Jerusalem’s Song: William Blake as Forerunner to Jung’s Feminist Psychology

Trudy D. Eblen
JERUSALEM'S SONG: WILLIAM BLAKE AS FORERUNNER
TO JUNG'S FEMINIST PSYCHOLOGY

by

Trudy Diane Eblen

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major: English

Under the Supervision of Professor Julia E. Schleck

Lincoln, Nebraska

August, 2019
William Blake's final epic poem, *The Song of Jerusalem*, consists of two textual narratives: the verbal (let me call it the conscious state) and the visual (the unconscious). I primarily focus on the visual, where the eponymous heroine psychically matures along the trajectory of a Jungian process of individuation (somewhat similar to the ancient universal initiation rite of maturation, as most famously described by Joseph Campbell). Preceding in Blake's corpus is a succession of his other female poetic characters, who represent various stages of successful and failed individuation—Thel, Lyca, Oothoon, and Ahania; these culminate in Jerusalem, Blake’s apotheotic female. Her visual story reveals the physicality of her liberating transformation that offers the reader a new feminist paradigm of personal freedom. In both illustrating and writing this archetype, Blake harkens back to the earlier original matriarchal cultures, from a pre-Christian stance. His mythopoetic world of Jerusalem reveals his beliefs in uninhibited sexuality as part of his open admonishment of the Moral Law, in addition to his opprobrium of England’s prevalent industrial dehumanizing methods and its scathing misogynist cultural practices. Ultimately, the apex of my overarching thesis of Blake as a forerunner to feminism and Jung’s analytical psychology occurs when I write of a new interpretation of the standard, patriarchal reading of the *hierogamos* of Jerusalem’s apotheosis in the penultimate plate. Indeed, my personal against-the-grain interpretation shows an *écriture féminine* à la Hélène Cixous, as I argue against the Urizenic standards of linearity and phallogocentrism.
Chapter One considers Blake as consciously oppositional to many of his culture’s patriarchal and rationalist tenets; Chapter Two reveals his and Carl Jung’s commonalities; Chapter Three studies the Romantic era’s female poetic subjects, portrayed by both female and male writers; and Chapter Four analyzes Jerusalem’s entire psychomachia, especially as displayed in the visual text. Blake’s peerless creation of *The Song of Jerusalem*, the most radical feminist poem in the 19th century, secures him and his pantheon’s great heroine a stellar berth in British Romanticism.
In memory of the women in my life who did not have a language to express their injustices, I dedicate this dissertation to my grand-niece, Bianca Lauren Rosenthal, who because of her family and indomitable spirit has known the freedom to express herself with honesty and joy each day. May she continue to realize her freedom that was a long time coming into my life.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My indebtedness and thanks go to the dear friends on my Supervisory Committee. Beginning with my advisor, I thank Julia Schleck, who from the beginning, encouraged me, bolstered my sometimes flagging confidence, and offered a highly original organizational outline for my Primary and Secondary Reading Lists. Her careful attention to bureaucratic minutia on my behalf was impressive, and her guidance through a patriarchally organized argumentative work of this magnitude has been invaluable. She found holes in my argument and relentlessly tried to teach me how to fix them. But most of all, her advice about the necessity for academic correctness in writing about feckless Blakean critics and my sometimes dismissive attitude toward them has challenged me in staggering ways.

I’ve known Steve Behrendt, one of my two readers, for more than thirty years. Studying Blake and female Romantic writers with him was the height of my academic pleasures. His several seminars provided me with an enjoyable and intellectually stimulating oasis away from my teaching career. His constant encouragement to write about what was important and enjoyable was a gift beyond my words to declare. Our deep love for Blake was shared over memorable visits where among other subjects of artists, libraries, and museums we loved, we shared the works of art that led us to tears. Most of all, I thank Steve for his tacit belief in my ability to flesh out a dissertation beginning with a nascent idea of Jerusalem's evolving physicality, portrayed within the poem’s visual text. With Steve I share not only a feminist approach to understanding and appreciating Blake, but also a belief in the power of intuiting the grand visionary’s meaning as a valid form of hermeneutics.
At Julia’s suggestion, I asked Tom Gannon to be a reader on my committee. He agreed.

