the table he sees is not really there but is only an illusory compound of what meets the eye and inherited prejudice--cannot be expected to know the truth about what is really there, the real reasons behind the policies of the powerful.

The real, the more, must be other, in itself, not a fiction of our own making but the source of its own presence. But this more, this "nature itself," Blake argues, is not the source of its own presence; it has no presence, it does not show itself, does not appear; it is always already absent, elsewhere, "afar off." What does not show itself cannot be known, Blake argues; dark Religion nihilates what meets the eye and what is of our own making in the name of an opaque "Mystery."

The Uncertainty Principle of the new physics means that the corporeal or physical or atomic "identity" of "nature itself" is unknown and unknowable. Our knowledge of nature is not knowledge of "nature itself"--of that which is the source of its own presence. Empirical facts are always already observed facts--the "presence" of which implies the "large disturbance" of the process of observation.

In his essay on "The Idea of Nature [Das Naturbild] in Contemporary Physics," Heisenberg summarizes the achievement of the new physics in the phrase, "Modern man confronts himself alone."³ But

we can ask--it is pre-eminently Blake's question, and precisely what for Blake is at issue in the question of the identity of "nature"--who or what is this self-confronting "man"? Man confronts himself alone, as a consequence of his inability to confront (to represent, to put before himself in a mathematically objective form) nature itself, what is really there, that by virtue of which nature itself is itself. What attributes of "man"--of man "himself," of man's "self," of human "identity"--is it possible to confront in the transparent clarity of a mathematics which describes an inability to know a "reality" external to man?

Nature itself does not show itself. The identity or "self" of nature itself is opaque, absent. So man's knowledge, what he knows, has to be conceived in terms of a relation between speculatively proposed theoretical constructions and "observed facts"; knowledge--science--consists of constructions of our own making invented to account for or explain phenomena which disclose the absence of nature itself. The mind which achieves this knowledge confronts in this knowledge its own displacement or outside separation from the real it desires to know. In the context of the belief in a nature itself which does not appear, the knowing mind is: that which knows that what it knows is phantasmal; or, that which does not know a reality that cannot be known. Thus defined, the knowing being, "man," "man himself," is a selfhood or spectre.

3 "Los stands in London building Golgonooza / Compelling his Spectre to labours mighty" (J10.17-18). Golgonooza--whence the "Vision of the Science of the Elohim"--is built with the assistance of the

spectre: "I will compell thee to assist me in my terrible labours" (J8.15). For Los, the labour of "Subduing his Spectre" (M3.38) is a condition of possibility for the practice of the Science of the Elohim, the building of Golgonooza and the creation of a World of Generation: "Subduing his Spectre, they Buildded the Looms of Generation / They Buildded Great Golgonooza" (M3.38-39).

The labour of subduing the spectre begins with the recognition that the spectre's truth, Natural Religion, is a "Building" or architecture or construct of the spectre's own making. There is no Natural Religion, no reality external to imagination. Nature itself does not show itself because it does not exist. The "other" of Natural Religion is not other: it is a concept; the source of the presence of this concept is the mind which conceives it--the spectre and its rational power. The spectre is the victim of its achievement, of its own dark Religion. The spectre--the knowing being which does not know, which is not a being but an abstraction outside separated from existents, an I alone in non-entity, a nothingness--is a product of the architecture built up on the foundation of the act of positing an external reality or nature itself.

The spectre is the victim of its achievement, of its "science," its truth, its explanation of nature. But this truth is error, Blake argues: the nature of Natural Religion does not exist. No things consist of hard, impenetrable least particles. There are no physical or corporeal phenomena. There is no "being" of the phenomenon external to vision. To subdue the spectre is to transform the opacity of the "other" into the transparent clarity of the recognition that this other is not other. To subdue the spectre is to identify the "reasons"

underlying the nihilation of what meets the eye as error, as fictions of the rational power's own making.

To subdue the spectre is to identify the spectre's explanation or account of "nature" as a cloven fiction. It follows that nature--the order of things and appearances, what is really there and what meets the eye, the phenomena themselves, what Newtonian science seeks to explain--is unexplained. The "substantiality of things" is not accounted for by reference to a hypothetical substance that does not exist.⁴ Appearances are not explained by reference to that which does not appear, that which cannot be perceived. The identity of the table I see is not explained by reference to the relation between speculatively proposed theoretical constructions and observed facts. What is not there does not explain what is there.

The labour or act of subduing the spectre marks the turning-point in Blake's argument from the critique of error to an alternative--to a "science" that will account for what is there, what we confront, what meets the eye, without transforming things into abstractions, appearances into shadows, and man into a spectre.

4 "All Things Exist in the Human Imagination" (J69.25), Blake argues. By "imagination" Blake does not mean the phantasia of "Abstract Philosophy." The question of the identity of imagination for Blake is a question concerning the identity of "all things." There is no reality, no substance, no God, no thing, nothing external to or other than imagination. It follows that, for Blake, if the term "nature" signifies something, some order of things or appearances, it signifies something that is imagined, the acts or the products of

imagination. A science of nature--for Blake, "the Science of the Elohim"--must start from the recognition that "Nature is Imagination itself" (E702). Golgonooza, I shall argue, is the architecture, what Los builds up, on the foundation of this premise. Golgonooza is the structure which upholds and articulates the perception, knowledge or understanding that nature is imagination--a Vision of the Science of the Elohim.

Generation is the oeuvre of Golgonooza, the product of the labours of Los, Enitharmon, their sons and daughters, in Bowlahoola, Allamanda and Cathedron. The World of Generation, I shall argue, is imagination appearing as "nature," as the "world" that the man of common sense confronts, the world of "Earth, Metal, Tree, Fish, Bird & Beast" (M25.41). In the World of Generation imagination shows itself as what meets the eye, what lies at hand, what we perceive, see, touch, experience.

Through the theme of Los's Elohistic labours, the building of Golgonooza and the creation of Generation, Blake attempts to articulate what it means to say, "nature is imagination itself." This claim flatly contradicts Bacon, Newton and Locke. This for Blake is precisely the point. As regards the identity of "nature," the positions of Blake and Newton are mutually exclusive: nature cannot be imagination and be particles of matter. The Science of the Elohim is not a solution to the problems that arise after we have posited as our starting-point the rigorous exclusion of mind from nature; it is rather to be understood as an alternative to the Cartesian assumptions of classical physics. The building of Golgonooza is not the building

of a transcendent bridge over a gap separating a subjective intelligence from an objective nature. Nature is imagination: the architecture of Golgonooza is the mental or imaginative structure of nature--it being understood that, as "matter" does not exist, there is no such thing as a "physical" structure, an architecture external to the mind; and understood that, if nature has a form or structure, it must be a mental form; and understood that, if our mathematical formulae describe anything, they do not describe the laws of a corporeal substance but processes of imagination. Generation does not consist of physical, material materials. Generation is the "nature" that we perceive, experience; matter does not appear. Or rather: matter appears, shows itself, as a concept, as a pillar of the Building of Natural Religion, as an abstract foundation for a science of abstractions. Imagination is not tied to the laws of matter; but neither so chained to an abstract fiction are things, what exists and appears, nature. Generation is that "nature" which Newtonian science seeks (or claims) to explain, but which, Blake argues, Newton fails to explain: in the Newtonian vision of nature, Generation becomes Ulro, land of shadows, home of the spectre.

5 A principal labour of Golgonooza consists of "Separating What has been Mixed" (M25.28)--the Elect from the Redeemed and the Reprobate, Ulro from Generation, dark Religion from science. What has been mixed is the concept of the "other," the concept of "nature" as other, the concept of a nature opposed to or other than imagination--whether this nature is conceived as a being or reality that imagination lacks, or whether it is conceived as "never good in

itself," as an order of illusion from which imagination is supposed to escape. The "other" is not other, but a concept. Nature is not other, but imagination itself. The source of the presence of nature is imagination: the sphere of Mutabilitie or Tirzah, the physical world of raw materials, the hypothetical world of speculatively proposed theoretical constructions, are equally and alike imagined. Los, labouring to separate what has been mixed, labouring to show that "Nature is a Vision of the Science of the Elohim," labours to show that it is not nature but Natural Religion--not the order of things and appearances amongst which we live but the imagined fictions we project upon things--that stands between, divides, Albion and Jerusalem.

We begin our examination of the theme of Los's labours with a glance at the beginnings of his career, before he has subdued his spectre, before "Los" can be distinguished from a "spectre," when his labours do not separate but contribute to the mixing of Natural Religion.

Part 2 - Los in Lambeth

1 On the evidence only of his labours in the Lambeth prophecies, no one would say that Los is a hero. He is called the "Eternal Prophet" (BU13.35), but The Book of Los summarizes the achievement of his prophetic labours as "a Human Illusion" (BL5.56). In The [First] Book of Urizen, the fullest Lambeth account of Los's labours, his achievement is the Urizenic world of "Egypt" (BU28.10), whose inhabitants "shr' i]nk up from existence" beneath Urizen's "Net of

Religion" (BU25.39,22).

Urizen begins with Urizen's act of rebellion, which forms a "void" or "vacuum," "Self-clos'd, all-repelling" (BU3.3). In this space of "obscure separation" (BU5.40) resides the selfhood, "I alone, even I" (BU4.19). What the ultimate outcome of Urizen's "enormous labours" (BU3.22) of abstraction would be we do not know, for Los (introduced but not identified) intervenes to bind "the changes of Urizen" (BU8.12). This first labour produces a skull and spine, heart, eyes, ears, nostrils, and throat (Chap.IVb). The "I alone," now enclosed in a "body," has become "the cavern'd Man" (Euriii.1). In six "Ages" or days of creation, Los has created "Adam."

Seeing Urizen "In his chains bound," "Los wept...& Pity began" (BU13.48,51). The effect of the beginning of "pity" is the separation from Los of a "female form," Enitharmon (BU18.7). Los pursues this coy mistress, and begets "his likeness, / On his own divided image" (BU19.15-16). Enitharmon brings forth "a Man Child" (BU19.40), who is named "Orc," and taken by his parents "to the top of a mountain" and chained to a rock "With the Chain of Jealousy / Beneath Urizens deathful shadow" (BU20.24-25). This completes the Lambeth labours of Los.

2 Robert E. Simmons describes Urizen as "a rigorous and scathing satiric critique of the whole basis of eighteenth-century rationalism and its offspring: natural religion."⁵ Urizen describes the construction of "Urizen's world"; this building of natural religion is for Simmons "a four-sided house of mirrors": "Everything in it is contained and reflected inward by the four surrounding mirrors or

symmetries of its structure: Reason, the Senses, Nature, and Religion."⁶ The four mirrors, Simmons argues, are created and defined by "two orientations," subject-object and physical-mental: "Subject-mental defines Reason; subject-physical defines the Senses; object-physical defines Nature; and object-mental defines rational Religion, or holy science, which to Blake are the same thing."⁷ The two orientations are, in turn, "a repetition or reflection of the act that begins The Book of Urizen: Urizen's rebellion by withdrawal into himself."⁸ Urizen's rebellion is "a literal 'abstraction'," a "first embracement of subjectivity, which means in itself the conceptual splitting of once-whole, infinite experience into subjective and objective parts."⁹ For the "I alone," for Urizen abstracted, what exists is "other": it "is the perception of this distinction between 'self' and 'other' that creates the divided physical world."¹⁰ Thus, in Simmon's analysis, the building of Natural Religion--the house of mirrors, Urizen's world--unfolds as a "logical sequence" that repeats and reflects Urizen's originating act of abstraction:

Forced to recognize an objective world, but insisting on viewing it through the finite and defined fallen Senses, Reason can only find in this world evidence of finiteness and definition: evidence, that is, of rationality. This in turn is taken to mean that some other "rational" being has created the objective world, and so an abstract God is born, identified with, and derived from, the "laws" of Nature.

Reason has now come full circle, like Narcissus: first projecting its conception of the world as an "other," and then using the resulting projected world as evidence of the "truth" of its conception. 11

3 Urizen functions as a critique of Natural Religion, Simmons argues, by making "the circularity of the deist argument manifest in its own symmetrically enclosed structure."¹² In this analysis, Los

must be viewed as a co-architect with Urizen of the deist structure. Earlier prophecies sought not only to identify or make manifest error, but also to indicate an alternative. The Marriage, for example, cites "contrary" propositions to the "Errors" of "All Bibles or sacred codes" (MHH4). But Los seems to have lost the capacity even to conceive "contraries"; certainly his labours do not express or execute alternatives. Binding Urizen and chaining Orc, Los seems to consolidate the paramount error of "Religion," the division of Man into two "existing principles" (MHH4), a Body apart from the Soul, a physical or corporeal res "other" than Reason.

4 The passivity of Los seems noteworthy: he responds or reacts to Urizen's acts, without initiating any counter-acts; he is defined by what Urizen does, not by his own capacity to resist; he seems overwhelmed by the dominant force of abstraction Urizen sets in motion. As Simmons notes, "Los only binds the changes of Urizen. He does not create them."¹³ Binding these changes, he constructs "the restricted portholes of the fallen senses"¹⁴ through which reason "finds" the "evidence" of finiteness and definition from which it infers the existence of a rational "other." For the self-closed, all-repelling I alone, what exists and appears is "other." Hence the doctrine of the "Philosophy of Five Senses" (SL4.16): the portholes of the senses are the means by which external reality acts upon the passive mind, causing sensations which in turn generate "Ideas." The very fact of perception is evidence of the passive relation of the rational power to the active other, the real subject that exists and appears, "nature" or the God who is the productive power behind

nature.

But no existent-otherness--no physical nature or God afar off--appears. What appears is what is perceived; and what is perceived in fact is not other than our capacity to perceive. "Five windows light the cavern'd Man" (Euriii.1). What exists, appears, emanates its own peculiar light. The light of appearances, Blake argues, illuminates a means by which caverned man may "pass out" (Euriii.5) of the abstract philosophy of five senses, and, seeing, see not the phantasmal representation of an unappearing reality but the emanation of imaginative form.

But the Eternal Prophet, Los, is strangely bereft of illumination. Binding Urizen's changes, he seems to bind his own capacity for vision. As he constructs reason's cavern he succumbs to reason's caverned philosophy. What he perceives, he conceives as "other": his emanation, Enitharmon, separates from him. What appears shows itself as outside separated, in an external space. This female space is an illusion, a "space undivided by existence" (BU13.46). Enitharmon is not a separate existence, an other; as "the first female now separate" (BU18.10), she is the manifestation of Los's abstraction, his "divided image" (BU19.16), the form of his illusion of alterity, the expression of his belief that what appears is other, the achievement of the philosophy of five senses.

5 We do not know--the text does not say--why the Eternal Prophet succumbs to Urizen's errors. "Pity began" (BU13.51); and when, in the Lambeth prophecies, something begins, Los seems unable to resist. As in a trance he pursues his separated emanation and compounds his

illusion, "begetting his likeness, / On his own divided image"
(BU19.15-16).

For Urizen, Orc represents Energy, from the body, which therefore is "other," sinful, unruly, a fluctuation without solid, that which must be made to obey the discipline of reason's laws. Why Los should attempt to enforce this ideology upon his son, is not explained. It is the case that, in Lambeth, Los is passive in relation to what Urizen initiates; as much as he acts he is acted upon. As if enmeshed in Urizen's "Net of Religion" (BU25.22)--the expression and achievement of the rational power's "slumbers of abstraction" (BA4.11)--as in a slumber or trance of deist rationality, "Beneath Urizens deathful shadow" (BU20.25), Los chains Orc with the "Chain of Jealousy"--with the fetters of Urizen's futile and self-destructive ideology.

The result, the achievement of Los's Lambeth labours, is "Egypt," "shrunk up from existence" (BU25.39), where acts of repression beget acts of violent rebellion which beget further acts of repression, further violence--where acts beget "victims." Chief among these victims are the architects of Egypt "Beneath the Net of Urizen," Urizen and the Eternal Prophet, Los.¹⁵

Part 3 - Ulro and Generation: separating, mixing, interpreting

1 The major prophecies show Los, not as in Lambeth, passively submitting to the force of Urizen's abstraction, but acting to oppose this error. In the Lambeth prophecies Los is a co-architect with Urizen of Urizen's "World of Loneness" (BA4.64), the home of the "I alone," a space of abstraction undivided by existence. Los is an

"inhabitant of this world,"¹⁶ that is, a selfhood shrunk up from existence, a dark spectre divided from his emanation. In the major prophecies, Urizen is the "Architect" of the Building of Natural Religion (J66.4). Los labours to build Golgonooza, that which is missing from the Lambeth prophecies, an alternative to the edifice and ideology of deism. Golgonooza is the home of Los "of the Elohim" (J73.24), Los who is no longer an inhabitant of Egypt, Los who has awakened from the slumbers of abstraction.

The role of the home, argues Emmanuel Levinas, "does not consist in being the end of human activity but in being its condition, and in this sense its commencement."¹⁷ Golgonooza is the condition and commencement of Los's Elohistic activity, the practice of the Science of the Elohim, those labours which oppose Natural Religion. The principal achievement of these labours is the World of Generation. In Golgonooza, Los labours "To Create a World of Generation from the World of death" (J58.18); "Fixing the Sexual into an ever-prolific Generation" (J73.26); "A World of Generation continually creating: out of / The Hermaphroditic Satanic World of rocky destiny" (J58.50-51).

The most detailed account of Los's Elohistic activity comes in the "Golgonooza" section which completes the first Book of Milton--the "center" of the prophecy (24.44-29.65)--where "Science (the Science of the Elohim) "is divided into Bowlahoola & Allamanda" (27.63). Generation is the oeuvre of Golgonooza, what is created by Los and Enitharmon, their sons and daughters, who "labour against Death Eternal" (M27.44), who "labour for life" (J59.37), in Bowlahoola, Allamanda and Cathedron. Generation consists of "Generated Bodies" or

--the word "vegetable" being in certain contexts virtually synonymous with "generation"--of "Human Vegetated Forms": "every Generated Body... / Is... / Built by the Sons of Los in Bowlahoola & Allamanda" (M26.31-33); "every Human Vegetated Form... / Is...Built by the / Sons & Daughters of Los in Bowlahoola & in Cathedron" (J73.50-52). The sum of Human Vegetated Forms is the "Vegetative Universe," extending from "the Earths center" to "the Mundane Shell" (J13.34,35). The World of Generation or the Vegetative Universe--the world within the Mundane Shell--is the "Mundane Egg" (M19.15), the "Egg form'd World of Los" (M34.33).

2 Los labours in response to--within a context determined by-- Albion's fall, when "Albion fell down...from Eternity hurld," "Into his own Chaos" (J54.6,8). Generation, "the Universe of Los & Enitharmon," is built "in the midst of" the chaotic disintegration of eternity, when "All fell towards the Center in dire ruin, sinking down" (M19.25,24,21). In relation to the "Human, Fourfold" world of Eternity, Generation is incomplete, flawed: it is "Egg form'd," merely embryonic; it is "Shadowy" (J98.55), less than translucent; its constituent forms are "mundane," "vegetative," less than "human." The Elohist labours of Golgonooza do not re-organize Eternity, re-integrate Albion's Four Zoas: "Four Universes round the Mundane Egg remain Chaotic" (M19.15). Generation is less than Eternity, and therefore is not adequate to the awakened imagination; "vegetative" is not Blake's highest term of approbation. It would seem that the tendency, especially pronounced in recent criticism, to interpret Los's labours in an ironic mold, does not lack for evidence.

For W. J. T. Mitchell, Los's labours in Golgonooza show us "the dilemma of the active imagination creating its own prison."¹⁸ The theme of Los's Elohist labours "is presented as an absurd and paradoxical affirmation of the need to continue creating when creation seems to have become a cycle of oppression and destructive reaction."¹⁹ For Damrosch, the exercise of Los's spiritual power "really means that nature, never good in itself, is being hammered into a stable form preparatory to regeneration."²⁰ But the stable form Los is able to create in Golgonooza is the "fallen, sexual body of death," that which is corrupt, never good in itself--"nature," consisting of "physical, material materials"; so that, "if Los has redeemed the creation of the Elohim, on the other hand he has inevitably participated in that creation by imposing form and limit."²¹ For both critics, Los's labours are a self-defeating, self-imprisoning exercise in futility, are symbolic of an absurd and paradoxical dilemma or of intractable "antinomies."²² For both critics, the theme of Los's labours contradicts or frustrates the apocalyptic intention of the prophecies. The labours of Golgonooza do not contribute to Albion's awakening, do not assist him in getting out of nature, but rather consolidate his error, bind him in a "body of death" or a vegetative prison--in "nature, never good in itself."

3 These interpretations it seems to me would serve very well as accounts of Los's labours in the Lambeth prophecies, where indeed Los consolidates the prison (Egypt) of Urizenic error, where nothing that Los accomplishes seems to indicate even the possibility of awakening from the slumbers of abstraction. But with regard to the major

prophecies, we can ask whether these interpretations do not mix what Blake's argument--what the theme of Los's Elohistical labours--requires us to separate.

Los in the major prophecies labours "That Man may live upon Earth till the time of his awaking" (M27.61), "till the Judgement is past" (M25.59). Milton, devoted entirely to the theme of awakening, and containing Milton's explicit "judgment" of Satan, also contains the most elaborate account of Los's Elohistical labours; arguably these labours are not meant to frustrate but to promote Milton's judgment and awakening. Awakening means (among other things, but pre-eminently) the recovery of the "emanation." Milton, seeking Ololon, discovers "her" (I use the singular) in the vegetative, mundane world of the Felpham garden; arguably the Vegetative World within the Mundane Shell into which Ololon descends (M36.13-14) makes possible her appearance before Milton: not as an "enem[y] of Humanity" (M36.15) but in a form which he can recover or "redeem" (M2.20). On this view the Mundane Egg would be a condition of possibility for Milton's awakening. This would be consistent with the text's insistence that Milton's "journey" to redeem his emanation lead him into Golgonooza (M17.29-30; see also M35.18-25), where the mundane, vegetative World of Generation, embryonic and potential, that which can be redeemed, is created from the World of Death, the home of the "Elect."

The labours of Golgonooza--"Separating What has been Mixed" (M25.28), separating "Redeemed" from "Elect," Generation from Ulro, the Arts of Life from the Arts of Death, the Vision of the Science of the Elohim from Natural Religion--enable us to see vegetative nature not as a body of death but as a "bright sandal" that can be bound on

"to walk forward thro' Eternity" (M21.13,14). In Golgonooza, Milton sees the phenomena of life not as garments of illusion woven by the Shadowy Female (M18.2-38), but as products of imagination's "Spiritual power" (M26.40), as the oeuvre or emanation of imagination; with this perception or knowledge or vision--the Vision of the Science of the Elohim--Ololon appears. In Golgonooza, separating what has been mixed, Milton sees that what shrouds and alienates his emanation are the illusions of Satan and his "impossible absurdity" (M40.13), Natural Religion.

On this view, Los's practice of the Science of the Elohim, his labours to separate what has been mixed, to create an ever-prolific Generation from the World of Death, creates the conditions of possibility for Milton's awakening, his judgment of Satan and the recovery of his emanation. This is consistent with the structure of the prophecy--with the prominent and literally central position of the Golgonooza-section.

4 A central premise for the interpretations of both Mitchell and Damrosch is the notion that we should equate Generation with Ulro. What Los creates in Golgonooza from the World of Death is only a world of death, a "body of death," a vegetative prison whose principle of organization is a cycle of oppression and destructive reaction. For Mitchell, Blake's response to Los's failure is to make a virtue of necessity, by affirming absurdity; like Sisyphus, Los returns to the continuous labour of building Golgonooza, thereby affirming that the attempt to create is good in spite of its paradoxical or oppressive results. The Vegetative Universe is our prison, a rock that we must

push uphill, willingly, in spite of the knowledge that it will only roll back and re-imprison us. For Damrosch, Mitchell's view is too modernist.²³ Blake rather seeks an answer to Los's failure by fleeing from necessity, by dreaming as Plato dreamed of an ideal state beyond the vegetative rock of nature, outside of "the weight of experience."²⁴

In contesting these interpretations, I am contesting their premise, the equation of Ulro and Generation. Generation is less than Eternity, and therefore is not adequate to awakened imagination. But the status or value or identity of Generation, our sense of what it is that Los labours in Golgonooza for six thousand years to create, cannot be summed up with the simple proposition that Generation is not Eternity, and should therefore be dismissed as a body of death, never good in itself. Generation is not simply a negation of Eternity. The "Egg form'd World of Los" is incomplete, but embryonic, potential. Vegetable forms are less than Human, but "Human Vegetated Forms" are, potentially, Human. The Vegetative Universe may appear as "a Fibrous Vegetation / A Polypus of soft affections without Thought or Vision" (M24.37-38); but "this Polypus is Orc," who burns "in fires of Eternal Youth" (M29.31,29). Los "conducts the Spirits to be Vegetated, into / Great Golgonooza" (M29.47-48), where "they Vegetate / Beneath [his] Hammer" (J90.50-51), not because he is helpless to do other than create his own prison, but "that L fe may not be blotted out" (J90.51).

For awakened Albion, the Vegetable World is, as Mitchell suggests, a prison. But Los labours "for Albion's sake," that "Man may

live upon Earth till the time of his awaking" (M27.61). Los labours in the context of Albion's fall, during the period of Albion's sleep. The fact that these labours do not erase Albion's dream of Natural Religion means that this dream must be confronted; hence the agon, the battle of sciences, the labours of Golgonooza "against Eternal Death" (M24.34), against the labours of the Building of Natural Religion where "the Arts of Life. [are] changd into the Arts of Death" (J65.16). The shape and sense of Blake's argument requires that we do not underestimate that against which Los labours, and therefore that we do not underestimate Los's achievements.

5 As the "Starry Wheels" of Albion's sons "revolve most mightily upon / The Furnace of Los; before the eastern gate bending their fury" (J5.27-28), seeking "to devour the Sleeping Humanity of Albion" (J5.30) and to draw Jerusalem "Eastward," "into Non-Entity" (J5.48,51), "Los against the east his force continually bends" (M26.18). Los's "force" is the "Spiritual power" (M26.40) of imagination, focused in Golgonooza: the force that through the artery pulsates the red "Globule of Mans blood" (M29.21); that works the "Bellows [of] the Animal Lungs" and "the Stomach for digestion" (M24.58,59; cf. J53.12,13); that sustains the "fires of Eternal Youth, / Within the vegetated mortal Nerves" (M29.29-30). Los's force is the power expressed in the labours of Golgonooza: to "labour against Death Eternal" (M27.44), against Albion's chaos, "putting off the Indefinite / Into most holy forms of Thought" (M28.4-5), planting "the seeds of all things" (M27.53), "mark[ing] out determinate" (M26.37) the Classes of Men "born on Earth" (M26.39), "every Species of Earth, Metal, Tree,

Fish, Bird & Beast" (M25.41). In Golgonooza Los bends his force against the east, that "Man may live upon Earth," that "Life may not be blotted out." Generation, the achievement of Los's spiritual power, expresses the capacity of imagination to survive--to sustain, "in the midst of" devouring nihilism, "Living Form," life in the midst of death ("Around Golgonooza lies the land of death eternal" J13.30), form in the midst of chaos ("Four Universes round the Mundane Egg remain Chaotic" M19.15).

6 The theme of Los's Elohistc labours is a principal focus of the prophet's agon with Natural Religion. At issue in this agon is the identity of "nature." For deism, nature signifies an external reality, in relation to which imagination is phantasia. For Blake, the idea of a nature external to imagination is a cloven fiction: "nature is imagination itself"; "Nature is a Vision of the Science of the Elohim." This "nature" is the World of Generation, what Los in Golgonooza creates from the World of Death or Ulro. The World of Generation is what Natural Religion threatens to destroy or devour: the Wheel of Religion moves "against the current of / Creation," "Opposing Nature" (J77). In the context of Albion's fall, Los labours to create Generation, and to resist the Starry Wheels of Religion: "were it not for Bowlahoola & Allamanda / No Human Form but only a Fibrous Vegetation / ...without Thought or Vision" (M24.36-38). Los labours to separate what has been mixed by Albion's fall: Ulro from Generation, the vision of nature promulgated by deism from the Vision of the Science of the Elohim.

For Mitchell and Damrosch, Los's "failure" is a failure to create

or discover an alternative to deism. If we equate Generation with Ulro, then indeed Los has no alternative to the World of Death. If we identify Los's achievement as a "cycle of oppression and destructive reaction," then it will follow that "Los has no answer" to the oppression and destruction wrought by the Wheel of Religion. If we identify the oeuvre of Golgonooza as "the best that can be done with physical materials--with material materials," then it will follow that Blake does not disagree with but in fact accepts (willingly, with resignation, unconsciously) the "foundation" of Newton's vision of nature.

But to equate Generation with Ulro is to mix what Los labours to separate, and to render the prophecies' agon with Natural Religion meaningless. The question of the identity of "nature" is no longer a question. As I have attempted to show earlier, Damrosch's "Platonist" and Mitchell's "Sisyphean" interpretations of the central meaning of Blake's art both assume and promulgate the idea of an imagination-nature opposition. "Sisyphean absurdity" names the relation between man as a thinking, imagining being and a nature conceived as a "rock," a res extensa other than--and in its otherness indifferent to--what man thinks or imagines. Nature for Damrosch is also a rock; the "weight of experience" is the heaviness of physical materials weighing down upon the spirit, imprisoning the spiritual power of imagination in the material otherness of nature which is never good in itself. The "Platonism" which Damrosch attributes to Blake names the futile (and for the "modern reader" unworthy) attempt of imagination simultaneously to identify what is imagined as real and to negate the reality of nature; but it is to be understood (by the modern reader)

that this nature which Blake attempts to negate is nature itself, the real, "the very world which is the world."²⁵

7 "The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight."²⁶ But the "Gods [who] orderd such things" are fictions of the "Priesthood" (MHH11). If we do not forget that "All deities reside in the human breast" (MHH11), we must imagine Sisyphus--persisting in the belief that his "futile and hopeless labour" is divine punishment--foolish.

The modern reader does not believe in the gods. But we can ask what knowledge or experience, what "phenomenology of lived experience" or knowledge of the very world, entitles the modern reader to claim that "experience" must be conceived in Cartesian terms, as a relation between "man" and an external, other, "nature itself." What is the "weight of experience"? The "weight" of electrons, quarks and neutrinos is so infinitesimal as to be incomprehensible except in abstract mathematical language. The concept, "rest mass 9.107×10^{-28} ," does not in any event describe "weight itself," does not describe an attribute of "nature itself," does not describe the "stone's own weight," if by "stone" we mean a physical form, an entity external to and other than our capacity to experience weight or to measure mass.

Generation--separated from Ulro, from the abstractions of the rational power--is what we experience, what meets the eye, what lies at hand. But no physical, material materials--no Cartesian res extensa, no Newtonian matter--lies at hand. The "weight of

experience," the stone's "own weight," is for Blake an imagined weight--which does not mean that it is unreal. Weight is an observed fact, what is perceived or experienced or measured; it implies a capacity for experience; it is the product of the act of perception. The stone's own weight is what Sisyphus pushes, experiences; the weight of "nature itself" is an abstraction, the weight of a concept; the weight of things--of "Tree Metal Earth & Stone"--for Blake is the weight of imagination--which can be experienced precisely because it is not "other" than we who experience.

The claim, nature is imagination itself, does not deny or negate the reality of the "witherd field where the farmer plows for bread in vain" (FZ E325). Blake wishes deliberately to cut himself (and his readers) off from, not the farmer's futile and hopeless labour, but from the idea that this "Experience" can be explained--rendered intelligible, justified--by an appeal to an external reality. The "laws" which exclude the farmer from the fertile fields controlled by the wealthy landowner are not "laws of matter." The forces of police, army, or death-squad which execute these laws are not forces of "nature itself." What the farmer sees and knows, the question of the weight of experience, the question as to why man persists or is forced to persist in futile and hopeless labours are not for Blake to be resolved by appeal to ancient fictions or modern abstractions concerning a "nature of things" that the man of common sense cannot see or know.

Part 4 - The World of Generation

1 The constituent forms of Generation are not "physical" and "material," but "mundane" and "vegetative": Generation is a "Mundane Egg" consisting of "Human Vegetated Forms."

By "mundane" Blake means, according to Northrop Frye, "ordinary": the mundane World of Generation is "the ordinary world of experience"; "the ordinary world we live in."²⁷ Generation is "nature" understood as the commonplace order of things, the world familiar to common sense, the world of "sun. & moon. & stars. & trees. & clouds. & waters" (M28.33). This sense of nature includes: "Seed, Root, Earth-Worm, Beetle, Emmet, Centipede, Spider, Mole, Earwig, Maggot, Flea, Louse, Bug, Tape-Worm, Slug, Grasshopper, Scorpion, Gnat, Wasp, Hornet, Honey Bee, Toad, Newt, Serpent" (M27.11-22). Generation is what "Thou seest": "the Constellations in the deep & wondrous Night"; "Glittring...streams"; "calm Ocean"; "the gorgeous clothed Flies that dance & sport in summer / Upon the sunny brooks & meadows"; "the Trees on Mountains" (M25.66-26.7). Generation is the world we (men and women of common sense) perceive and experience, what we see, what we feel, "the Nettle that stings" (M27.25), what we taste, "the milk of cows, & honey of Bees" (J19.5) or the bitter milk of the thistle (M27.26), what we hear, the "trill" of the Lark "Reechoing against the lovely blue & shining heavenly Shell" (M31.31,33).

Generation or mundane nature is the world bounded by the "Mundane Shell" or sky, the world whose daily rhythm is measured by "the unwearied Sun" (M29.23). Generation contains "every Space that a Man views around his dwelling-place" (M29.5), "whatever is visible to the

Generated Man" (J13.44). The "Generated Man" is the "cavern'd Man," the man of common sense, Urizen bound in six "Ages," "Adam." Mundane Generation is the world as it appears to the man of common powers of perception, the world which bound Urizen perceives and upon which he projects the ideology of his "Net of Religion." Generation or genesis is the world as it appears to "Adam" after the six "days" of creation, the world of earth and sky and waters, vegetation and fruit, sun and moon, fish, birds and beasts, described in Genesis 1, the world bounded by the firmament or sky or shell and containing "every Species of Earth, Metal, Tree, Fish, Bird & Beast" (M25.41).

In its "mundane" aspects Generation is what meets the eye, "whatever is visible," that which we see, hear, touch, perceive, that which appears to our senses, the phenomena which compose "nature" understood as the ordinary world of experience. The mundane "Egg form'd World of Los" is what Owen Barfield calls "the world of appearances": "the familiar world--that is, the world which is apprehended, not through instruments and inference, but simply."²⁸

2 The World of Generation is "mundane" and "vegetative." According to Frye, the term "vegetable" indicates that "no living thing is completely adjusted to this world except the plants."²⁹ Mitchell's view of the vegetable world as a "prison" does not lack for evidence. Blake does not approbate the adjustments Orc and Albion are required to make when they are "bound down to the stems of vegetation." This "vegetable Earth is but a shadow" of Eternity (M29.22). The "Vegetated Mortal Eye's perverted & single vision" (J53.11) is unfit for visions of Eternity. Vegetative seems an apt synonym for "mortal," for that

which lives and dies, for life that is subject to and as it were shaped by death. The ephemeral mortality of plants--the cycle of seed, growth, flower, decay, seed--answers to Plato's definition of generation or genesis: "that which is always in a process of becoming and perishing and never really is" (Timaeus 28a).