Since Tom is a birder and Jungian devotee, I showed him Plate 11 of Jerusalem where Blake reveals the heroine as half swan and half woman. He wrote the word “theriomorphic” and suggested that I look it up in the index of Jung’s Complete Works. That became my turning point where Jung and Blake intersected. After signing off on my reading lists, he said he could offer some help with my annotations that, at his firm behest, he expected each to be single-spaced, full paged, and footnoted to boot. He became an indefatigable mentor through many revisions of eighty-eight books’ annotations. Here, I thank him for consistently challenging me to become a better observer, thinker, and writer; however, what is most memorable: when I felt daunted about the huge project that I had taken on at 64, he made me laugh.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 1  
Chapter 1: Oppositional Blake .......................................................................................................... 5  
Chapter 2: Blake and Jung ............................................................................................................... 70  
Chapter 3: Blake and Women ....................................................................................................... 121  
Chapter 4: Jerusalem ....................................................................................................................... 175  
List of Figures .................................................................................................................................. 234  
Works Cited ..................................................................................................................................... 236
INTRODUCTION

Almost two decades ago, a graduate student in Steve Behrendt’s seminar on Blake shared with us something he told her: "It's not so much about solving something in the text as it is about solving something in ourselves." The intimacy of the expression not only remains with me but was one of the main impulses in my pursuing this doctoral work. The other impulses included a fascination with Jung's ideas of symbols and the inner world, or as Kathleen Raine (one of my favorite Blakean scholars) writes, "Jung, neither poet nor prophet, speaks to our common humanity in the soul's universal forgotten language"; the other impulse was the Joycean aesthetic arrest when I first saw Blake's iconic illustration of Jerusalem's Plate 32, "Naked Beauty Displayed."

Two compelling fascinations led me to the study of Blake. The first: Blake loved women. Other poets, novelists, painters, and playwrights have loved women as well obviously, but Blake painted them and wrote about them so reverentially and tenderly—evidence of his highly valued and integrated anima (his “woman within”). No artist ever wrote or drew a trajectory of female individuation as well as Blake. Certainly, several others have poetically written more beautifully of them: Wallace Stevens, Percy Shelley, and Lesley Marmon Silko immediately come to mind, and, yes, there is Shakespeare's apotheotic heroine Cleopatra, but she is more of a cardboard negative anima figure: “epic” but not individuated.

The second fascination, coupled with Blake's poetry and drawings, was my decades' long interest in reading Carl Jung's writings on his psychology of the unconscious¹ (which he designated in Four Archetypes, especially on the archetypes of the mother figure, the anima and animus, and his theory of individuation. My wonderful sister, Kathy Sayers, gave me a

¹ Jung chose to call the new theory “analytical psychology” to distinguish from Freudian psychoanalysis.
copy of Clarissa Pincola Estés’s *Women Who Run with the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype*, and after reading it, I knew that a feminist approach to Jung’s theory of individuation was what I wanted to pursue. However, it was not until I experienced a Joycean aesthetic arrest when I viewed Jerusalem's Plate 32, "Naked Beauty Displayed" that I started to consider the possibilities of how Blake and Jung might intersect. And when I became curious (later, obsessed) with the character of Jerusalem, I discovered that indeed there was a significant connection between these two geniuses. Jung’s is a Romantic version of psychoanalysis (depth psychology), with his emphasis on the unconscious as creative and mythopoeic; in contrast, Freud was much more the Enlightenment rationalist. Thus Jung was arguably more influential on his literary contemporaries and descendants, from Yeats, Joyce, Mann, and Hess to Robert Bly and W. S. Merwin. Thus to find a relationship between Blake’s own myth-making and Jungian psychology is not a difficult stretch.

After reading Blake's long and tedious poem, I started to think about the possibility of another narrative—the visual—because often the two narratives were asynchronic. It occurred to me that one way to discover the character of Jerusalem's narrative would first be to print out all the plates in which she was featured (or at least present). Arranging them in a linear fashion, little by little I began to discover her narrative that, as I've indicated, was not often synchronized with the verbal. This asynchrony led to what I believe is a very original reading of *Jerusalem*.

With Blake's metaphor of the golden ball in hand, I began to follow its thread and by looking, intuiting, and a bit of general musing, I discovered that the engravings of Jerusalem in their linear succession revealed a visual narrative of a Jungian prototype of individuation. Her entire psychic individuation is revealed from the title page on. I realized that Jung's
theory of individuation intersected with Blake's visual and verbal texts, although mostly not in tandem.