Between "being" and "generation" Plato in the Timaeus postulates an intermediary, "difficult of explanation and dimly seen" (49a), "the receptacle, and as it were the nurse, of all generation" (49a), "the mother and receptacle of this generated world" (51a), the womb or "space" (chora 52b) wherein the generated image becomes and perishes-- a nameless Shadowy Mother, a type perhaps of Mutabilitie or Tirzah. In the Song of Experience, "To Tirzah" (E30), Tirzah is the mother of "Generation" or mortality: the "Mother of my Mortal part," who in giving her children "Mortal Birth," betrays them to "Mortal Life," a life that "Blow'd in the morn: in evening died." In the major prophecies, to be "vegetated by Tirzah" (M25.58) is to be woven into "the black Woof of Death" (M29.56). In the Building of Natural Religion, Tirzah and her "sisters," the Daughters of Albion, labour to "alter" or pervert the Human Form so that it becomes a "Mighty Polypus" (J66.46-48). In "the Ulro: a vast Polypus," a "self-devouring monstrous Human Death," sit "Five Females & the nameless Shadowy Mother" (M34.24,26,27).

3 But the text does not permit us to identify "vegetative" solely with Tirzah and her black Woof of Death. Los is a vegetable-smith: forms vegetate beneath his hammer, "that Life may not be blotted out" (J90.51). His sons and daughters, building "Human Vegetated Forms" in

Golgonooza, "labour against Death Eternal" (M27.44), "labour for life" (J59.37). The term "vegetable" is ambiguous, having clear associations both with "death" and with "life."

Damrosch, cautioning against too facile an appraisal of Los's success, notes that Blake's text is "invested with more ambiguity than is commonly recognized."³⁰ Ambiguity means to have a double-meaning, to have two senses; etymologically it means "to drive both ways, in two directions." Blake's text is indeed invested with ambiguity. "Nature" can be understood as a Vision of the Science of the Elohim; or as Hand and Hyle conceive it, "nature" signifies the "Goddess Virgin-Mother," Vala, "our Mother! Nature!" (J18.29-30). The "Polypus" can be a "monstrous Human Death" (M34.26); but the text, insisting on ambiguity, requires us to know that "this Polypus is Orc" (M29.31). These double-meanings are commensurate with the sense in which the text "drives in two directions," toward the sleep of Ulro and away from error, "From west to east against the current of / Creation" (J77) and "against the east" (M26.18). The text, insisting on ambiguity, insists on agon or struggle, on an all-pervasive sense of forces driving in antithetical directions, on antithetical forces meeting in "enormous strife," as Milton and Urizen meet "on the shores of Arnon," "one giving life, the other giving death" (M19.29,5).

To recognize Blake's ambiguity is not to equate his double-meanings, to mix together what the text, as it "invests" in ambiguity, seeks to separate. "Giving life" is not equivalent to "giving death." We can understand the vegetative universe unequivocally as a prison, never good in itself, only if we ignore the sense in which it can be understood as a "Sandal," if we erase its associations with "life."

4 A clue as to why Los can speak of "the glorious spiritual / Vegetation" (M25.60-61), and why Blake refuses to ascribe a single negative value to "vegetative," is given by Damon, who notes that, in Blake's day, "vegetative" was "a medical term applied to those physiological functions or systems which are automatic and beyond the control of the human will, such as growth in general, or digestion and sleep."³¹ The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines "vegetal functions" as those common to plants and animals, such as "growth, circulation, generation, etc." The vegetal functions are those without which "Life would be blotted out." The functions and systems which sustain living form, which compose the infra-structure of life, are for Blake functions and systems of imagination. Specifically, they are the functions and systems of Golgonooza, of Bowlahoola and Allamanda.

Los is a vegetable-smith, a maker of Human Vegetated Forms. His "force" or "Spiritual power" is in part the capacity for generation, for the coming to be of what is "born on Earth" (M26.39), "every Species of Earth, Metal, Tree, Fish, Bird & Beast" (M25.41). The proliferation and specification of "species" implies the power of differentiation, "putting off the Indefinite" (M28.4), "mark[ing] out determinate" (M26.37). Were it not for the labours of Bowlahoola and Allamanda, there would be "neither lineament nor form" (M26.27). The "Pulsation of the Artery" (M29.3) and circulation of the "red Globule of Mans blood" (M29.19) are achievements of Golgonooza, as are the acts of "the Optic Nerve" (M28.79) and the "Nerves of the Ear" (M29.40). Digestion (a process of separating what has been mixed) is a labour of Bowlahoola: "Bowlahoola is the Stomach in every individual

man" (M24.68). The "vital organs" whose acts express and sustain life are the "tools" of Los in Golgonooza: "The Bellows are the Animal Lungs: the Hammers the Animal Heart / The Furnaces the Stomach for digestion" (M24.58-59).

The vegetal functions, Blake argues, are functions of imagination, acts of Spiritual power, the activities or labours of Bowlahoola and Allamanda, the achievements of Los's Elohistie labours: "The bellows & the Hammers move compell'd by Los's hand" (J10.6). "Vegetative," in the sense associated with Los and the Elohistie labours of Golgonooza, can be tentatively defined as that without which life would be blotted out, those functions which express and sustain life, those acts which accomplish the capacity to exist as a Living Form.

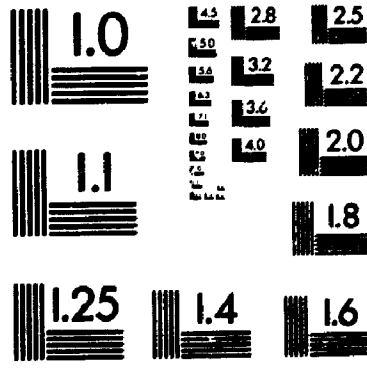
To this definition must be added, that which can be perverted by Tirzah. Los "conducts the Spirits to be Vegetated, into / Great Golgonooza," "That Satans Watch-Fiends touch them not before they Vegetate" (M29.47-48,50). The spirits to be vegetated are given to the "charge" of Enitharmon and her daughters; "But Raha^h & Tirzah pervert / Their mild influences," "Weave the black Woof of Death," "The veil of human miseries" (M29.51,53-54,56,62).

Here, on the ultimate plate of Milton's Golgonooza-section, the text continues to insist on ambiguity. This can be understood as an admission of failure: in spite of the labours of Golgonooza and Los's guidance, "Tirzah & her Sisters" continue to weave their veil of death. But Blake does not claim that the "success" of Los's Elohistie labours is to be understood as the re-organization of Eternity and the

3

OF/DE

3



FORWARD IN MOTION. THE BLUE TESTING MILE. 1991

THE QUALITY THAT'S DIFFERENTIAL IN U.S.A. 1991-1992

awakening of Albion from his dream of Natural Religion. Los labours "for Albion's sake," during the period of Albion's sleep, "in time of trouble" (J95.20), before the dark Religions are departed. Milton 29 summarizes the time of trouble, the agon of Los against Natural Religion. Its ambiguity does not, in my reading, require us to equate the "mild influences" of Enitharmon with the perversions of Tirzah. The "success" of Tirzah and "Satan's Watch-Fiends" is not the destruction of Golgonocza. Tirzah weaves the Woof of Death not in Golgonooza or the World of Generation, but in the "Three Heavens of Ulro" (M29.55). In spite of the perverting "touch" of deism, Los has managed to maintain the difference between "giving life" and "giving death," between "Human Vegetated Forms" built in Golgonooza and the "ever dying Vegetation & Corruption" (J90.42) achieved by Natural Religion. Building Golgonooza and creating a World of Generation from the World of Death, Los accomplishes an alternative to Natural Religion, a double or second order of meanings--ambiguity. He separates what has been mixed, the meaning of "nature" as Generation from the meaning of "nature" as Ulro.

5 The "mundane" and "vegetative" aspects of Generation come together in the theme of the "body." The "Human Vegetated Form," "Built by the / Sons & Daughters of Los in Bowlahoola & in Cathedron" (J73.50,51-52), is the "Generated Body" (M26.31).

The "body" can be understood as the "outward form of Man" (ARO E1). "Body," according to Frye, means "the whole man as an object of perception."³² According to the definition offered in The Marriage, "that calld Body is a portion of Soul discernd by the five Senses"

(MHH4). The body in this sense is "mundane": what "is visible to the Generated Man" (J13.44), that which "Adam" or "caverned Man" can perceive, see, hear, touch. The mundane or generated body, what is perceived, is the "Garment," the "Sexual texture Woven" (M4.4), what is woven in "the Looms of Generation" (M3.38) or Cathedron.

By virtue of the garments woven by Enitharmon and her daughters in Cathedron, the Generated Body built in Bowlahoola and Allamanda appears, shows itself to the five senses, meets the eye in a form which the eye can discern. The "mild influences" of Enitharmon can be perverted; upon the order of things discerned by the five senses the priesthood can project their fictions, Urizen can project his ideology. But the fictions of the rational power show themselves as error, Blake argues. The Generated Body is more than an "object of perception," more than the garments woven in Cathedron and perverted by Tirzah. The mundane, ordinary world of Adam's experience includes his own body, which is ill-identified as an object set over against a subject, and absurdly identified as a "corporeal" or physical form consisting of atomic particles of Newtonian matter disposed in an objective space of "nature" from which the mental "subject" is excluded.

The Generated Bodies built in Golgonooza are "Human Vegetated Forms." The mundane body is "vegetative." The "vegetal functions" are "physiological"; digestion, circulation, growth are functions or systems "of the body"; the vital organs and their acts or processes compose the body, the human vegetated form. Were it not for the vegetative functions of the body, life would be blotted out. "Energy," Blake argues in The Marriage, "is the only life and is from the Body"

(MHH4). Were it not for his generated or vegetated body, Adam would not exist to perceive the world of appearances discerned by his senses. The Generated Body or Human Vegetated Form is the body understood as a form of Energy, an achievement of the capacity to exist as a Living Form, an expression of the only life.

Generation, the mundane "Egg form'd World of Los," consists of Human Vegetated Forms, Generated Bodies; not of physical objects, corporeal or physical materials. The vegetated, generated body is that which exists and appears in the World of Generation; corporeal materials appear in Ulro--in the rational power's space of abstraction, a space undivided by existence. Built in Golgonooza, "marked out determinate" in Bowlahoola and Allamanda where the "indefinite is put off"--where the fictions which reduce existents to abstract generalities commensurate with the rational power's spectral understanding are separated--the vegetated body is an achievement of the capacity to exist in the definite and determinate identity of Living Form. Woven in the Looms of Cathedron, the mundane body appears, is that which we perceive, the visible (apparent, appearing) "Garment" of Energy or Spiritual power or life--of imagination.

6 "If Los's works were to survive permanently," Damrosch argues, "they would become restrictive prisons, and so he must continually destroy and recreate them. It is the activity, not the product, that matters."³³ This claim is consistent with Bloom's view of Los as an "artificer" who builds in Golgonooza "only an artifice of Eternity, a sculpture that the fire of fresher vision will burn down," who creates "constructs" that "are never to be valued for their own sakes,

but [are] constantly to be created and destroyed by the imagination."³⁴ Mitchell's "Sisyphean" interpretation of Blake's art is also based on the view that Los's works are not to be valued for their own sakes, for they show us only "the dilemma of the active imagination creating its own prison."³⁵ In response to this dilemma, Los must make an "an absurd and paradoxical affirmation of the need to continue creating"; what matters is the activity, the continuous creation, destruction and recreation, the labour "to design a system that [will] self-destruct."³⁶

These interpretations, it seems to me, imply a misunderstanding of "Los's works"--of the labours of Golgonooza and of the product of these labours, the World of Generation. Los labours in Golgonooza, that Man may live upon Earth till the time of his awaking. Los's "works," what is built in Bowlahoola and Allamanda, are generated bodies, the constituent forms of Generation. The Generated Body or Human Vegetated Form is not the Divine Body or Human Form Divine, the constituent form of Eternity, the awakened form of Man. Albion awakens to discover a world that is more than Generation. But he does not awaken to discover that the heart, lungs, and stomach for digestion are "restrictive prisons," artificial "constructs" to be "burned down." Awakening does not mean that the Divine Body does not breathe. The awakened imagination consumes "error," not living forms, the "members" of the Divine Body, the expressions of Energy. Awakening means, among other things, the recognition that the vital organs which accomplish and sustain life are not the instruments or "works" of a "nature" other than imagination. Whether or not Albion has attained

this recognition, he must breathe; hence, during the period of his sleep, the Bellows of Golgonooza "move compell'd by Los's hand" (J10.6), that Life may not be blotted out.

Within the Cartesian architecture of vision, anything that is imagined or thought is by definition outside separated from "nature" or res extensa. If we follow Bacon and Newton and identify this external nature as "reality," then it will follow that what mind or imagination "builds" must be viewed as "subjective constructs"--as reflections or representations of an absent reality, as speculative hypotheses, as fictions of our own making. Criticism, as it introduces the Nietzschean idea of the "Dionysian" creator who continually destroys and recreates his "works," rescues Blake from the error of believing that what imagination creates has any intrinsic value, is more than unreal, more than an order of phantasmal or intentional constructs. The idea of a Dionysian Los, as it rescues Blake from naivete, preserves the Cartesian intelligibility of his "works."

But Los, labouring in Golgonooza, does not, I am arguing, labour in a Cartesian building. In Golgonooza, the self-consuming ideology of Natural Religion is separated; the absurd requirement that the imagination of man must imagine a system within which imagination dissolves into phantasia is identified as unnecessary error and cast off. In Golgonooza, Los is not required continually to destroy or burn down the achievements of imagination in order to demonstrate a sophisticated awareness of the "truths" promulgated by Bacon and Newton (or by Camus and Nietzsche)--truths which, as they posit as their foundation a nature or reality that does not show itself and therefore cannot be known, dissolve into abstraction or mystification.

In Golgonooza Los labours in the knowledge that the Generated Body and its vegetal functions are achievements of imagination; he labours at his Forge, with Hammer and Bellows, to build Generated Bodies and to sustain the vegetal functions which express the only life.

The interpretation of Los as a Dionysian artificer, continuously building and destroying and rebuilding his "sculptures," not only misconstrues the identity of "Los's works," but also mis-identifies the agency of their destruction. Los builds Golgonooza "continually" because the agents of deism threaten continually to destroy it: "They war, to destroy the Furnaces, to desolate Golgonooza: / And to devour the Sleeping Humanity of Albion" (J5.29-30). Los must "continually" recreate the vegetative universe of Generation, because the Human Vegetated Forms which compose Generation are continually "perverted" by Rahab and Tirzah, continually "touched" by Satan's Watch-fiends. The fact that Los's labours in Golgonooza do not erase sleeping humanity's dream of Natural Religion does not, I maintain, authorize us to equate the achievements of deism with Los's efforts to bend his force against this devouring nihilism. The "Poets Work" (M29.1)--the Vision of the Science of the Elohim--does not imply the ridiculous or insane idea that the various species of earth, metal, tree, fish, bird and beast are fictional constructs to be burned down. Los does not in Golgonooza labour to destroy the heart and lungs and stomach for digestion.

Part 5 - A Murderer of Its Own Body

1 Los, labouring against Natural Religion, labours to create a

World of Generation from the World of Death, labours in Golgonooza to build Generated Bodies. The theme of the "body" serves as a focus for the issue of "nature"--for what is at issue as between Blake and Natural Religion. For Blake, "nature" understood as a "Vision of the Science of the Elohim" is the achievement of Golgonooza, the World of Generation, which consists of the mundane, vegetative "works" of Los, Generated Bodies. The Generated Body, "built" in Golgonooza, is the constituent form of generation or nature: a definite and determinate form of energy, that without which life would be blotted out, that which, appearing, composes the familiar world of appearances. Nature understood as a Vision of the Science of the Elohim, as the product of Los's Elohistic labours, as the World of Generation, consists of heart and lungs and stomach, the vital organs and their functions, the "vegetative" infra-structure of living form; and consists of what appears to "Adam," what meets the eye, the forms or bodies (including his own body) of animal, vegetable and mineral, the world of sun, moon, stars, trees, clouds and waters, what the man of common sense perceives, experiences, "the mundane architecture of fact."

Los's "works" are what Natural Religion, "Opposing Nature," seeks to devour, desolate, destroy. Opposing nature means changing the Arts of Life into Arts of Death, the perversion by Tirzah of the mild influences of Enitharmon, the "rage & hunger" of Albion's sons to "war, to destroy the Furnaces, to desolate Golgonooza" (J5.30,29). Opposing nature means the transformation of Generation into Ulro, the perversion of the vegetative universe into an "ever dying Vegetation & Corruption," the deformation of the mundane, visible World of Los into

a "land of shadows." The deformation of Generation means the perversion of the Generated Body, the deformation of the Human Vegetated Form into a "Polypus of soft affections without Thought or Vision" (M24.38).

2 The achievement of deism's devouring and perverting touch is "Ulro, Seat of Satan" (M27.45). Satan is the "Great Selfhood" or "Spectre" (J29.17,18). "Satan is Urizen" (M10.1), the "I alone, even I," outside separated from existence, in its World of Loneness. This "Spectre of Man" is "the Holy Reasoning Power," an "Abstract objecting power, that Negatives every thing" (J10.15,14). The Reasoning Power of deism, an "Abstract, which is a Negation," is a "murderer of its own Body: but also a murderer / Of every Divine Member" (J10.10,12-13).

The chief instrument of the reasoning power's "murder" or "negation" of the body is the "Error" of abstraction or division which asserts that "Man has two real existing principles Viz: a Body & a Soul"; the cloven fiction which asserts that "Energy. calld Evil. is alone from the Body. & that Reason. calld Good. is alone from the Soul" (MHH4).

"Energy," Blake argues, "is the only life and is from the Body"; but "Man has no Body distinct from his Soul for that calld Body is a portion of Soul discern'd by the five Senses" (MHH4). To negate the body is to negate a portion of the soul, to negate "the only life." The "body or outward form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius" (ARO E1). The "Poets Work" (M29.1), derived from the Poetic Genius or imagination or Spiritual power, is the Generated Body, that portion--the outward form--of Man which appears, which the senses discern. In

its "inward form," the Poet's Work or Generated Body is the "soul" or living form of the only life, "a garden of delight & a building of magnificence, / Built by the Sons of Los in Bowlahoola & Allamanda: (M26.31-33). The poet's works, the achievements of Golgonooza, are the acts of imagination, definite and marked out determinate, the pulsation of the artery, the "works" of heart and lungs and stomach, the motions of life that "move compelled by Los's hand." The "mundane" body, the outward form discerned by the five senses, that which, woven in the Looms of Cathedron, appears, is the "garment" or "emanation" of living form, a portion of man and not a separate existing principle.