But the epiphanic moment occurred when I perhaps wishfully imagined that my process of individuation and hers could be happening simultaneously, which eventually became the *mother lode*: the Blakean hope of reader and text merging into one artistic creation. Could I possibly have found a blueprint of successful psychic maturation? Then, after reading the poem and seeing her heroic journey within the visual text, it occurred to me that Blake had written a trajectory of female individuation through his other poems’ female characters, culminating in Jerusalem, and that he was indeed one of the great forebears of both feminism and Jung’s analytical psychology, and a beloved British Romantic to boot. His transcending figure of Jerusalem was at the epicenter of a potentially liberating heroic spirit of peerless dimensions. Undoubtedly, both female and male poets during the Romantic era write of females who, through their arduous trials, so adroitly become beautiful heroines, but no poet since the Medieval illustrators has combined a visual narrative with a verbal (poetic) one. It became for me a like a film script of dynamic actions and brilliant colors, eventually leading to my thesis that Blake wrote *Jerusalem* as a kind of handbook, if you will, of individuation—essentially a liberation theory for women.

To argue that Blake is both a forerunner to feminism and Jungian analytical psychology, my dissertation takes the following form: Chapter One considers Blake as consciously oppositional to many of his culture’s tenets; Chapter Two reveals his and Jung’s commonalities; Chapter Three studies the Romantic era’s female poetic subjects, portrayed by both female and male writers; and Chapter Four analyzes Jerusalem’s entire psychomachia, displayed primarily in the visual text. Blake’s creation of *The Song of Jerusalem,*
the most radical feminist poem of the 19th century, secures him and his pantheon’s heroine a Stellar berth in British Romanticism.
CHAPTER 1

OPPOSITIONAL BLAKE

I must Create a System. or be enslav’d by another Mans
I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to Create.
William Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 10, 20-1

And we sail on, away, afar
Without a course, without a star
But, by the instinct of sweet music driven.
Percy Shelley, “My Soul is Like an Enchanted Boat”
17-19

Blake is the alchemist; Jerusalem, the gold; and her apotheosis, the philosopher’s stone. And, in large part, for Blake to have achieved this accomplishment, I will argue that because of his \textit{modus operandi}—his conscious opposition—he goes against the grain of the Romantic Era’s status quo’s precepts.\footnote{Blake’s idea of a “Mental Fight” is an ongoing state of mind. And to maintain it, one must continually be making a choice between what is true and what is not true, or as Stephen Behrendt writes, “Whenever a person rejects error and embraces Truth a ‘last judgment’ passes on that individual. And each of us is \textit{required} to be continually making such apocalyptic choices. We must always, in that sense, be going against the grain. It’s the price of maintaining our liberty . . . ” (personal correspondance).} Within the following areas, his revolutionary and visionary sensibility thrills us: the multivalent texts, reorganization of time, pre-Christian stance, body monism, his views on gender and sexuality, reinscription of femininity, and theory and practice of book production. All of these intellectual and artistic accomplishments set Blake in a unique area of aesthetic and critical consideration and separate him from other female and male poets of this rich era; however, his imagination becomes even more compelling when I argue my overarching thesis that he becomes an uncommon forerunner of both a feminist ideology and a Jungian depth-psychology.

Here, then, I will 1) survey what critics have observed about Blake’s ideological stances and actual practices (although the following chapters contain many other topic
specific, critical responses), 2) explain how my ideas on each topic either differ from theirs or extend their work in new ways, and 3) show how my ideas lead into my argument’s thesis because Blake is nothing less than a game changer in British Romanticism. I will argue that, within and beyond British Romanticism, Blake's mythopoeic *Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion* changed the game and still has the potential to change us.

After devoting more than sixteen years to his final epic poem, *Jerusalem*, Blake—as an old, sick, and dying man—completed his apotheotic work about an archetypal heroine. His poem as old as time (just one more quest journey), consisting of two texts—a visual and a verbal—is as fresh and dynamic now as the first day he began composing it in 1804. After all, he did address it to “future readers.”

So we, as his future readers, might begin by considering several critics’ writing regarding my against the grain topics and/or their experience of reading and studying Blake in general and *Jerusalem* in particular, or what possible maps of comprehension they offer us, or as is often the case with especially the male critics, how they fail (often with a hubristic attitude and a general state of incomprehensibility) to contribute to the ongoing body of scholarship within Blakean studies and/or offer us any insights into Blake’s consciously oppositional creativity and production.