3 For Plato, "generation" is not a "separate existing principle." But Platonism, the Platonic expression of the reasoning power, means the division or separation of the "sensible" from the "intelligible", the body from reason. To follow Platonism, to build up a Platonic architecture, Adam must refuse to ascribe real existence to generation, to what which is "visible and tangible and possessed of a body" (Timaeus 28b). What appears to Adam, what his senses discern, including his own body, must be dismissed as an order of phantasmal "images"--images of "forms" that have no emanation, forms of a "substance" (ousia) that has no colour or shape, that cannot be touched, that reason alone can apprehend (Phaedrus 247c).

The "sensible image"--that which is visible and tangible and possessed of a body, the constituent form of genesis, the other of reason--must somehow "cling to existence as best it may, on pain of being nothing at all" (Timaeus 52c). The generated image becomes what it is, comes into its shadow existence, in some place: "it is somehow

necessary that all that exists should exist in some place (topos) and occupying some space (chora)" (52b). This space cannot be the domain of the things themselves, the intelligible forms, the space in which truly existent things are themselves, the same with themselves, uncontaminated by otherness. To maintain the difference which defines Platonism, Timaeus postulates a Female Space, chora, "the Mother and Receptacle of this generated world" (51a), who "provides room for all things that have birth" (52b). In this receptacle or womb the generated image is what it is, a copy (eikon) of something else, an image, that which is "borne always as the phantasma of some other" (52c). Chora is not the emanation of being: she is a space of difference or otherness or outside separation; her function is hold her "children" apart from their father, from that which exists but does not appear, that which has no emanation or garment or body, the intelligible that would be perverted by the touch of the tangible.

For Descartes, the body, the "corporeal," is a separate existing principle or res: mind and body are "diverse substances," "are really substances essentially distinct one from the other."³⁷ Mind, the reasoning power, has a clear and distinct identity, that of the "I alone," the cogito which is in essence outside separated from or other than its body:

I possess a body with which I am very intimately conjoined, yet because, on the one side, I have a clear and distinct idea of myself inasmuch as I am only a thinking and unextended thing, and as, on the other, I possess a distinct idea of body, inasmuch as it is only an extended and unthinking thing, it is certain that this I (that is to say, my soul by which I am what I am), is entirely and absolutely distinct from my body, and can exist without it. 38

To follow Descartes, Adam must see generation--the "nature" that meets

the eye, including his own body--as a res extensa, an order of "unthinking extended things," a world by definition "without Thought or Vision" (M24.38). Res extensa is not the emanation of res cogitans; the body is not a portion of the soul or selfhood, but is a substance "essentially distinct." Corporeal nature is an external space, outside separated from the "I," "entirely and absolutely distinct."

4 "Adam," for Blake, signifies mind and body, energy and reason, a mental form of energy which exists, lives and appears, a Generated Body, vegetative and mundane, a living form. Cartesian philosophy requires Adam to divide himself into separate existing principles, to conceive his identity in terms of an "I" or selfhood absolutely distinct from his body, to conceive his vegetative functions and mundane portion in terms of an alien substance.

Whether or not the "I" can exist without its body, as Descartes claims, the selfhood in fact inhabits a body, lives "in" a body, lives by virtue of its vegetative functions. According to its own definitions, the rational power is essentially distinct from its body; but as it lives in the body, reason is by its own definition "in" an external space. Adam, following Descartes, must conceive his vegetative functions, that without which life would be blotted out, as "other." Living form is a form of exteriorization. Life, for the selfhood, is alienation, a process whereby that which in essence is invisible and unextended is rendered visible and extended by that which is absolutely distinct, alien. By virtue of its conception of Generation, its concept of the corporeal other, the Cartesian selfhood finds itself alive in an alien land, exteriorized, extended outside

itself in an external space, outside separated from its proper identity, at a further distance from its God who of course is not a corporeal thing.

The Platonic and Cartesian architectures are built on the foundation of the difference between generation and being, sensible and intelligible, body and reason. Both systems subsume what the senses discern under the concept of the "corporeal," which is conceived as the "other" of reason. Science--what reason knows--deploys the concept of the corporeal to purify itself, wields this concept as a sword to cut away those illusions that would soil reason and obscure or confuse its contemplation of truth.

The concept of the corporeal nihilates the emanation: reason (nous, the cogito) has no outward form, no sensible or mundane portion. Reason (what is rational, the intelligible form of being that reason alone can apprehend) exists but does not appear, cannot be discerned by the senses, has no extension, cannot be touched, is not possessed of a body, is absolutely distinct. The concept of the corporeal nihilates the world of generation, reduces it to an external space, a caverned land of shadows where reason cannot be at home with itself, a space of outside separation where reason is displaced, dislocated, where reason and rational forms of existence are exteriorized, extended outside themselves, other than themselves, reduced to phantasmata. The rational power's concept of the corporeal, as it locates the vegetative functions which sustain and express life in the phantasmal space of generation, murders the body, nihilates living form; so that, for reason, to live--to breathe, to be sustained

by the pulsation of the artery--is to be displaced, alienated, imprisoned amongst defiling images, to be extended amongst unthinking objects lacking reason or truth, to be touched by the other, to be forced to submit to an unclean or irrational intimacy with corporeal "vegetation and corruption."

5 The "time may come," Raphael tells Adam, "when men / With Angels may participate"; from "corporal nutriments" men's "bodies may at last turn all to spirit" (Paradise Lost V 493-497). The possibility of this happy sublimation of the corporal into the spiritual is interrupted by the Fall, when man, disobeying God who is Reason, is touched by the "Misery" Satan brings "into Nature" (P.L. VI 267-68). The Fall means alienation from divine reason, the alienation of human reason in a "nature" or generation permeated and perverted by sin and death. The Fall means, arguably, what is expressed in Samson Agonistes, where Samson or fallen Adam has become "the Dungeon of [him]self" (156), where Samson's "Soul" is forced to dwell "In real darkness of the body" (156,159). Generation has become Gaza, the space of corruption focused by Dalila, the "deceitful Woman" (202), Gaza's harlot-emanation. In Gaza the violence latent in the concept of the corporeal erupts. In Gaza, reason--displaced and dislocated, blinded and imprisoned, perverted and touched--takes vengeance upon the corporeal, upon the body, the emanation, nature.

God is Reason. Faith is obedience to reason; in faith the human intellect is illuminated by the light of divine reason. In Gaza Samson finds his faith: his obedience to reason is expressed in the act which destroys the world of Generation, nihilates the whore-emanation, and

nihilates his own body. The telos, achievement, of Samson's faith is the act "At once both to destroy and be destroy'd" (1587). Faithful Samson, obedient to reason, is "self-kill'd" (1664), a murderer of his own body; though "Not willingly," the Chorus insists (1665). Samson's "will," his will to destroy and be destroyed is in the moment of faith enhanced by God, Reason, who, "favouring and assisting to the end" (1720), gives Samson the strength to transform his corporeal, mundane, vegetative portion into "clotted gore" (1728).³⁹

Part 6 - This Newtonian Phantasm

1 The body--the Generated Body, our mundane, vegetative portion--fares no better when the intellectual authority of Milton's Religion wanes and is replaced by Newton's science; when the vision of generation as a Satan-corrupted, miserable nature--an accursed witness of sin--is replaced by the vision of an ethically neutral res extensa, a "value-free" objective reality. Physical forms, corporeal objects--bodies--compose Newton's nature; it might seem that Newtonian science ascribes to the body the value of the thing itself, constituent form of the real. The Generated Body would be real precisely because it is not the poet's, but nature's work, the achievement of nature itself. But is what meets the eye, or the pulsation of the artery, explained when it is explained as the manifestation of the acts of forces working upon particles of matter which do not appear and which do not exist--so far as anyone knows--except as speculatively proposed theoretical constructions? The concept of "nature's work" cannot illuminate the intellect if the "nature" that works is unknown. The

science which thinks that it knows the thing itself when it confronts the idea of a "form" conceived as the disposition of Newtonian least particles in a res extensa, has--now, by its own admission--deceived itself.

2 For Newton (as for Plato, and Blake) the question of the identity of nature coincides with the question of the identity of the body. "The qualities of bodies," Newton argues, "which are found to belong to all bodies within reach of our experiments, are to be esteemed the universal qualities of all bodies whatsoever."⁴⁰ A science which can account for the universal qualities of all bodies whatsoever will be a proper science of "nature."

The "qualities of bodies are known to us by experiments only"; these qualities include: "the extension of bodies"; "many bodies are hard"; "all bodies are impenetrable"; "all bodies are movable, and endowed with certain powers (which we call the force of inertia) of persevering in their motions, or in their rest."⁴¹ The qualities of the whole result from the qualities of the parts: "thence we conclude the least particles of all bodies to be also extended, and hard and impenetrable and movable and endowed with their forces of inertia. And this is the foundation of natural philosophy."⁴²

For Plato, genesis or nature--that which is known by perception or observation or "experiment," that which is "possessed of a body"--is other than reason, is by definition unreal or phantasmal, and is therefore by definition an unfit object for science, knowledge of the real. The validity of this definition or principle is for Plato confirmed by observation. "Since all that we perceive is continually

changing, coming into being and passing away," Barfield explains, knowledge derived from observation by the senses "grasps nothing permanent and nothing therefore which can properly be called 'truth'."⁴³

For Newtonian science also, nature appears to be in flux; the nature which science seeks to understand shows itself in the form of the "phenomena of motions." "All the difficulty of (natural) philosophy," Newton argues, "seems to consist in this--from the phenomena of motions to investigate the forces of nature, and then from these forces to demonstrate the other phenomena."⁴⁴ Whereas Plato could find no "solid without fluctuation" in genesis, no substance, nothing that merits the status of reality, the "foundation" of natural philosophy, the idea of matter, identifies precisely such a solid substance. Plato "did descry that forms were the true object of knowledge," Bacon argues; "but lost the real fruit of his opinion, by considering of forms as absolutely abstracted from matter, and not confined and determined by matter."⁴⁵ The least particles of matter constitute the real and physical substantiality or nature of things, compose the phenomena, the "bodies" that we perceive, which move. On the security of this foundation, science can "demonstrate the phenomena," that is, describe the mathematical forms of the motions of bodies.

3 But we can ask if the "fruitful" idea of matter--which carries the division of the mind and the body into separate existing principles to the point of ne plus ultra--brings us closer to the real "nature" of the body.

For Plato, the generated body has no real nature or identity. The fluctuations of genesis have no "subject": there are motions; but in the space of chora, nothing exists which can be said to move, which can be identified as the subject of the verb "to move." The phantasmal image, possessed of a body, cannot properly be said to exist, nor does it move--rather, it is moved, is passive, "is carried (pheretia) always as the phantasma of some other." To discover this something "other," the reality that the generated body lacks, reason must turn away, look elsewhere.

The idea of the body as a form "confined and determined by matter" does not answer to Plato's critique of genesis. The "inertial force" which classical physics attributes to the least particles explicitly defines the essential passivity of matter: the particle (or body composed of particles) is in itself--in its inmost nature, in accord with its identity--helpless to do other than persevere in its rest or its motion. The particle is passive--is moved, or stopped; it is the "object" upon which the forces of nature work. To explain the reality of the phenomena of motions, to reach the real subject of the verb "to move"--nature itself--reason must turn away from the concept of the least particle and look to the concept of "force."

Existence, for Newton, real and physical existence, is what it is by virtue of matter (the least particles are Newton's principium essendi); which means that to exist is to be passive, to be the object upon which the forces of nature act. The least particles of all bodies would not form bodies were they not acted upon by forces which cause them to be "mutually impelled towards one another; and cohere in regular figures."⁴⁶ To explain life, the vegetal motions of living

form, it is necessary to postulate forces which act upon the "regular figures" so as to cause and sustain life: "If it were not for these [Active] Principles, the Bodies of the Earth, Planets, Comets, Sun, and all things in them, would grow cold and freeze, and become inactive Masses; and all Putrefaction, Generation, Vegetation and Life would cease."⁴⁷

We can ask whether the hypothesis of "active principles" acting on particles to cause "Vegetation and Life" is an explanation of life; or whether it postulates as a principle of explanation that which is supposed to be explained, that which we wish to understand and come no closer to understanding after we are told that active principles act on particles of matter. This is a factual question: is the pulsation of the artery explained by a "law of motion" which declares that "Every body left to itself moves uniformly in a straight line"⁴⁸; or is there a gap between what is actually explained and what we actually experience, the "facts," what meets the eye?

There is the further problem that if the active principles or forces are "natural"--forces of "nature" in Newton's sense of nature--they are by definition external to the mind; in which case it is not clear how it would be possible for the mind to know them. The concept of a "force of nature" cannot illuminate the intellect if the "nature" whence these forces emanate is unknown.

"An impressed force is an action exerted upon a body, in order to change its state, either of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line."⁴⁹ We know--understand, grasp--the force as we measure its effects, the change of the state of motion of a body. A force is an

action exerted upon a body. But what is the subject of the verb "to exert"? A force is that which acts on particles or bodies composed of particles. The concept of force is built up on the foundation of the least particle. We can ask what would be the status of the "force" which acts on particles, of the "active principle" which vivifies inactive Masses, of the "body" composed of particles, if the foundation of these concepts, the least particle, does not exist, is neither a thing nor an object, is a "Newtonian Phantasm" (M40.11).

4 According to Donald Ault, Blake rejects Newton's explanation of life as the effect of active principles acting on matter, on the grounds that Newton's active principles are not active:

in Newton's scheme of nature, the "active" principles are "mathematical forces," and Blake explicitly opposes all mathematical forms to "Living Form." For Blake, mathematical forms cannot be, contrary to Newton's argument, active at all--or even passive, for that matter--but rather, lifeless forms which aptly symbolize the underlying inert formless matter." 50

The labours of Los, according to Ault, are Blake's explanation of what Newton's model fails to explain: "Into the dead world of Ulro the visionary poetic power (Los) infuses life and motion through the internal archetypal energy of Golgonooza."⁵¹ The interpretation of Los as the poetic power which quickens dead nature "into life by poetic energy" is consistent with Ault's broader thesis which claims that "Blake's poetics is inversely analogous to Aristotelian poetics, in which 'natural' objects have their own internal principle of generation and life, while 'artistic' objects have to be formed by an external principle of generation and can never be truly alive."⁵²

This interpretation of Los's Elohistical labours, and of Blake's

critique of Newton, are both flawed, I am arguing, for the same reason. An "inversion" of the values assigned to nature and imagination in Aristotle's poetics retains the basic idea of an opposition between imagination and nature; nature, now a "dead nature" (p.39), remains the "other" of imagination. And, as is the case with Damrosch's "nature, never good in itself," Ault's nature is dead because it consists of physical materials, "inert formless matter." Los does not infuse "poetic energy" into nothingness, but into something that is there, into the "dead world of Ulro," into "nature" as Newton conceived it--which is to say that, according to the logic of Ault's argument, Blake accepts the "foundation" of Newtonian science.

The theme of Los's Elohistic labours, I maintain, neither expresses nor implies any such acceptance. Building Golgonooza means building the architecture of a vision which does not conceive nature as the other of imagination, the body as a separate existing principle external to the mind. To create a World of Generation from the World of Death does not mean to quicken inert matter into life by poetic energy: there is no "poetic energy" in Ault's sense of this term, an energy that can be identified with a poiesis conceived as separate from physis or nature. Energy is the only life and is from the body; the body is not other than reason; the energy or power which Aristotle attributes to physis is for Blake "Spiritual power," the energy of imagination, the force which through the green fuse drives the flower or through the artery pulsates the red globule of man's blood.

It is not necessary to posit "forces" (either "physical" or "visionary") to act on "matter" because there is no matter to be acted

upon. Neither Generation nor Ulro consists of "inert formless matter." Ulro is the effect of the rational power's belief that its concept of matter signifies an external substance or reality; Ulro is the achievement of error. The vision of nature which bids us conceive the Generated Body as the effect of active principles acting on least particles of matter--"this Newtonian Phantasm"--is an impossible absurdity, not because it misconstrues Los's spiritual power as a "natural force" appearing in mathematic form, not because it falsely inverts the proper values or powers of imagination and nature, but because, Blake argues, there is no matter, there are no hard, impenetrable least particles, no physical, material materials.

Part 7 - The Sleep of Ulro

1 The issue focused in the theme of Los's Elohistc labours--his struggle to create in Golgonooza a World of Generation from the World of Death--concerns the identity of "nature." "Nature is Imagination itself," Blake argues; things, existents, are the achievements of imagination's Energy or Spiritual power; the order of things and appearances that meets the eye consists of imaginative forms and their emanations. Nature, understood as a Vision of the Science of the Elohim, is the mundane, vegetative World of Generation, the familiar, ordinary world of experience, what the man of common sense in the late-twentieth century understands as "the environment." Generation is the "nature" that the science of Bacon, Newton and Locke seeks to explain; but the explanation, the science or knowledge of classical physics, Blake argues, is built on the foundation of a cloven fiction.

Things exist; corporeal objects do not. Nature understood as an objective reality outside separated from the human mind, as an order of things consisting of least particles of matter, as a "physical world," is for Blake a phantasm of the rational power.

Newton's claim, that the concept of matter is derived by observation or general induction from the phenomena themselves, has been discredited. Matter has no emanation. In the absence of "corporeal phenomena," it is recognized that our knowledge of the "structure of matter" has for its foundation the relation of speculatively proposed theoretical constructions and observed facts. Knowledge built up on this foundation cannot be construed as knowledge of "nature itself": "We have had to forego the description of nature which for centuries was considered the obvious aim of all exact sciences," Heisenberg insists; "the new mathematical formulae no longer describe nature itself but our knowledge of nature."⁵³ In the architecture of mathematical constructions which do not describe the behaviour of elementary particles "but only our knowledge of this behaviour," the mind does not confront a substance or structure that can be identified as being other than or external to itself.