Before considering the various critics, let me cite a ludicrous comment by an old-guard Blakean critic. Unequivocally, the most outrageous critical comment, read *boast*, is by none other than the biographical critic G. E. Bentley, Jr., who in his *William Blake’s Conversations: A Compilation, Concordance, and Rhetorical Analysis*, writes on the publication page, “Records all the conversations the poet is known to have held with his living friends and patrons and with spirits.” Bentley’s quoting the spirits is a stretch for our imaginations, but mostly we wonder how he quoted them.
Substantially contrary is one by Yeats, one of Blake's earliest appreciative critics (and whom W. P. Witcutt would later agree with) on the following point, who writes in his homage-like brief essay "William Blake and the Imagination" that Blake “spoke things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him” (168). Yeats, who exhaustively wrote about Blake (but oddly not about Jerusalem), understands his genius, mystery, myth-making, and against the grain creations and sings his praises:

There have been men who loved the future like a mistress, and the future mixed her breath into their breath and shook her hair about them, and hid them from the understanding of their times. William Blake was one of these men, and if he spoke confusedly and obscurely it was because he spoke things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him. He announced the religion of art, of which no man dreamed in the world about him; and he understood it more perfectly than the thousands of subtle spirits who have received its baptism in the world about us, because, in the beginning of important things—in the beginning of love, in the beginning of the day, in the beginning of any work, there is a moment when we understand more perfectly than we understand again until all is finished.

(“William Blake and the Imagination” 176)

Yeats describes Blake making a religion of art, “preaching against the Philistines,” and decrying lethargies as unholy in the same scathing way as Jung, who in his Symbols of Transformation, writes that idleness is the most violent passion and the most mischievous (174), which, in a contrary way, reminds me of Blake’s aphorism “Exuberance is Beauty.” Agreeing with Witcutt, Yeats wrote that Blake “spoke things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him” (168), so he first expressed himself in the visual.
Interestingly, Yeats here writes of the beauty of Vala and ignores Jerusalem. Yeats and Blake both shared a marvelous love of the body, and Blake expressed his ultimate expression of body monism in *Jerusalem* and Yeats’s in his “The Thinking of the Body.” Yeats writes, “Art bids us touch and taste and hear and see the world, and shrinks from what Blake calls mathematic form, from every abstract thing, from all that is of the brain only, from all that is not a fountain jetting from the entire hopes, memories, and sensations of the body” (212).

The significance of Yeats to my work includes too many connections to write of here, but I will state a few more. Both Blake and Yeats not only celebrated the body, they also positioned it at the center of their art. Additionally, they concerned themselves with the making of one’s soul. In Yeats’s essay, he writes that is why we read the great poets—and certainly Jung’s writings on individuation come alive in the study of Jerusalem’s *becoming* a soul. Both Yeats and Blake believed in, revered, and understood the essential nature of the physical body regarding beauty, pleasure (both sensual and sensuous), and memory. Both had a deep awareness and understanding of the overarching energy of the libido that serves our link with divinity and therefore transcendence. After all, it is Blake’s Jerusalem who is the only character in the poem who can transcend the world and the worldly (the verbal text) through what Suzanne Sklar calls her “angelmorphic sensuality.” Jerusalem’s narrative is revealed and discoverable through the visual text—the body of the visual.

In his Blake Seminar in the spring of 1999, Steven Behrendt commented, “Reading *Jerusalem* is fiendishly difficult,” but with Morton Paley’s critical apparatus in place

---

3 I have no idea why. Maybe he did not read *Jerusalem*.

4 This will probably require more explanation later, since if “soul” = anima, this allows male chauvinistic Jungians to read her as just an anima figure to Albion. Possibly. However, Witcutt in *Blake, A Psychological Study* writes in a footnote, “Jung, ‘Psychological Types,’ substitutes ‘anima’ for ‘soul’; which is better used as the equivalent of ‘psyche.’ The word ‘anima’ is always used in his later lectures” (93).

5 It was not until I read Suzanne Sklar's *Blake's Jerusalem as Visionary Theatre: Entering the Divine Body* that the reading became less fiendish. She writes that it is easier to understand the epic poem if viewed as a play where
(annotations, references) in his volume for the William Blake Trust, published in 1991, the reading is less fiendishly so. Paley has been writing about Blake for many years, but here his writing is immediately relevant to the poem and its visual art. Therefore, this critical edition is significant. First, this edition of Jerusalem is important because it is a facsimile of Copy E, the only colored one by Blake (the other four were monochrome). Second, Paley’s lucid commentary was the first to be done on all the plates. Although the annotations are crafted with meticulous scholarship, they sometimes fall into the ludicrous, especially when he cites other critics such as Keynes, who notes that, on the frontispiece plate, “the tops of the sleeper’s wings suggest the pincers of an earwig” (132). On this plate we have the resplendent Jerusalem being illustrated in her various stages of individuation, and the mention of her wing tips resembling an earwig’s pincers is a stretch at least, absurd at most, and obviously erudition in its most minute particular. To experience the sublimity of Jerusalem requires no annotations: after all, Blake would have adamantly rejected the notion of annotations being helpful, since he primarily wanted his reader to experience the poem; however, Paley’s annotated edition is the definitive go-to from which to study all the plates for a few reasons: 1) It is the facsimile of the only colored copy; 2) given the structural binary that is the poem, I can view both the complete visual and verbal texts; 3) his peerless annotations on each plate and in his copious references provide a good base camp from which to conduct my research; and 4) his comments on Blake’s process of drawing, characters recite their lines. I also agree with Behrendt that it is not to be read as a chronological narrative but rather as a multi-layered drama.

6 Paley favors the pre-eminent Blakean cadre of scholars—all male: Essick, Wicksteed, and Erdman.
7 “Blake’s Night Thoughts: An Exploration of the Fallen World”; The Continuing City: Blake’s Jerusalem; and William Blake, to mention only a few.
engraving, coloring, and printing provide an initial understanding of Blake’s theory and practice of book production.\(^8\)

The biographical critic Peter Ackroyd, in his *Blake*,\(^9\) writes tenderly about the widely misunderstood British Romantic genius. Ackroyd gets a lot of the visual text. He (who also wrote biographies of Eliot and Dickens) understands Blake's artistic vision and gives the reader both black and white as well as color illustrations of the paintings and engravings to bolster his arguments. Ackroyd begins his hefty biographical tome (almost 400 pages) with Blake’s writing on his portrayal of nude characters:

\[
\text{O how couldst thou deform those}
\]

\[
\text{Beautiful proportions}
\]

\[
\text{Of life \& person for as the Person so is his life proportioned.}
\]

Significantly, Ackroyd here reveals his understanding and appreciation for Blake's body monism and aesthetic philosophy. And Blake urges us to study every drawn lineament—for there lie clues to the imaginary characters' intrapsychic conditions.

As an impressive chronicler of Blake's external life in London (the poet preferred cats to dogs), Ackroyd is also a formidable writer of the revolutionary artist's inner life as well, elucidating both Blake's progression as a creative genius and his evolving philosophy. Clearly, he appreciates Blake's immense vision as well as his ability to give it a verbal and visual form. *Blake* is Ackroyd's testament to this.

When Ackroyd simply and profoundly writes of *Jerusalem*, he understands Blake’s revolutionary challenges: “The difficulty lies only in his attempt to create dramatic characters out of human faculties and instincts, but he did so because there was no other language to

\(^8\) Robert Essick in *Printmaking* writes, “*Jerusalem* is as epic in its range of graphic technique as it is in its poetry” (618).

\(^9\) Stephen Behrendt calls it “an immensely readable biography” (private conversation).
name or define his understanding of the psyche” (Blake 319). Furthermore, within the visual, it is easier to be aware that Blake is writing of the psychomachia because in looking at the plates, we can see that characters are making love on top of a floating water lily, flying in the azure skies, swimming in the water, and emerging from and commingling with the other characters. Little is static, and the multiple variations on a theme impart its rhythm of dynamism. We have in these colored plates, a world of dream-like proportions and scenes—Blake’s vision of the Jungian unconscious’ timeless realm. Ackroyd understands Blake’s vision—all four folds of it.¹⁰

Notably, Susanne Sklar is one of the few feminist critics of Jerusalem, who in her 2011 publication of Blake’s Jerusalem as Visionary Theatre: Entering the Divine Body, devotes her book’s entire study to Jerusalem’s character. Sklar, a former Cumner Fellow at Oxford, summarily proclaims, “Blake wrote Jerusalem for no less a purpose than to transform individuals and societies, to create a world in which forgiveness can be a spiritual and social structuring principle . . . . where transformation and forgiveness are not just possible; they are inevitable—and disconcerting” (vii). Understanding the cosmology of Jerusalem, she lauds Blake’s sense of erotic joy and how it is “integral to human divinity” (32). After struggling with the hermeneutics of the poem for years, she suddenly realized the poem has an operating manual, which she discovered when she read within the text that the poem is suited to “the mouth of a true orator” (J3). Thus, her highly original approach to the poem is literally to view it as theatre—visionary theatre, unconstrained by time and space, operating on both the microcosmic stage (within individuals, psychologically and spiritually, both human and divine) and the macrocosmic stage (within society, ecology, politics). The poem