What exists, Blake argues, appears; existents are phenomena. A science of nature is possible, because nature is imagination itself, and because the forms of imagination which comprise nature show themselves: five windows light the caverned man. Newtonian nature does not appear, Blake argues, because it does not exist. Atoms are neither objects of perception nor things in themselves.

What exists, appears. Newton's "Atom," the idea of matter, the

vision of a "physical nature itself," exist as concepts of the mind which conceives them, and appear in the texts which articulate and promulgate these concepts. The mind which conceives a "corporeal" substance, and conceives it as a reality external to the mind which conceives it, is, Blake argues, "Idoltrous to [its] own Shadow" (J43.46). Nature is imagination itself, Blake argues. The phenomenon of classical physics confirms this thesis: the vision of nature as a "physical world" consisting of matter is not derived from a source external to imagination--it is imagined. To understand how the imagination can achieve such idolatry, Blake evokes the notion of "sleep."

2 Newtonian science, Blake argues, is the expression of "Newtons sleep" (Letter to Butts 22 November 1802 E722). This "sleep" has several readily identifiable traits. It is a state achieved by the rational power, a "slumber of abstraction." It combines idolatry with a certain kind of forgetfulness. In Newton's sleep the rational power posits a physical reality, consisting of least particles, while overlooking the fact that these corporeal particles owe what reality they have to the mental act which posits them. The rational power creates an otherness, posits a gap between itself and the other, while forgetting that this other and the gap are its own creations. Newton's sleep means a remarkable capacity for self-deception, as instanced by the famous claim that the concepts of natural philosophy are implied by the facts, when, in fact, there are no corporeal phenomena; when, in fact, no empirical evidence whatsoever supports the foundation of natural philosophy; when, in fact, no eye has seen, no hand has

touched, no experiment has shown, the hard, impenetrable least particles of matter.

In its state of sleep the Newtonian rational power achieves a curious inversion or displacement of itself in relation to its own acts. Its own act of positing particles of matter becomes the act of an other, a God afar off who in the beginning formed matter into least particles. Reason's own act of projecting upon the nature that meets its eye the ideology of matter and forces becomes the "reflection" or representation of a "truth" that originates from elsewhere and projects or exerts itself upon reason which has transformed itself into a passive receptacle.

"Newton's sleep" designates a relation between the rational power and its own products, in which these products become "other," become the source of their own presence, become things in themselves. In the state of sleep the rational power bestows upon its own products the capacity to act, to generate themselves, to become sui generis, to become "active principles," natural forces, forces originating from a "nature" outside separated from the mind. Forces which have neither shape nor identity beyond their mathematical form become in the state of sleep "physical forces" external to the mind; forces which as they act upon matter act upon our senses and "cause" our observations; natural forces which act to cause reflections or representations of themselves in the passive mind--in the mind which receives what it has conceived after forgetting the act of conception.

3 As Newton's science is but an example of type of Natural Religion, "Newton's sleep" is but an example or type of "the Sleep of

Ulro" (J4.1), the achievement of deism's idolatrous myth of external reality. A further and cogent example of what Blake means by the state of "sleep" is afforded by the situation of Los in the Lambeth prophecies.

We have noted the passivity of Los in Lambeth, his seemingly passive relation to what Urizen initiates. Urizen initiates abstraction, withdrawal into the selfhood, the "I alone." He initiates "an activity unknown and horrible; / A self-contemplating shadow" (BU3.20-21). The achievement of this activity is the "Net of Religion," a "Web dark & cold" that "stretch'd / From the sorrows of Urizens soul" (BU25.16-17). This web, "Drawing out from his sorrowing soul" (BU25.11), expresses Urizen's slumbers of abstraction, the state of the I alone drawn-out or abstracted from existents. The Net of Religion does not express Urizen's mastery, his power to control; it expresses his lack of control, the fact that "no flesh nor spirit could keep / His iron laws" (BU23.25-26). Urizen himself is a victim of what he initiates, is passive in relation to the the Web that "None could break" (BU25.19); the Web, not Urizen, "stretches," performs the act of "drawing out." The Web stretches, twists, knots, shrinks--acts· its victims are twisted, knotted, "shrunk up from existence" (BU25.39).

Los is seemingly caught in Urizen's Net, folded in slumbers of abstraction. As much as he acts he is acted upon. He acts, labours--to bind Urizen's changes, to chain Orc beneath Urizen's shadow. As Simmons notes, "Los only binds the changes of Urizen. He does not create them."⁵⁴ Los only responds or reacts to Urizen's changes, which are not acts but accidents, effects of his abstraction, changes

wrought upon him, effects over which he has no control, changes that he suffers. The labour of binding--of reacting to Urizen's accidents--does not afford Los any measure of autonomy or control over events. When Urizen is bound, "Pity began" (BU13.51), and Los is powerless to resist as "pity divides the soul" (BU13.53), as the career of Pity separates or divides from Los his emanation, Enitharmon. As in a trance he follows the "female now separate" (BU18.10) and begets "his likeness, / On his own divided image" (BU19.15-16); as in a trance he binds his "likeness" to a mountain top "With the Chain of Jealousy" (BU20.24).

In his annotations to the text of Lavater's Aphorisms on Man, Blake distinguishes between "Act" and "Accident": "Accident is the omission of act in self & the hindering of act in another, This is Vice but all Act is Virtue. To hinder another is not an act it is the contrary it is a restraint on action both in ourselves & in the person hinderd" (E601). In the light of this distinction, Los's chaining of Orc seems to be not an "act" but its contrary, a labour which hinders Los as well as Orc. In America, those in whom "the fires of Orc" burn "feel the nerves of youth renew, and desires of ancient times" (Am15.20,25); Orc's red flames are "wreaths of fierce desire" (Am15.21), "energies of nature" (Am11.9). Reason, the Urizenic rational power, cannot condone the sight of "females naked and glowing with the lusts of youth" (Am15.22); but if Orc is energy, he is not a separate existing principle--he is reason's energy, the only life, and his repression will mean that Urizen's vital powers, too, will shrink up, grow "wither'd, & deafen'd, & cold" (BU28.16). If Orc is energy, he is

Los's energy: Orc's repression expresses Los's impotence, the miscarriage of his power to act; as he binds Orc with the Chain of Jealousy he enfolds himself in the web of error, the ideology of the rational power he has laboured to consolidate.

Los chains Orc "as in a trance": his "intention," his sense of conscious purpose, is not manifest, is not stated, here, or for that matter, anywhere in the Lambeth prophecies. The "Eternal Prophet" is strangely inarticulate; he howls and rages and curses, but where are the words that would validate his identity as a prophet? The answer is that "a nerveless silence, his prophetic voice / Siez'd" (BU13.38-39). As much as Los acts he is acted upon: here we note that the "silence" is active, performs the act of seizing, while Los is passive, the object upon which the act is performed, the victim. Los is "bound in a chain, / Compell'd to watch Urizens shadow" (BL3.31-32). The passive-voice construction here is by no means exceptional in the Lambeth prophecies. In his watch, "the Eternal Prophet was divided / Before the death-image of Urizen" (BU15.1-2). Los can only "curse his lot" as, "in anguish, / Urizen was rent from his side" (BU6.3-4). In this latter instance, both Urizen and Los are victims, passive objects of the action; neither is able to identify the subject of the the verb "to rend."

Los in Lambeth is "compelled," "rent," "seized," "divided." He is displaced amongst the phenomena of violent motions, where events happen to him and through him, without his knowing why or by whom. He labours or acts, as in a trance. His acts seem to recoil upon him, to become accidents he must suffer, to become acts originating from elsewhere; as Urizen, the divider, is divided or rent, Los, the

binder, is bound:

Coldness, darkness, obstruction, a Solid
 Without fluctuation, hard as adamant
 Black as marble of Egypt; impenetrable
 Bound in the fierce raging Immortal.
 And the separated fires froze in
 A vast solid without fluctuation,
 Bound in his expanding clear senses (BL4.4-10)

Los in Lambeth is a "victim." Unable to speak for himself, to say or show or achieve an orientation or focus, to command his own voice, his perspective is objectified, is shown, is said for him. The experience--which is not, after all, unique to Los, being the experience of each and every actor in the Lambeth drama--is that of a dream-world or nightmare, in which the actor does not act but suffers, where the subject is subjected to accidents that originate from and dissolve into a maelstrom or vortex of violent processes.

We might call these processes "unconscious," and thereby suggest something of a major irony of the later Lambeth prophecies. On the one hand, a work such as *Urizen* is about, has as its principal theme, the production of the "subject"; the apex, the point around which the vortex converges, is the subject or selfhood, the "I alone, even I." On the other hand, there is no subject. The "I alone" is a victim, an object of manipulation. There is action, but where is the author? Who act, compels, seizes? There is consciousness, but it is passive, a consciousness of suffering, "in anguish." No consciousness comes forward to identify itself as the subject of the verbs which tell how the victim is manipulated, seized, rent. There is violence--the relation of "I alone" to what is not-I is realized as violence; as actor becomes victim, violence becomes impotence, dissolves into a

frustration pregnant with new forms of compulsion and repression-- violence abounds, but as a process which has no master, only victims.

The later Lambeth prophecies tell of the creation and career of the subject, the I alone, the abstract reasoning power. But as this subject is displaced and becomes an object or victim, its story becomes displaced, becomes as a sentence with verbs and objects but no subject, which states the effects of forces which have no author--a predicate which says something about a subject that does not appear, who remains hidden. The "I alone" is sentenced to anguish, manipulation, violence; its career is passive, a story best told in the passive-voice construction. There are motions, processes, expressions, significations, to be designated by the impersonal third person: "There is." There is a dream of the selfhood, in which the "I alone" is compelled, seized, rent; in which the subject is displaced, objectified, becomes an object, direct or indirect; in which the selfhood is created, manipulated, signified--dreamed. But who is the dreamer?

4 The major prophecies identify the dreamer as Albion. When, at the end of Jerusalem, Albion realizes that this is so--that he is the "subject" who dreams, who has dreamed his own displacement--he awakens. When Jerusalem begins, however, Albion is "the sleeper of the land of shadows," the victim of the dream-process he has initiated, the dreamer who is dreamed:

the ancient porches of Albion are
Darken'd! they are drawn thro' unbounded space,
scatter'd upon
The Void in incoherent despair! Cambridge & Oxford &
London,

Are driven among the starry Wheels, rent away and
dissipated

(J5.1-4)

Again we note the inversion or displacement of the subject as expressed in the passive construction: Albion's porches are drawn and scattered, driven and rent away. "Albion is dead! his Emanation is divided from him" (J12.6). "Albions Circumference was clos'd" (J19.36); "The corn is turn'd to thistles & the apples into poison" (J19.10); "Doubt first assaild me, then Shame took possession of me" (J21.5). Displaced, no longer the subject of his own actions--he "is assailed" by his own doubt--Albion's attempts to assert control over the dream-process only "redound" and strengthen the process: "He recoil'd: he rush'd outwards; he bore the Veil whole away / His fires redound from his Dragon Altars in Errors returning" (J23.20-21); in the end, the nightmare with its redounding errors is master, autonomous, out of hand: "Thundring the Veil rushes from his hand Vegetating Knot by / Knot, Day by Day, Night by Night" (J24.61-62). In the end, in the land of shadows, folded in the Veil, Albion is a "Victim": "May God who dwells in this dark Ulro & voidness, vengeance take / And draw thee down into this Abyss of sorrow and torture, / Like me they Victim" (J23.38-40).

No "God" dwells in Albion's dark Ulro. This God upon whom Albion calls for vengeance, and the "Manhood" whom Albion addresses as "thou," do not exist in the land of shadows. These names name names; they are signs betokening a presence which is absent, an identity that Albion cannot identify: "O Manhood, if thou art aught / But a mere Phantasy, hear dying Albions Curse!" (J23.36-37). But no interlocutor emerges to dispel Albion's doubt; Albion's curse disseminates into

dark voidness where no voice answers. Albion is a "victim," an object acted upon, rent away and dissipated, divided and assailed; but for the sleeper in dark Ulro, the "other," the "subject" who acts, is unknown, that which can be signified but not identified; the "origin" of the forces acting upon the victim is as opaque and impenetrable and unknown as corporeal nature itself, the physical world.

Part 8 - Subduing the Spectre

1 The "sleeper of the land of shadows" is Albion "a Rocky fragment from Eternity hurld / By his own Spectre, who is the Reasoning Power in every Man" (J54.6-7). Albion the "victim," "from Eternity hurled," is the victim of "his own Spectre." Albion is hurled down "Into his own Chaos" (J54.8), where no voice answers except that of his Spectre: "the Spectre like a hoar frost & a Mildew rose over Albion / Saying, I am God O Sons of Men! I am your Rational Power!" (J54.15-16). Albion, divided from his emanation, in the land of shadows, is "The Humanity in deadly sleep / And its fallen Emanation. The Spectre & its cruel Shadow" (J15.6-7). Albion the victim of his own Spectre, is his own Spectre: is the selfhood, the "I alone," the I alone with itself in its own Chaos, in a "dark & unknown Night" (J18.45) where no voice answers save that of the spectre--where the I alone with itself in voidness converses, like the Cartesian cogito, with itself, addresses itself as "thou," evokes itself as "God."

The spectre is its own God--the creator of itself, of its selfhood in its World of Loneness. But this God is not afar off. Albion falls "upon his face prostrate" before "a Shadow from his

wearied intellect" (J43.41,37). Albion in dark Ulro, victim of his spectre, is his spectre, is the rational power "Idolatrous to [its] own Shadow" (J43.46). God is not afar off; the unknown other, because it is not "other," can be known.

2 Jerusalem ends with Albion's awakening from the "Sleep of Ulro" to "Eternal Life." Awakening, the telos of the prophet's argument, means in part the end of "divided existence," the recovery of the "emanation." Whereas the sleeper is folded in Vala's "Veil" or Urizen's "Net of Religion," the restoration of Jerusalem means in part the "Labour of Knowledge," science: when the dark and unknown night of Natural Religion--reason's sojourn in the physical world--is past, when "the Eternal Day / Appears upon our Hills" (J97.3-4), the "dark Religions are departed & sweet Science reigns" (FZ E407).

The sleeper is a "victim," a subject displaced, an object divided and assailed and possessed; in the midst of Ulro's "impalpable voidness" (J22.26) the Veil rushes from Albion's hand and his cities are rent away and dissipated. Awakening, Albion is the focus of Spiritual power, the Divine Body whence energy emanates, the origin of force, the subject who acts, whose hand grasps firm:

Then Albion stretchd his hand into Infinitude.
And took his Bow.

And the Hand of Man grasps firm between the Male &
Female Loves
And he Clothed himself in Bow & Arrows in awful state
Fourfold
In the midst of his Twenty-eight Cities each with his
Bow breathing (J96.6-7, 15-17)

Albion the sleeper is "The Spectre." When Science reigns, when the "Arrows of Intellect" (J98.7) fly from the Bow, "The Druid Spectre was

Annihilate" (J98.6).

Awakening follows from, is the consequence of, the act of annihilating the spectre or selfhood. To awaken, Albion must die "a little Death" (J96.27), throw himself "into the Furnaces of affliction" (J96.35), nihilate his "Selfhood cruel" (J96.8). As Milton declares to Ololon, the act of "Self-annihilation" (M41.2) is the condition of possibility for awakening:

All that can be annihilated must be annihilated
 That the Children of Jerusalem may be saved from
 slavery
 There is a Negation, & there is a Contrary
 The Negation must be destroyed to redeem the Contraries
 The Negation is the Spectre; the Reasoning Power
 in Man
 This is a false Body: an Incrustation over my Immortal
 Spirit; a Selfhood which must be put off & annihilated
 always
 To cleanse the Face of my Spirit by Self-examination.
 (M40.30-37)

3 For Los in the major prophecies, this cleansing self-examination takes the form of the labour to "subdue his spectre." As awakening for Milton and Albion requires the act of selfhood-annihilation, so "Subduing his Spectre" (M3.38) is a condition of possibility for Los's emergence from his Lambeth nightmare.

In Lambeth, Los is overwhelmed by the force of Urizen's abstraction. Binding Urizen's changes, Los fixes portholes or windows that might illuminate caverned reason; but for the philosophy of five senses, what reason perceives is "other"; succumbing to this doctrine, Los is divided from his emanation. For the abstract reasoning power, the form of energy discerned by the senses, what the generated body expresses, is a separate existing principle or an illusion, a reality

lacking its reality or an accursed witness of sin, a licentious otherness that must be banished from the republic of reason or forced to submit to the discipline of reason's "iron laws." Succumbing to this doctrine, Los chains Orc beneath Urizen's shadow, and thereby consolidates the Net of Religion.

In the major prophecies, Los "bends his force" against the Wheel of Religion, against the reasoning power in man, against the spectre. "Subduing his Spectre, they Builded the Looms of Generation / They Builded Great Golgonooza" (M3.38-39). Golgonooza is what Los, labouring to subdue his spectre, accomplishes. Golgonooza is the achievement of Los's awakening. In Lambeth, in the absence of Golgonooza, Los is a spectre, a sleeper, a victim, a subject displaced, an object seized, divided, compelled. In Golgonooza, Los acts, "Compelling his Spectre to labours mighty" (J10.18); "I will compell thee to assist me in my terrible labours. To beat / These hypocritic Selfhoods on the Anvils of bitter Death" (J8.15-16). Beneath the Net of Religion, Orc is chained; in the Building of Natural Religion, "They vote the death of Luvah" (J65.8). In Golgonooza, Los acts: to build the Generated Body, compelling the Bellows and the Hammers, that life may not be blotted out; and to separate from the generated body the "false body," the "incrustation" projected by the rational power which transforms the body into a sensible illusion or corporeal object or "Polypus without Thought or Vision."