¹⁰ Fourfold vision reduced to a simple explanation: Single vision—Newton’s sleep, linear thinking, the scientist. Twofold—Relationships (nature), the theorist. Threefold—unconscious, memory, intuition, the humanist. Fourfold—integration, the artist (Palmer 22-25).
becomes a living thing, hence not academic (state of Ulro) but rather imaginative (Eternity/Eden). She sees this visionary theatre's action happening simultaneously—both sequentially and synchronically—and all aspects of the poem as fluid: "time, place, perception, and character" (3). In this way, she advances my argument of Blake’s against the grain idea of reorganization of time. Like improvisational jazz music or viewing a cubistic painting, there is both a linear theme happening simultaneously with other views/sounds. (As a disclaimer of sorts, Ms. Sklar does admit, “I am not arguing that Jerusalem is visionary theatre or trying to demonstrate a literary theory about it; I am using this interpretive tool to elucidate the text” [3].) She realizes that by reading aloud and studying the characters’ lines, the poem suddenly makes sense to her. It comes alive with a surging energy that surely Blake intended, for early in his writing he declared, "Beauty is energy." (Stephen Behrendt asserts a similar claim in Reading Blake.) Her book consists of two parts: 1) perspectives, dramatis personae, settings; and 2) commentary, through which she reveals how by viewing the poem (Blake titles it a “song”) as theatre, entering the Divine Body becomes ontological rather than metaphorical.

Her monographic argument is important in five areas: 1) She interprets the plates with Jerusalem as the central figure; 2) she sharply excoriates past critics, specifically Dortort, who sees Jerusalem as static, Paley, who sees her as passive, and Brenda Webster, who denies all female sexuality and erotic joy in the poem; 3) she expounds Jerusalem’s development into goddess/whore through the poem’s four chapters; 4) she writes of Jerusalem’s mythopoetic antecedents: women in the Bible, Eve, various virgins, Bathsheba, Sophia; and 5) she describes the several main sources for Blake’s writing of the poem: The Book of Revelation (especially with its totality of redemption), Rosicrucians, Boehme (Blake’s prophetic progenitor), Freemasonry, alchemical texts (with their theatrical and visionary
elements), and Blake’s primary inspiration—*King Lear*, obviously relating Albion to Lear and Jerusalem to Cordelia.

Additionally, feminist and psychoanalytic critic Diana Hume George grasps Blake’s mythopoeia and comprehensively understands that Jerusalem in *Jerusalem The Emanation of the Giant Albion* holds the spotlight—after all, Blake did not title his epic *The Song of Los*. As she so eloquently writes in *Blake and Freud*,

> Jerusalem is the emanation of everything human for Blake, the mediatrix between humanity and regenerated nature, the ever-present potential for movement and growth. She is the artist’s vision, the poet’s words, and the lover’s love, the completely humanized form of everything. (231)

When a colleague asked her, “But why aren’t you working on Blake and Jung?” she answered that Blake is more closely aligned to Freud than Jung: Freud’s empiricism vs. Jung’s antiempiricism, Freud’s theory of analysis vs. Jung’s theory of synthesis. Identifying herself as a feminist, she realizes her study is not compatible with mainstream feminist psychologists, who reject Freud; however, George makes a notable exception to Juliet Mitchell.\(^{11}\) Her psychoanalytic study of Blake is grounded in Northrop Frye’s *Fearful Symmetry* as she makes the strong distinction between how her purpose shows mimesis is prophetic, and Bloom’s shows how prophecy is mimetic. Her most compelling reason for choosing Freud over Jung is as follows: “Freud was . . . the first to acknowledge that he was preceded in his psychological discoveries by the poets and artists whose works embody psychic phenomena” (27). Confirming that women represented the majority of Freud’s clientele, she finds his opinion of women seldom being worthy of men alarmingly disingenuous, especially since he believed in “original bisexuality.” Her study concludes with quoting Freud, “The

\(^{11}\) Note: Her study is thirty-five years old.
business of analysis is to secure the best possible psychological conditions for the
functioning of the ego; when this has been done analysis has accomplished its task” (228), to
which George responds, “That best possible functioning ideally included unrestricted
capacity for enjoyment and productivity, but this was seldom the case.” However, since she
aligns herself more with Freud than Jung, her argument generally counters mine.