4 The labour of subduing the spectre, brought to completion in the act of "self-annihilation," is in part an act of identification, the

labour of vision to identify what the spectre is and what its accomplishments are. Albion is prepared for awakening when he sees and knows that his "deadly Sleep" has been the achievement of his selfhood:

Albion said. O Lord what can I do! my Selfhood cruel
 Marches against thee deceitful from Sinai & from Edom
 Into the Wilderness of Judah to meet thee in his pride
 I behold the Visions of my deadly Sleep of Six Thousand
 Years
 Dazling around thy skirts like a Serpent of precious
 stones & gold
 I know it is my Self (J96.8-13)

"I in my Selfhood am that Satan," Milton declares, "He is my Spectre! (M14.30-31). With this identification Milton awakens from his "Religion" (M22.39), from his attempt to justify to men a "scheme of Human conduct invisible & incomprehensible" (M4.13), his attempt to rationalize the ways of a God afar off. A God who "favours and assists" suicide is not God but Satan. To be annihilated, this Satan must be discovered, opened, shown, explored--identified:

I come to discover before Heavn & Hell the Self
 righteousness
 In all its Hypocritic turpitude, opening to every eye
 These wonders of Satans holiness shewing to the Earth
 The Idol Virtues of the Natural Heart, & Satans Seat
 Explore in all its Selfish Natural Virtue & put off
 In Self annihilation all that is not of God alone
 (M38.43-48)

5 "I have found thee out," Los declares to his spectre, "Thou art reveald before me in all thy magnitude and power" (J8.30-31). What Los finds out is this: the spectre is a "Negation," a "distorted & reversed Reflexion in the Darkness / And in the Non Entity" (J17.36, 42-43). The spectre is the Rational Power, architect of Natural Religion ("Satan is Urizen" M10.1); in its power spectral reason moves

against the current of creation, murdering its own body, perverting Generation into Ulro, altering the Human Form into a Polypus, seeking the death of Luvah (Orc). The spectre is the selfhood, the I alone, outside separated, abstracted: "knowing / And seeing life, yet living not" (J10.57-58). In its power the spectral I accomplishes the space of its abstraction, Ulro. The spectre is Man abstracted, outside separated from life, from energy, from his emanation, from what exists and appears--"outside of Himself" (J17.32).

The magnitude and power of the spectre is the magnitude and power of Natural Religion. Urizen's Net of Religion is the expression and achievement of the "I alone" and its philosophy of five senses; the architecture of Natural Religion upholds the "truth" of the selfhood. For the selfhood, the real is in truth outside separated; in the void outside of existence, existence is in truth "external." To maintain itself as itself, as an I alone, the spectre must be "other" in relation to existents; to be itself, the same with itself, to achieve its identity, the I alone must conceive existents as not-I, "other." To be itself the selfhood must be abstracted from what exists and appears, from God, from the being of the phenomenon, from nature. To be itself the I alone must be other than what exists "in itself," must be that which being in itself is not, a nihilation of being, what Blake calls a "Negation," what Sartre calls the pour-soi, that which "has no reality save that of being the nihilation of being."⁵⁵

To be itself the Cartesian cogito must be a thinking and unextended substance, absolutely distinct, a nihilation of its own body, that which the extended and unthinking body is not. To be itself, to achieve its truth, the Cartesian rational power must be a

power of abstraction, negation and division--it must build walls of separation, must partition existence into extensa and cogitans, must insist on the gap, the difference separating itself in its proper selfhood, in its absolute distinctness, from the other, the corporeal, nature.

To be itself, the rational power of Bacon, Newton and Locke must follow the Cartesian cogito into the mental space of abstraction. Reason must be a "mirror or glass," a receptacle for the representations of a presence that is other. The original, the presence, the being of the phenomenon, must be other, elsewhere, outside the mirror; the truth of reason, the laws of nature, must originate from nature, cannot be imagined hypotheses, mere subjective constructs. To be itself, to achieve its truth, science, reason must be passive, must be that which is acted upon by the forces of nature, that which receives empirical impressions or sensations. Nature acts; reason reflects; science represents--in mathematical form--an external reality, that which reason is not.

6 "Being has not been given its due," Sartre argues.⁵⁶ "The first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to reestablish its true connection with the world, to know that consciousness is a positional consciousness of the world."⁵⁷ Consciousness is "intentional," "consciousness of something"; but consciousness is not "constitutive of the being of its object"; it is consciousness of something other; consciousness is "total emptiness (since the entire world is outside it)."⁵⁸

We can ask how it is possible for a knowing being entirely

outside things (the world, being) to know the being of the things from which it is entirely outside separated; how that which is by definition an abstraction could know something other than abstraction. Sartre's solution is to define consciousness as the capacity to know what is other: "For consciousness there is no being except this precise obligation to be a revealing intuition of something."⁵⁹ This definition of consciousness is not merely the "result of a logical construction," but is rather an account of "the subject of the most concrete of experiences."⁶⁰ But Newton, we recall, also conceived reason (the knowing being) as a capacity to reflect something other; this definition was founded, Newton alleged, on actual knowledge, on reason's "experience" of the concrete other, on experience derived from what is most "concrete," the concrete itself, "matter."

The knowledge that for Sartre gives being its due, the knowledge which establishes an ontological foundation for phenomenology, the knowledge which expresses the recognition that the being of the phenomenon is not constituted by the cogito or consciousness but is other, the knowledge of being-in-itself, amounts to this: "Being is. Being is in-itself. Being is what it is."⁶¹ Newton's foundation for natural philosophy, the knowledge that the least particles of all things are hard, impenetrable, movable and inertial, was presented by Newton as knowledge derived from "nature," from the phenomena themselves, as knowledge of a reality external to the mind; but in fact no such least particles appear; the knowledge of this matter was recollected from the definition posited by reason. We can ask whether the knowledge that "being is what it is" is not also derived, not from

things, from what exists and appears, but from a definition posited by the cogito or rational power. Who will doubt that, if there is a "being," this being will be what it is? Knowing that "being is," what do we know? That is, we can ask whether Sartre's theses express or articulate knowledge, or rather the complete and utter poverty of knowledge, the condensation of what is known to a limit of opacity, to a rock or least particle of knowledge.

What can be built on the foundation of this knowledge? Knowing that being is in-itself, we know that it is "other," always already outside the knowing being, the for-itself; and so we know that the knowing being is phantasmal, outside separated from what is, a "lack" or nihilation of being, a "shell of nothingness." To be itself, being must remain in-itself, must be other than phantasmal consciousness; or else it would not be a being but a phantasma. The knowing being must remain outside the in-itself; or it would not be what it is, for-itself, a revealing intuition of something other. But the knowing being's knowledge of the in-itself must traverse the gap separating being and consciousness; or else the for-itself could not know that being is in-itself. Knowledge must enter the shell of nothingness; or else the for-itself, the knowing being, would be outside separated not only from the being of the known being but also from what it knows, outside its own knowledge. But knowledge which has entered the shell of nothingness can only be phantasmal. What is known--the knowledge, for example, that being is other--is known to be phantasmal, outside separated from its object, an object which, being other than what is known, is unknown.

So, too, that scientific reason which has posited as the object

of its knowledge a "nature itself," has found that this nature does not appear, remains inscrutable, hidden behind "observed facts"--has found that its object of knowledge is unknown. Knowledge conceived as the relation between speculatively proposed theoretical constructions and observed facts is not knowledge of nature itself--is, in relation to the in-itself, phantasmal. Confronting mathematical formulae which describe not nature itself but only "our knowledge of nature," "man confronts himself alone," Heisenberg explains the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory. But "man" confronts "knowledge" which is not knowledge of nature itself, which is, in relation to the unknown otherness posited as the object of knowledge, un-knowledge. The sign "man" signifies that which does not know the unknown. Within the architecture built on the foundation of the idea of nature itself, the knowing being achieves the nihilation of its knowledge; man--the subject of the verb to know--confronts the displacement of his capacity to know, confronts the transformation of science or vision or knowledge into unknowing.

7 Found out, identified, the spectre is identified as the "victim" of its "truth." The spectre's truth, its achievement, is its abstraction, its outside separation. To be itself, to achieve its identity, consciousness must expel things, the substantiality of things, the being of the phenomenon, from its shell of nothingness; in its truth the Cartesian cogito must be absolutely distinct from sensible things, from what appears, from its body; to achieve its truth, a truthful account of nature, Newtonian reason must be a representation of something other. To be itself the spectre or

rational power must abstract itself from what exists and appears; must conceive an otherness, an in-itself, from which it is outside separated; must posit a "gap," a space of separation, between reason and nature, between the soul and the body, between consciousness and its object, between the I alone in its selfhood and the other in its otherness, the in-itself in its in-itself-hood.

In its truth, in the space of its abstraction, the spectre confronts not the other but itself, confronts not what exists and appears but itself as the "Negation" of what exists and appears, itself as a mirror or glass capable only of images or representations, as a Reflexion in Non Entity, as a "pure reflection of a non-being."⁶² The in-itself must abide in itself, on the other shore, afar off, or it would not be what it is, the other. To reach the selfhood, to enter the space of separation, the in-itself would have to violate the principle of its identity, go outside itself, become other than itself, a phantasma. What appears for the selfhood, what shows itself in the spectre's "space undivided by existence," cannot be the in-itself; what reaches the selfhood, what the rational power confronts or perceives, are phantasmata, representations, images of something other. Appearance for the rational power is that which represents that which is not present (the Platonic phenomenon); or that which expresses reason's inability to perceive the in-itself (the Kantian phenomenon, the observed fact). The other, the in-itself, nature itself, does not show itself. Though ever so acute, the electron microscope does not see electrons. The experiment discloses traces, clouds in a cloud-chamber, the tracks left behind by that which has

always already escaped direct observation, that which does not appear. The microscope shows that which the Lockian mind knows: an image of an effect, a representation of a presence which is not present, which has already vanished, leaving only sensations, a disturbance, an evanescent shadow.

The "Spectre," victim of its truth, "has no Emanation" (J65.59). The act of positing a gap between the selfhood and an in-itself nihilates the emanation, the phenomenon, what appears: appearances are phantasmal, mere shows of things; what appears is not what is, is outside the real; appearances veil, dissemble, deceive, show what is not there, represent what is not present, make absence apparent. The phenomena themselves are not themselves, are representations of an otherness from whose presence the appearance has been banished or disseminated. Observed facts show not what is there in itself, but the disturbance caused by the experiment or observation, show what has already been altered, what is already other than it was. For the spectre, Jerusalem is a Harlot, a Circe or Dalila. Five windows open unto Female Space, Babylon or Gaza, the sphere of Mutabilitie, chora-- where illusions are generated and nurtured, borne always as the phantasmata of some other.

The act of positing some "other," an in-itself, posits a "being" that has no emanation, that does not show itself, that emanates no light; the in-itself abides elsewhere, afar off, whence it draws to itself the reality of the phenomenon, leaving a shadow, an unreality, a trace or sign. The act of positing an in-itself--the spectre's act, the act by which the spectre achieves its truth--posits a space of separation, a gap, the difference between the in-itself and the

selfhood. For the selfhood this space of separation is a "dark and unknown night," a black hole into which collapses identity and knowledge. The known being is unknown, a reality that does not show itself. Appearances are phantasmata, shadows, which compose a veil of illusions, a text of significations signifying the absence of the signified, the unreality of significations. The knowing being--the spectre--is a spectre: a knowing being which does not know, the subject of knowledge which is not knowledge but a distorted and reversed reflexion in the darkness, knowledge of phantasmata, phantasmal knowledge; a being which is not a being but a Negation, a form of abstraction in a space undivided by existence.

Part 9 - Building Golgonooza

1 The theme of the spectre--the knowing being "self-exiled from the face of light & shine of morning" (J19.13), the rational power which confronts only itself, its own constructions or Ratio--returns us to the question of the identity of nature. The spectre, Blake argues, is an achievement of Natural Religion: the idea of the mind as self-exiled, outside separated, excluded from the real, is built on the foundation of the idea of "nature itself," nature as an external reality, nature as "other." The idea of the knowing being as cogito or pour-soi implies the idea of res extensa or en-soi. The determination of the mind as "consciousness of something other" is intelligible only in a context where it makes sense to speak of "something other." The notion of the mind as a mirror or glass, "capable of the image of the universal world," implies the idea of a universal world external to

the mirror. The description of nature itself would not for centuries have been "the obvious aim of all exact sciences," were it not supposed that a nature itself exists to be described.

The idea of a universal world, a nature of things, external to the mirroring mind implies that what is in the mirror, knowledge, consists of reflections, representations of a presence which is absent from the mirror. The mirroring mind, reason, is capable only of images of something other; the rational power is a power of conceiving phantasmata. The modern idea of the mind as a shell of nothingness brings forward and makes explicit what is implied by the age of reason's natural philosophy. The argument that begins by attributing reality to an external "nature" will end, Blake insists, by "rejecting Ideas as nothing" (J70.7). The investigation of the phantasmal status of the knowing being and its knowledge is but the obverse of the investigation of an external reality.

2 The spectre is the corollary of nature itself. The for-itself is conceived in the context of an in-itself. The terms objective nature and subjective mind, external world and mirror, other and selfhood, being and nothingness, imply each other, form a system. But it does not follow, Blake argues, that this system--the spectre's truth--constitutes science. The foundation of Natural Religion is the idea that nature itself, external reality--something other--exists and appears. But this foundation, Blake argues, is among other things incommensurate with the facts.

The Cartesian vision of nature as an order of extended, unthinking things is the achievement of an argument which begins with

the cogito's act of closing its eyes, stopping its ears and calling away all its senses--with an act of abstraction which draws the mind away from what appears, which draws the fact that things show themselves into the space governed by the cogito's "doubt" where it is rational to esteem what we perceive, the facts, as vain and false. The philosophy of five senses does not turn the mind from the vain shows of things to the real and physical nature of things; in fact we do not see (hear, touch) least particles of matter, or corporeal bodies composed of least particles, or a physical nature composed of corporeal bodies. The laws of matter governing the motions of particles in the external space of nature itself are not derived by induction from the phenomena themselves. The Newtonian idea of nature itself, an objective world consisting of physical, material materials or a non-mental substantiality of things, is not an idea that is implied by the facts; on the contrary, this idea of nature itself leaps over or ignores the fact that nothing other than our capacity to perceive is perceived, the fact that the facts are always already observed facts.

The act of positing "something other" as the object of knowledge posits a "gap" between the knowing being and the known being; Cartesian science is what it is as it partitions, divides, creates a space of separation between what knows and what is known. But this is absurd: science begins by positing the conditions of its impossibility, by positing a gap which cannot exist if there is to be science. Alone with itself in its abstract space of separation, confronting the "images of sensible things," the cogito cannot know

whether the source of the presence of these images is something other. The gap between mind and nature must be traversed if nature is to be an object of knowledge, a known being. For Descartes, as for Newton, it is evident that God has fashioned corporeal nature in such a way that it shows itself to the mind in the form of mathematical principles; hence, as Descartes argues, "all things which, speaking generally, are comprehended in the object of pure mathematics, are truly to be recognized as external objects."⁶³

For Blake, this mixing of the mathematical and the physical, this claim that the ability to comprehend mathematic form enables the mind to grasp "what is called corporeal," is an impossible absurdity. It is moreover incommensurate with the facts: he who sees the mathematical principles of natural philosophy sees no external objects, no reality or nature external to the mind. This judgment is consistent with Heisenberg's thesis that the mathematical formulae of science do not describe nature itself, but only our knowledge of nature; on the foundation of this knowledge it is not possible to know that res extensa is a res, that the term "nature" signifies a non-mental reality. The gap separating knowing being from an object of knowledge conceived as something other is in fact not bridged by mathematic form. In the context of the belief in an external nature itself, the knowing being is that which confronts itself alone, that is, confronts the relation between speculatively proposed theoretical constructions and observed facts, confronts the achievements of its own long abstract arguments, confronts a mathematical text in which is inscribed a system of significations which do not signify something other, which do not describe nature itself.

In the context of the belief in nature itself, for the science built on the foundation of this belief, the object of knowledge is unknown. The question of the identity of nature dissolves into the recognition that we have no way of knowing whether this otherness exists. Reason, the rational power, is not capable of the image of nature itself. The idea of the mind as a mirror collapses: the reflection or representation or sign does not reflect or signify something other; the sign "atom" does not signify a Newtonian least particle, a known being known to be a thing itself. The system built on the foundation of nature itself deconstructs or "devours" itself, collapses upon itself, falls in upon its center, where the selfhood or spectre confronts itself alone. The terms of the system, mind and nature itself, self and other, dissolve into the terms spectre and shadow, selfhood and that which reflects or expresses the selfhood's unknowing.

3 Ideas are nothing, the mind is a shell of nothingness, the knowing being is a spectre, in relation to nature itself, in a context shaped by the belief in an external reality. But nature itself is not an object of knowledge; the other is not a known being. The spectre's truth, Blake argues, constitutes a "religion": a belief in an external reality, a belief which ignores or leaps over or exceeds the facts, what appears, what is known. Reason is not capable of the knowledge of nature itself, because nature itself does not show itself, does not present itself in a form which the mind can represent or reflect. In fact, Blake argues, there is no science of nature itself, no knowledge of an otherness external to the mind, no

"heterology."

Golgonooza is built as the spectre is subdued: that is, as it is recognized that the spectre is the corollary of nature itself; and as it is recognized that nature itself, the other, is not other, but a construction of the rational power, an idol of the sleeping intellect, a cloven fiction. Natural Religion is a "tautology," a logos of the self (autos), a system commensurate with the selfhood. The movement of thought which starts from nature itself and the mind as a mirror and ends with the spectre and its reflected shadow, with the I alone with itself, is for Blake the odyssey of the rational power, a movement which ends where it begins, which does not go beyond the selfhood and the constructions which define and express it abstraction. The context shaped and determined by the idea of nature itself is the context of the selfhood, Ulro. In Ulro, the selfhood does not confront something other but "itself alone," itself as a spectre outside separated from a being or reality that does not appear and is not known.