Another Freudian feminist, Brenda Webster, generally ignores Jerusalem’s
psychomachia; however, when Webster does writes about her, she views Jerusalem as a
second-string player rather than a primary one. However, she lauds Blake, as she writes,
“Not only is he profoundly in touch with the unconscious, but he also reveals it at a level of
reality that even the most courageous minds have not been able to reach” (8). She claims
that Harold Bloom’s “theory of Poetic Influence” parallel hers and concludes that the
“influence is Oedipal struggle on a literary plane” (7). Declaring that Blake’s central
psychomachic struggle is with his Oedipal dilemma, she writes that “Blake was
psychosexually involved in his art to the highest degree, and he suffered, as do his tormented
characters, from the self-division of ‘shame and doubt,’” which she believes Freudian
analysis tries to address (3). From the 1930s on, Jung’s analytical psychology was gaining
ground as a valid critical approach, but psychoanalytical/archetypal criticism is not part of
her argument, and she fails to mention Jung once even as she writes that Blake’s writing “is
an astonishingly translucent description of the unconscious” (8). Therefore, she thinks that
“Freudian psychoanalysis seems the most productive for studying Blake” (4). Looking in

9Both of their comments aptly apply to the ending of Jerusalem, where the eponymous heroine, who after
peacefully joining the world’s countries, is shown in Plate 99 in a possible *conjunctio oppositorum* or in a
Campbellian fashion, “following her bliss.”
13 And this would be the “standard” Jungian reading, too (as Blake’s anima figure).
14 Can we rightly assume Weber refers to Milton as Blake’s father figure?
15 Webster goes on to write, “Not only is he profoundly in touch with the unconscious, but he also reveals it at
a level of reality that even the most courageous minds have not been able to reach” (8).
depth at the Freudian mainstream subjects of penis envy, desire for incest, repression, and the Oedipus Complex, Webster mines what she calls Blake's struggle between a free libidinally driven existence and one based on the Christian principle of self-sacrifice. Her close “reading” of many plates lends her position much credulity; moreover, she cogently argues that Blake is working out his inner struggles through the portrayal of his characters. Sadly, she mainly emphasizes the male characters and is somewhat neglectful of Blake's females. Her dogged attempt to understand Blake's psychic development through the creation of his characters shows best when she writes of his later works: *Vala* (later *The Four Zoas*), *Milton*, and finally *Jerusalem*. The chapter titled “Jerusalem” focuses (again) mostly on the male characters. Therefore, her argument lends little if any support to any of my against-the-grain topics.

Within *Jerusalem* Blake vociferously rejected Enlightenment rationalism or the “rationalist ideology of abstraction” (40). But Vincent O'Keefe writes, “*Jerusalem* does not fit into Jerome McGann's rubric of the romantic ideology of transcendence” (40). Instead, he claims that Blake can better be understood through a methodology of new historicism rather than through a romantic ideology. Citing McGann's book *Romantic Ideology*, O'Keefe maintains that “the idea that poetry, or even consciousness, can set one free of the ruins of history and culture is the grand illusion of every Romantic poet” (40). The Romantic ideology of transcendence or what McGann names “false consciousness” reveals itself at the heart of what O'Keefe vehemently criticizes. O'Keefe insists that reading Blake's idea of the imaginative perception as overthrowing reason is absurd because, by poem's end (Plate 98),

> . . . they conversed together in Visionary forms dramatic

---

16 This is a general Freudian failure (including Bloom).
17 From Webster, I surprisingly learned of another plate with Jerusalem in it that I had not noticed before. Plate 21 shows Jerusalem and two other females being whipped by a male figure. All are naked.
Creating exemplars of Memory and of Intellect

They are sexy and smart. Moreover, O'Keefe questions why Blake even addresses rationalist ideology and concludes that Blake becomes a precursor to Marx. After all, because of the hand-engraving, illustrating, and binding, Blake ultimately rejects commodification and capitalist reproductions. In sum, O'Keefe concludes his article with a bit of a compliment to McGann when he writes, “Ultimately, Blake's *Jerusalem* bolsters McGann's new historicist doctrine that ‘poems are not mirrors and they are not lamps, they are social acts’” (47). Therefore, O'Keefe replaces the traditional critiques of Romanticism with the new historicist methodology of McGann.

New historicist David Erdman’s annotations for the individual plates featuring Jerusalem in *The Illuminated Blake* have little, if anything, to do with her character and much less with her characterization. I am always nonplussed when most critics (and here I mean both female and male) repeatedly skirt around Jerusalem, noticing only her hem. From the beginning of my study of *Jerusalem*, I have been aware that the vast majority of the critics do not realize that Blake’s apothecotic work, in one multivalent reading, focuses on Jerusalem’s transformation. Because their focus is primarily on the eventual redemption of Los, even Erdman's comments reveal almost no understanding or insight into her character.