4 Golgonooza is built on the foundation of the thesis, "nature is imagination itself." The world of "Fish & Bird & Beast & Man & Tree & Metal & Stone" (J50.6), the order of things we confront and amongst which we live, consists, Blake argues, of the acts and products of imagination. The vegetative functions, the stomach for digestion and the pulsation of the artery, are achievements of "Spiritual power." What is visible to the man of common sense, the phenomena themselves, are the oeuvre or "emanation" of imagination. Nature is a "vision," not a reality external to our capacity to perceive and know.

The claim, nature is imagination itself, contradicts Cartesian science. More precisely, the theme of Los's labours to build Golgonooza states an alternative to Natural Religion, to a system or architecture which contradicts, nihilates, itself. The fact that the man of common sense sees a table is not explained by reference to a system of concepts which explains perception in terms of non-mental objects which somehow act to cause the formation of an image or reflection of themselves in a mental space outside separated from the reality or being of the thing itself. The idea that a physical object can emanate something which strikes the eye (itself a physical object) which transmits the impression (or some kind of information regarding the event of having been struck or impressed by something) via the optic nerve to the brain (itself a physical object, a thing which is what it is by virtue of consisting of a physical substance), which somehow processes the "mental" image or concept of the thing which causes the idea, leaves unexplained the miracle of how the gap was traversed, how the physical became mental. Such an explanation moreover overlooks the fact that, from our knowledge of the brain, the optic nerve and eye, and "objects" external to our skin, we cannot infer the existence of the "physical," of a substance or reality external to our capacity to perceive and know. The sign "atom," since Newton the foundation of the idea of the physical, signifies, so far as we perceive or know, that which is neither a thing nor an object.

"Earth, Metal, Tree, Fish, Bird & Beast" (M25.41), things "out there," outside our skins, are not, Blake argues in the Golgonooza-section of Milton, "physical" objects. Nor are the eye, the "Optic

Nerve" (M28.29), the heart and lungs and "Stomach for digestion" (M24.59) "corporeal" organs. What exists and appears, every thing that lives, that which accomplishes our capacity to live upon Earth, are not explained by an appeal to nature itself. Digestion is not a "natural" process; physical nature is not the subject of the verb to digest. Nature itself is a concept of the rational power, which signifies that which we do not know, that which does not appear. The Newtonian idea of the eye--the organ of vision which is what it is by virtue of the acts of forces of nature which cause least particles of matter to cohere together in regular figures--is in fact not derived from the facts, is, so far as any one knows, a cloven fiction.

It does not follow from the fact that we have no knowledge of corporeal things, that we have no knowledge of things, that science is impossible. The fact of the pulsation of the artery is not the less a fact because it is not explained by the hypothesis of laws of matter acting on atomic units of a non-mental substance. It does not follow from the fact that we have no knowledge of corporeal things or of events and processes occurring in a "physical" space outside the mind, that such things, such a space, exist. There is no knowledge of nature itself, because nature itself does not appear. The hypothesis of the atom does not explain classical facts, corporeal phenomena, because there are no corporeal phenomena to be explained. Nature itself does not show itself--because, Blake argues, it does not exist. This claim is commensurate with the facts, with what we perceive and know.

5 Platonism is not wrong to contend that forms confined and determined by a non-mental substance could not be objects of

knowledge. But neither is an unappearing reality an object of knowledge, Blake argues; reason which ascends "beyond the heavens" to discover that which reason alone can apprehend, apprehends itself alone. Like "matter," ousia is an unnecessary hypothesis. As there is no reason (commensurate with the facts) to posit matter, and hence to posit a gap between what exists and what knows, there is no reason (that is not commensurate with the rational power's desire for abstraction, for closing its eyes and stopping its ears) to posit ousia, and hence to posit a gap between what exists and what appears.

There is no reality external to imagination, Blake argues: imagination exists, is the subject of the verb "to be." What is really there, the things's reality, the Imaginative Form, shows itself, appears: "every particular Form gives forth or Emanates / Its own peculiar light" (J54.1-2). Imaginative form--that by virtue of which each thing is what it is, a definite and determinate identity--is the antipodes both of the Newtonian corporeal form and of the Platonic idea or eidos. For Blake, to exist is to appear; to be is to be a phenomenon. What appears, what is shown, the "object" of perception or knowledge, is the "emanation" of what exists. The emanation is not a Platonic phantasma, an image of something other. Imaginative form does not exist afar off, in some place outside separated from its manifestation. Chora is the corollary of ousia; Vala, the "Shadow" of Jerusalem, is "builded by the Reasoning power in Man" (J39.40). There is no gap between what exists and what appears: there is no reason to suppose that what is really there does not meet the eye, and no reason to suppose that what meets the eye is not really there.⁶⁴ Imagination shows itself, not afar off, not in some intelligible space beyond the

earth of which poets sing, nor in some physical space or res extensa outside separated from vision, but in the form of vision, as the content of vision, as what perception perceives, knowing knows. Our capacity to perceive and know is not accomplished in forms external to or other than the forms we perceive and know. Common sense sees the table, not the image of an unseen table which reason alone can apprehend; no mental image of a physical table is reflected somewhere in the skull cavity. The philosophy of five senses, which supposes that reason receives through its senses impressions of forms confined and determined by matter, deceives itself. The Cartesian theatre, where something other acts to show itself or images of itself to reason, where reason (essentially passive: a "lazy onlooker," as Coleridge puts it) receives images of something other, is for Blake a theatre of illusion, a stage upon which the rational power enacts its idolatrous confrontation with itself. Nature itself, so far as any one knows, does not "act," does not form unthinking existents from least particles, does not show itself; the idea of a "Natural Cause" is "a Delusion" (M26.45). The other is not other: what appears on the Cartesian stage--images of corporeal things, or the real, objective, mathematic forms of external objects--does not originate from a source external to the human mind.

6 The excursion of imagination through Ulro comes to an end at "the Gate of Los" (J35.3), the threshold of Golgonooza, where the idea of an external reality or being or nature itself--the "nature" of Natural Religion--is identified (as a construct of the rational power, as the spectre's truth, as an unnecessary hypothesis) and separated, cast

off. Entering Golgonooza, we can no longer say that imagination lacks the substantiality of things; nor can we say that nature is sub-imaginative, that which is never good in itself insofar as it lacks the reality of an imagination conceived as that which nature is not. In Golgonooza, the idea of an imagination-nature opposition is meaningless: nature is imagination itself. To build Golgonooza is to transform the question, what is nature? (what is really there? what is the cause of the phenomena we perceive? what is the substantiality of things?) into the question, what is imagination? This question admits of resolution: "the labours of Art & Science" (J77) are its resolution.

We live amongst, in a world of, images, phenomena, appearances. The claim, nature exists and appears--the attempt to construe the phenomena as manifestations of something other--lacks entirely for evidence, or misconstrues the fact of observed facts. Blake's alternative claim, imagination exists, amounts only to a beginning or starting-point for the Science of the Elohim, the labours of art and science in Golgonooza. This claim means that imagination (unlike ousia or matter) shows itself, emanates. Imagination exists is equivalent to the proposition, imagination images. The images amongst which we live, Blake argues, are the manifestation, oeuvre of imagination. Thus the question, what is imagination? (what is imaginative form?) resolves to the question, what appears, what images do we perceive? Imaginative form is what shows itself: the forms of "Animal & Vegetable & Mineral" (M25.21); the forms of "Rivers Mountains Cities Villages" (J71.15); the forms of Paradise Lost and Jerusalem and Newton's Principia.

Imagination is what we perceive, when we have dispensed with the notions of an unappearing reality or of a corporeal form; imaginative form is what we perceive when we cast off the philosophy of five senses and Cartesian "method," when we open our eyes, unstop our ears, and rouse our faculties to act.

7 Golgonooza means, implies, "nature is a vision." There is no nature itself, no objective reality external to vision, our capacity to perceive and know. What appears is what is perceived, the "object" of perception; facts are observed facts; in fact, we do not perceive something other than vision. The images amongst which we live, the phenomena themselves, the appearances which constitute common sense's "nature," Blake argues, emanate from imagination, are what imagination images; but imaginative form, what exists, Blake argues (Golgonooza means) is not other than the act of vision. The image, what is shown, does not appear in a space external to vision, but appears in the form of vision, as the object of knowledge or perception, as the content of which the act of vision is the form. What is shown--the emanation, image--shows, manifests, demonstrates, the identity of imagination, the co-inherence of what exists and what knows, form and vision. The emanation is the product, the oeuvre of imagination: what is shown, what the imaginative form, showing itself, shows, emanates, gives forth, the shows of things, what meets the eye, the odours of nature, the images of Paradise Lost, the mathematical constructions of the Principia; the emanation is what is perceived, what the eye sees, the nose smells, the hand touches, what the act of vision produces and contains, what perception perceives, the product and content of

knowing, knowledge.

Golgonooza means--is the architecture which upholds and articulates the proposition which asserts--the identity of mind and nature. Existents are "mental forms"; the idea of a corporeal thing or object is a cloven fiction; mental forms, the forms of imagination, are the acts of vision. To engage in the labour of building Golgonooza is to understand that "nature" can be known, can be an object of knowledge, precisely because it is not other than our capacity to perceive and know. The processes of "nature," the vegetative functions, for example, or the motions of the sun, moon and "the Constellations in the deep & wondrous Night" (M25.66), are processes of imagination. Imagination exists, moves, digests: "Bowlahoola is the Stomach in every individual man" (M24.67).

Imagination images, shows itself. In Golgonooza imagination shows itself as "nature," the World of Generation. The theatre of Golgonooza focusses the images of imagination, not of an unappearing reality external to vision, not images of something other. In Golgonooza, imagination acts, that life may not be blotted out. The acts of imagination, imaginative forms, appear in Golgonooza as "Generated Bodies," the manifestation, discerned by the senses, of our capacity to live on earth. Golgonooza is the act of vision, the imaginative form of perception and knowledge, of which the mundane world of ordinary experience is the content. Whatever is visible, the Generated Body, what is woven in Cathedron's "Looms of Generation," is the content of the act of vision achieved in the building of Golgonooza. The World of Generation, the world of appearances which common sense confronts, the world of Adam's experience, is not the art of a God

afar off, not the emanation of a nature we do not know, but the art and emanation of Golgonooza.

8 The labours of art and science in Golgonooza--the practice of the Science of the Elohim--are labours of vision. Vision (to essay the kind of discursive definition that Blake for the most part eschews) is the principium cognoscendi, that by virtue of which we perceive and know. For Blake (as for Coleridge, and as against the Cartesian tradition) the principium cognoscendi is not other than, co-inheres with, the principium essendi (for Blake, the imaginative form). In Golgonooza we understand that the form is the vision; that the act of the power to exist, the imaginative form, is the act or form of vision; that the product of this act, the content of this form, is the emanation or image. Imagination images; vision is that which allows imagination to image; the labours of vision are the making of that which allows the emanation to be an image, to be what is perceived, an "object" of perception and knowledge.

As labours of vision, the labours of Bowlahoola, Allamanda and Cathedron to build Generated Bodies or Human Vegetated Forms, to create whatever is visible to the Generated Man, are the making of that which allows imagination to appear as "nature," as the "world" that appears for us as an order of images, as the ensemble of objects we perceive and know, as the world of fish, bird, beast, man, city, mountain, village. As a labour of vision, the building of Golgonooza is the making of that which allows us to understand that nature is imagination itself, that the force which through the green fuse drives the flower is not other than the force which through the poet drives

the poem. As labours of vision, Milton and Jerusalem are (among other things) the making of that which allows imagination's idolatry (its attempt to bestow alterity on that which is not other; its attempt to attribute to nature or God its own force or productive power or capacity to act) to appear in such a way that it can be perceived, seen, identified, as a state of sleep from which it is possible to awaken.

Imagination images, gives forth or emanates appearances. By virtue of vision the emanation, the images of imagination, are perceived, are objects of perception or knowledge. Vision puts before, proposes, objectifies, is the capacity of imagination to put before the eye what the eye sees, the object, this particular tree, that stone. Vision substantiates: by virtue of vision the imaginative form shows itself as that which the hand touches, the density of metal or stone or earth. The substantiality of things is not an illusion; the carpenter who believes that the "substance" of pine differs from that of maple is not deceived. But this "substance" is not "other," external to vision: it is what the senses sense, what the hand touches, the product of vision, the content of the carpenter's knowledge of his materials. Vision makes themes, proposes propositions, is the capacity of imagination to assemble and hold together the themes, concepts, images, words, which state or propose or articulate knowledge, what is known; as Newton's Principia proposes the theme of a "nature" known as a calculable coherence of forces, and organizes a mathematical representation of the phenomena of mechanical motions; or as Jerusalem proposes (among other things) the thesis,

nature is imagination itself, and organizes that which allows the mind to know that the forms of earth, metal, tree and stone are not corporeal but human or imaginative forms.

9 To build Golgonooza is to build a vision of nature, to build an alternative vision to that proposed by Cartesian science. A vision of nature, Blake argues, is not, as Cartesian science proposes, the reflection of something other, is not the product of the "subject's" act of representing an "objective reality" or external world. Nature, the world we perceive, is (not other than) vision. "All that we see is vision." The "objective," the ensemble of objects we perceive and know, does not exist or stand-out in a space from which vision or mind is excluded; the idea of such a space is an idea, a mental form. Vision is not a capacity of the Cartesian "subject"; the "I alone" is capable of proposing, objectifying its own abstraction.

The "objective," Blake argues (Golgonooza means), is the product of our acts of vision, which are the acts of imagination, imaginative forms, things. The form of my perception or vision of the table is the table, what is really there; the content of this form of perception is what I perceive and know. The "objective" is what our acts of vision propose, substantiate, objectify, what we see, hear, touch, know--the world, the very world which is the world. The "world" is what it is as we are capable of allowing it to appear before us, as we are capable of making that which allows the world to show itself, as we are capable of proposing, substantiating, objectifying the objects, images, phenomena, concepts, words that constitute a world.

Vision is world-making--which does not mean, as Tilottoma Rajan

argues, that "vision" for Blake signifies a capacity to reconstitute the external world in accordance with patterns imposed by man's imagination.⁶⁵ The world that vision makes, the world that appears for us by virtue of our acts of vision, is our "emanation." The world of earth, metal, tree and stone, the world wherein the idea of nature itself is proposed and discussed, is not "external," is the product of our capacity to perceive earth, tree and stone, the product of our capacity to propose ideas concerning the identity of nature.

To labour in knowledge for Blake is to build up the emanation. Knowledge of the world, science, the cognitive relation, is a relation between vision and emanation; the "objective" is what imagination images, the product and content of our acts of vision; we know--the object of knowledge is--our emanation. Natural Religion seeks to transform the "objective" into "something other," a nature itself, an external world, an objective reality, that which is the source of its own presence. But this is "sleep," Blake argues. Newton's sleep, for example, as it transforms the objective into the reality of physical nature, proposes that the products of vision, what is perceived, be regarded as the cause of vision, that which acts to cause the appearances of natural things, a "presence" which the mirroring reason represents. But sleep, Blake argues, accomplishes or builds up not knowledge but delusion. The other, the external presence, nature itself, is in fact not an object of knowledge. What is in fact perceived, the emanation, becomes a phantasma, an image of something other that we do not know. The world, the ensemble of objects, images, appearances we perceive, becomes a space of illusion, Ulro or chora, a Female Space where Tirzah or Vala weave a veil of illusion around the

spectre. But the spectre, Blake argues, is the victim of its own truth, author of its own displacement. The spectre's sleep is the achievement of the rational power's idolatry. The source of the presence of the objective is not afar off. The other, nature itself, is not other, but a concept, a mental form. The external world is not external, but that which is proposed by, constituted in accordance with patterns imposed by, the rational power.

Part 10 - The Gate of Los

1 For the awakened imagination, "to Labour in Knowledge. is to Build up Jerusalem" (J77). But Los labours to build Golgonooza because Albion sleeps, because the dark Religions have not departed. In Golgonooza, Los labours to separate what has been mixed, the vision of Natural Religion from the Vision of the Science of the Elohim. For the imagination at the Gate of Los, the threshold of Golgonooza, there is a choice or decision or "judgment" to be made: either we do or we do not dispense with (separate, cast off) the idea of an external reality or nature itself.

Regardless of our choice, science or vision, the labour of knowledge, does not, Blake argues, represent or reflect something other; nature itself is an unconfirmed hypothesis, not an object of knowledge. Science can only build up or nihilate the emanation, the images of imagination. The emanation is the only object of knowledge, the known being; hence, to nihilate the emanation is to devour knowledge, to transform the knowing being into a spectre.

Science or vision is world-making: at the gate of Los we choose

to make Ulro or the World of Generation. We propose, build up, make a vision of the Science of the Elohim, that which allows imagination to appear as nature or generation, that which allows the eye to see, the mind to understand, that nature is not "other" than the acts and products of imagination, that the very world is an order of imaginative forms and their emanations. Or we build up an architecture which proposes that nature is in itself, that the objective emanates from afar off, that the being of the phenomenon is other than or external to vision; in which case, Blake argues, we build up a space in which we confront the articulated structure of our belief in an unappearing reality; we make that which allows the images, objects, phenomena we perceive to show themselves as images of something other, as phantasmal representations of a presence which is not an object of knowledge, as signs signifying a signified that we do not know.

2 To enter Golgonooza is to understand that there is nothing "other" (no God, being, nature) for the image to represent or signify. There is no being behind the appearance; the being is a phenomenon; the phenomena, the objects we perceive, the world we know, is our emanation. The relation between form or vision and emanation--the chief proposition proposed by Blake's argument--cannot be construed in the Platonic terms of ousia and phantasma, nor in the Cartesian terms of self-subject and other-object. In Golgonooza it is understood that what appears, what meets the eye, is really there, is not an illusion of the senses. It is not possible to nihilate, to reduce to the status of illusion, the familiar, mundane world of appearances; the ousia or being such a strategy requires is imagined, is known only as it is

proposed, objectified by our capacity to know, vision; but so is the "sensible" world objectified, proposed by vision. In Golgonooza it is understood that it is not possible to transform the objective into an objective reality, a nature or substantiality of things--that which can be used as Plato used ousia, to nihilate imagination and what imagination makes, poems, images, words--without repeating the idolatry of Platonism. The other is not other; the external world is not external; the objective is the emanation of vision. The mundane world visible to common sense is the product of common sense's capacity to perceive, to objectify, to put objects before its eyes. In Golgonooza, practising the science of the Elohim, Adam understands that Eden or Gaza are not explained by reference to something other, God afar off or Satan in hell. In Golgonooza, the man of common sense understands that "nature" is not explained by reference to Newtonian "matter."

The World of Generation is our emanation. This means that Generation neither is nor is not a "construct of our own making" in the sense of this expression proposed by Cartesian science. The world of fish, bird, beast and man is not a res extensa, the "classical" world of corporeal things, nor the Kantian world of things-in-themselves. But neither is it a world of constructed illusions, Bacon's shows of things, de Man's poetic world of intentional images, Nietzsche's world of metaphors, metonyms and anthropomorphisms. What meets the eye is the oeuvre of vision; but vision is not other than nature, is not a capacity to make illusions and add them to what is really there. What meets the eye is the emanation of imaginative form,

what is given forth by the thing which is its own cause and its own effect, which is the source of its own presence. In Golgonooza the fact that the forms of earth, metal, tree and stone exist and appear does not mean that the forms of Paradise Lost or Jerusalem must be regarded as unreal, as is proposed by Bacon, Newton and Sartre. Nor in Golgonooza are we required to regard the forms of earth, metal, tree and stone as constructs or sculptures that the fires of vision are supposed to burn down. What appears, is. To the notion of "fires of vision" proposed by Bloom must be added the notion of the "earth of vision." The earth which sustains us, Aristotle's physis, the force that drives the flower and pulsates the blood, are neither illusions nor aspects of a reality that excludes us.

We do not know a reality that excludes us. We do not know that which would permit us to dismiss what we perceive and make--the world of images in which we live--as illusion. The object of knowledge, Blake argues, is the emanation: what is given forth, imaged, by that which is not other than vision; what is perceived, the oeuvre of our acts of vision, the achievement of the labours of art and science. There is no solid without fluctuation, no being which is what it is as it holds itself and its attributes together in a space afar off or outside separated from vision. The labour of knowledge does not apprehend a being behind the appearance; to build the emanation is to add more to what meets the eye, to see more of what is there. The labours of art and science, building up the emanation, add to the order of images, multiply perceptions, expand the order of meanings, recruit new figures for our armies of metaphors and metonyms which say, mean, express, propose, accomplish the emanation, what we

perceive and know, the very world.

There is no matter or ousia, no solid without fluctuation, and therefore no truth or true knowledge that would apprehend or describe or take the measure of such a solid; there is no correct reading, no definitive interpretation. The emanation, the object of knowledge, is in flux: the capacity of imagination to appear is infinite; the capacity of vision to mark out determinate images is infinite; our objects of perception and knowledge expand or contract not in accordance with laws of matter but with our acts of vision, as we rouse our faculties of vision to act. There are as many correct readings, definitive interpretations, as there are acts of vision, labours of art and science, which read and interpret. Flux, the enemy of philosophy, is exuberance, the manifestation of the only life, the manifestation of an infinite capacity for more, for something new under the sun, a new perception, new appearances, new knowledge; the manifestation of our infinite capacity to add to the order of images, to build up the emanation, to expand the sum of human relations with our "Arrows of Intellect."

3 "The influence of the Cartesian division on human thought in the following centuries can hardly be over-estimated," argues Heisenberg:

If one follows the great difficulty which even eminent scientists like Einstein had in understanding and accepting the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory, one can trace the roots of this difficulty to the Cartesian partition. This partition has penetrated deeply into the human mind during the three centuries following Descartes and it will take a long time for it to be replaced by a really different attitude to the problem of reality. 66

Perhaps the case of Blake ought to be regarded as an example of

the influence and dominance of Cartesian discourse; proposing an alternative to classical physics in the age of the ascendancy of classical physics, he could only mean, say, that which for his contemporaries could only be naivete or nonsense or phantasia. Perhaps for us matters have not changed. To say that Los, building Golgonooza, works with physical, material materials, and therefore frustrates or deconstructs the apocalyptic intention of the prophecies to achieve a Platonic vision of a reality out of nature; or to say that building Golgonooza is the act of making a Sisyphean affirmation of absurdity, the act of accepting that, because mind and nature (the external world, the benignly indifferent universe) are mutually exclusive, the only relation between them can be absurd; or to say that, because Blake refuses to accept that imagination lacks the substantiality of things, he must be regarded as the master and victim of grandiose naivete; is to say the same thing, to say that which is commensurate with Cartesian discourse, that which means a Cartesian meaning.

Given the fact of the persistence of Cartesian discourse, we can wonder if Blake, proposing Golgonooza, proposing an alternative solution to the question of the identity of nature, proposes a prolegomenon to a text that we cannot write, to a discourse we cannot say. Our language seems to insist that the terms "nature" and "imagination" are exclusive, that whatever be the meaning we ascribe to imagination, such meaning must mean that which nature is not. We can wonder if Blake, proposing a discourse in which "imagination" does not mean phantasia, but the identity of what exists and what knows, proposes more than we can know. Our language seems to insist that

knowing and knowledge must signify the act of a "subject" to apprehend or represent something "objective," something "other." It may be the case that for us--because we choose not to dismiss the idea of nature itself, because we continue to say "nature" and mean an external world--"knowledge" which is not knowledge of "something other" can only be phantasia and cannot be "truth."

On the other hand, certain of our labours of knowledge indicate that matters have changed or are changing. Quantum theory insists that nature itself is not an object of knowledge, that the mathematical formulae of physics do not represent an objective reality. Grammatology insists that expressions such as "the substantiality of things" do not signify something other than the capacity of words to signify. It may be the case that it is not Blake but our persistent Cartesian discourse that proposes more than we can know. If we cannot know nature itself, the nature of Natural Religion, we cannot know that imagination is phantasia. If we cannot know something other, then for the Cartesian "subject"--for the knowing being defined or constructed or proposed by the Cartesian architecture--there is no knowledge, no truth. But if we do not know something other, we cannot know that the Cartesian architecture is not what Blake claims it is: not a framework framed by God afar off, not a structure which represents the physical structure of nature, but a construct of our own making, an error that can be consumed.

4 Blake's claims for "imagination," his attempt to propose a discourse for which imagination does not signify phantasia--the prophecies--are a response to, an attempt to take cognizance of, an

effort to propose a discourse that would be commensurate with, these "facts": we live amongst images; and we do not know anything other than our capacity to behold and to make images--our capacity to imagine. We can choose to nihilate the images we behold and make, to disperse Jerusalem into non-entity; or we can choose instead to nihilate or consume the nature of Natural Religion. This choice confronts us at the Gate of Los, the place of krisis, the place of "choosing," of "separation," of "judgement."

Regardless of our choice, Blake argues, our labours of art and science cannot but be resolutions of the question, what is imagination? Whether we choose to believe in a reality that we do not know, or choose to believe that the real we desire to know is what shows itself, what we perceive, the order and flux of the images we behold and make, we cannot but make the very world, that is, the only world we can know. The power to make images, our objects of knowledge, the world we know, the power we have attributed to nature or to the Elohim--to something other--is not other. Blake's claims for imagination amount to this: imagination images.

NOTES

- 1 Bacon, The Advancement of Learning 100.
- 2 God and The New Physics (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983)
ix.
- 3 The Physicist's Conception of Nature 23.
- 4 Nor is the substantiality of things explained by reference to an "energy" conceived as a potentia in the Aristotelian sense; potentia does not signify that which actually exists, what is really there, a thing or object.
- 5 "Urizen: The Symmetry of Fear," Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic 146.
- 6 Simmons, "Symmetry" 146, 160.
- 7 Simmons, "Symmetry" 163.
- 8 Simmons, "Symmetry" 156.
- 9 Simmons, "Symmetry" 154, 156.
- 10 Simmons, "Symmetry" 151.
- 11 Simmons, "Symmetry" 159.
- 12 Simmons, "Symmetry" 159.
- 13 Simmons, "Symmetry" 156.
- 14 Simmons, "Symmetry" 156.
- 15 We will return, later, to the career of Los in Lambeth, and attempt to show that his passivity--his position as an actor who is acted upon--is an exemplary description of what Blake means by "sleep."
- 16 Simmons, "Symmetry" 165.
- 17 Levinas, Totality and Infinity 152.
- 18 "Blake's Radical Comedy," Blake's Sublime Allegory 306.
- 19 "Comedy" 300.
- 20 Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth 318.
- 21 Symbol 318, 334.

- 22 Symbol 152.
- 23 Symbol 322: "Blake is not Camus. The transcendent has not in the least vanished from his comos..."
- 24 Symbol 368.
- 25 "In the end, for all his awareness of the weight of experience, Blake cannot come to terms with 'the very world which is the world / Of all of us'"; Symbol 368, citing Wordsworth, The Prelude XI. 142-143 (1850).
- 26 Camus, "The Myth of Sisyphus," The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays 88.
- 27 "The Keys to the Gates," The Stubborn Structure (London and New York: Methuen, 1980) 191; Fearful Symmetry 49.
- 28 Saving The Appearances 21.
- 29 Fearful Symmetry 49.
- 30 Symbol 319.
- 31 A Blake Dictionary 432.
- 32 Fearful Symmetry 18.
- 33 Symbol 325.
- 34 Blake's Apocalypse 371-72.
- 35 "Radical Comedy" p. 306.
- 36 "Radical Comedy" 300, 307.
- 37 Meditations on First Philosophy, The Philosophical Works of Descartes 141.
- 38 Meditations 190.
- 39 The issue of suicide--the idea of self-destruction as a rational or proper act for the selfhood in an architecture built on the foundation of a gap between self and "other," between self and an "external world," between self and a world that the self cannot love--persists as a theme for poets (e.g., Adonais, Empodocles on Aetna), and for philosophers: "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem," Camus argues, "and that is suicide" ("An Absurd Reasoning," in The Myth of Sisyphus 3).
- 40 Cited by Heisenberg, Conception 116.

- 41 Conception 116.
- 42 Conception 117.
- 43 Saving The Appearances 46.
- 44 Conception 114.
- 45 Advancement of Learning 110.
- 46 Conception 114.
- 47 Cited by Ault, Visionary Physics 39.
- 48 This abridged statement of Newton's "First Law of Motion" is cited by Heidegger, Basic Writings 262. We have noted earlier Heidegger's observation that the "body left to itself" posited by this law is a fiction: "There is no such body" (265).
- 49 Cited by Heidegger, Basic Writings 264.
- 50 Visionary Physics 38.
- 51 Ault 38
- 52 Ault 40, 38.
- 53 Conception 25.
- 54 Simmons, "Symmetry" 156.
- 55 Being and Nothingness 786.
- 56 Being and Nothingness 21.
- 57 Sartre 11.
- 58 Sartre 21, 17.
- 59 Sartre 786.
- 60 Sartre 17.
- 61 Sartre 59.
- 62 Sartre 246.
- 63 Meditations 191.
- 64 Compare Barfield, expounding Coleridge's notion of "actual realism": "we become aware that reality, although it is indeed real, is also appearance; and that appearance, although it is indeed appearance, is also reality." What Coleridge Thought 68.

- 65 Dark Interpreter 220.
- 66 Physics and Philosophy 79, 81.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aristotle. Introduction to Aristotle. Ed. Richard McKeon. New York: Modern Library, 1947.
- Ault, Donald D. Visionary Physics: Blake's Response to Newton. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1974.
- Bacon, Francis. The Advancement of Learning and New Atlantis. Ed. with a Preface by Thomas Case. London: Oxford UP, 1956.
- Blake, William. The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake. Ed. David V. Erdman, commentary by Harold Bloom. 1965. Newly revised ed. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1982.
- Barfield, Owen. Saving The Appearances: A Study in Idolatry. London: Faber and Faber, 1957.
- , What Coleridge Thought. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, 1971.
- Bloom, Harold. Blake's Apocalypse: A Study in Poetic Argument. 1963. Garden City: Doubleday, 1965.
- , ed. Romanticism and Consciousness: Essays in Criticism. New York: Norton, 1970.
- Brisman, Leslie. Romantic Origins. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1978.
- Camus, Albert. The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays. Trans. Justin O'Brien. New York: Random, 1955.
- Capra, Fritjof. The Tao of Physics. Boulder: Shambhala, 1975.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. Biographia Literaria: Or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions. Ed. George Watson. London: J. M. Dent, 1975.
- Curran, Stuart, and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr., eds. Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on The Four Zoas, Milton and Jerusalem. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1973.
- Damon, S. Foster. A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake. Providence: Brown UP, 1965.
- , William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols. 1924. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958.
- Damrosch, Leopold, Jr. Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980.

- Davies, Paul. God and The New Physics. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983.
- Derrida, Jacques. Margins of Philosophy. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982.
- . Of Grammatology. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1981.
- . Writing and Difference. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1978.
- Descartes, René. The Philosophical Works of Descartes. 2 vols. Trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross. 1911. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975.
- Doskow, Minna. William Blake's Jerusalem: Structure and Meaning in Poetry and Picture. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1982.
- Erdman, David V. and John E. Grant, eds. Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970.
- Fox, Susan. Poetic Form in Blake's Milton. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976.
- Frosch, Thomas R. The Awakening of Albion: The Renovation of the Body in the Poetry of William Blake. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1974.
- Frye, Northrop. Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake. 1947. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974.
- . "Notes for a Commentary on Milton." The Divine Vision: Studies in the Poetry and Art of William Blake. Ed. Vivian De Sola Pinto. London: Victor Gollancz, 1957. 97-137.
- . "The Keys to the Gates." The Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society. London and New York: Methuen, 1980. 175-199.
- . "The Road of Excess." Romanticism and Consciousness: Essays in Criticism. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Norton, 1970. 119-132.
- Grenet, Paul. Thomism: An Introduction. Trans. James F. Ross. New York: Harper, 1967.
- Hartmann, Klaus. Sartre's Ontology: A Study of Being and Nothingness in the Light of Hegel's Logic. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1966.
- Hawking, Stephen W. A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes. New York: Bantam, 1988.

- Heidegger, Martin. Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964). Ed. with General Introduction, David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper, 1977.
- . Identity and Difference. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper, 1969.
- . "Modern Science, Metaphysics, and Mathematics." Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964). Ed. with General Introduction, David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper, 1977. 247-282.
- . Poetry, Language and Thought. Trans. Alfred Hofstadter. New York: Harper, 1971.
- . "The Question Concerning Technology." Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964). Ed. with General Introduction, David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper, 1977. 287-317.
- Heisenberg, Werner. Across The Frontiers. Trans. Peter Heath. New York: Harper, 1974.
- . Physics and Beyond: Encounters and Conversations. Trans. A. J. Pomerans. New York: Harper, 1971.
- . Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958.
- . The Physicist's Conception of Nature. Trans. A. J. Pomerans. London: Hutchinson, 1958.
- Hempel, Carl G. Philosophy of Science. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966.
- Hilton, Nelson and Thomas A. Vogler, eds. Unnam'd Forms: Blake and Textuality. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: U of California P, 1986.
- Husserl, Edmund. Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology. Trans. Dorion Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977.
- Jones, Roger S. Physics as Metaphor. Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 1982.
- Kant, Immanuel. Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. Trans. Norman Kemp Smith. New York: St. Martin's, 1965.
- Kirk, G. S. and J. E. Raven. The PreSocratic Philosophers: A Critical History with a Selection of Texts. 1957. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977.

- Levinas, Emmanuel. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979.
- Levine, George. The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Chatterly. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1981.
- Locke, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Abridged and edited by J. W. Yolton. Don Mills: J. M. Dent, 1965.
- Mandell, Robert. "The Emergence of Los Within Blake's Archetypal Dialectic." Diss. U of Wisconsin 1972.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. Blake's Composite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978.
- "Blake's Radical Comedy." Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on The Four Zoas, Milton and Jerusalem. Eds. Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1973. 281-307.
- "Dangerous Blake." Studies in Romanticism. 21 (1982): 410-16.
- Newton, Isaac. Sir Isaac Newton's Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy and His System of the World. Trans. by Andrew Motte in 1729. The translations revised, and supplied with an historical and explanatory appendix by Florian Cajori. 2 vols. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1966.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. Beyond Good and Evil. Basic Writings of Nietzsche. Ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random, 1966. 191-435.
- "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense." The Portable Nietzsche. Ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann. 1954. New York: Viking, 1972. 42-47.
- Northrop, F. S. C. Introduction. Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science. By Werner Heisenberg. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958. 1-26.
- Pagels, Heinz R. The Cosmic Code: Quantum Physics as the Language of Nature. New York: Bantam, 1984.
- Paley, Morton D. Energy and Imagination: A Study of the Development of Blake's Thought. Oxford: Clarendon, 1970.
- The Continuing City: William Blake's Jerusalem. Oxford: Clarendon, 1983.
- Pinto, Vivian De Sola, ed. The Divine Vision: Studies in the Poetry and Art of William Blake. London: Victor Gollancz, 1957.

- Plato. Plato: Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles.
Trans. R. G. Bury. 1929. London: William Heinemann, 1981. Vol.
9 of Plato in Twelve Volumes. The Loeb Classical Library.
- The Collected Dialogues of Plato Including the Letters.
Eds. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. 1961. Princeton:
Princeton UP, 1971.
- Rajan, Tilottoma. Dark Interpreter: The Discourse of Romanticism.
Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1980.
- Rorty, Richard. Philosophy and The Mirror of Nature. Princeton:
Princeton UP, 1979.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay
On Ontology. Trans. Hazel E. Barnes. 1966. New York: Washington
Square Press, 1973.
- Simmons, Robert E. "Urizen: The Symmetry of Fear." Blake's
Visionary Forms Dramatic. Eds. David V. Erdman and John E.
Grant. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970. 146-173.