Writing as a new historicist, Saree Makdisi states early in his *William Blake and the Impossible History of the 1790s* that little has been written about Blake’s most frequently used word: “joy.” He introduces his book: “This is a book about many things having to do with

---

18 One wonders, is McGann's New Historicist reading of British Romanticism in general cynical?

19 Saree writes, “Scholars have never really known what to do with the joy in—and of—Blake’ work. Such joy has been left for the private appreciation of individual readers, rather than for pubic, scholarly or critical understanding, unless it can somehow be tamed into one of those pseudo-Jungian narratives of transhistorical drives and abstract ethereal passions that sometimes make their way into Blake criticism—drives and passions so abstract that no living human being could possibly experience them” (xiii).
history and politics and the resistance to mass conformity, to the brutality of capitalist monoculture, to modern imperialism, to the beginnings of what we now call ‘globalization,’ which Blake identified over two hundred years ago as a tendency toward ‘universal empire.’ But it is also a book about the kinds of joy and love that we encounter in Blake’s work” (xiv).

Makdisi writes about all of Blake’s illuminated books written in the 1790s: *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, *America: A Prophecy*, and *The Book of Urizen*. New historicists generally have placed Blake in the context of the culture of modernization, with its focus on the sovereign individual and her/his secular freedom to choose other than the prescribed and inherited socially imposed moral law. However, Blake in his antinomian stance warned against the closed realm of subjective self-sufficiency because it eventually leads to alienation, isolation, and narcissism. Opening up the five senses—the organs of perception—is to resist organization in the realm of religion, politics, commerce, etc. Makdisi seamlessly combines the social, political, religious, and cultural paradigms through which Blake lived and explains how, in Blake’s artistic medium, he was able to give us his philosophical thoughts on the harmful effects of the subjective sovereignty of the individual.

Makdisi’s study identifies Blake’s destabilizing of time and makes possible to see Jerusalem’s visual narrative as a reading/viewing through a historical lens. But Blake’s

---

20 Makdisi used not only Stephen Behrendt’s book’s title *Reading Blake* for his article, published in *The William Blake Quarterly*, but disrespectfully used a considerable amount of Behrendt’s writing without any acknowledging reference to Behrendt.

21 In the 1790s, the two opposing camps were Edmund Burke, et al., representing the hegemonic old regime; and the radicals, consisting of Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, Tom Paine, and Blake, the “prophet against empire,” as Erdman calls him.

22 Additionally, within these books Blake is experimenting with the production of books consisting of copperplate engravings. As a producer he finds himself wrestling with the idea of the assembly line or the repeated impressions of a given image—thus with Blake there are often, instead of an “original,” several “copies” since the colorings vary from plate to plate of the same image. Thus he was not part of a tradition he vehemently railed against: the modernity of mass production, and if carried to the extreme: the dark Satanic mills.
destabilization of time, by repeating images and figures in the succession of poems, results in even fuller characterizations and philosophical tenets. And since the illustrations sometimes do not synchronize with the narrative, I am challenged to mediate not only between the visual and the narrative texts, which occur not only often and ostensibly on different trajectories (nonlinear and linear), but also between one poem and another, and even further as Makdisi writes—to the “world beyond” (182).

Let us now turn to Steven Behrendt, who understands Blake’s cosmology with its “sensual and sexual agenda and activities” (409) and reorganization of time. He offers us, through broad scholarship in and teaching of British Romanticism, a concise guide, reading somewhat like a Blakean primer and offering an overview of Blake’s polysemic language and his “multipotentiated visual text.” Much like Sklar’s advice for a reader “to experience” the text rather than “to reason,” we see again an anti-Urizenic approach to reading and viewing Blake. Furthermore, Behrendt subtly mocks a reader-response approach wherein a reader’s predisposed response comes up short in an earnest study of Blake. At the heart of this small book, Reading William Blake (176 pages plus extensive endnotes), are the dynamics of a highly inventive reading and viewing process. As he writes, “I have tried to outline some of the ways in which the intellectual and imaginative transaction proceeds between author and reader via the medium of the illuminated text as physical artifact” (viii). In a graduate seminar on Blake, Behrendt said, “Reading Jerusalem is fiendishly difficult,” possibly demonstrating Blake’s dictum that, like Milton, he was of the devil’s party without knowing it. This potent little book transforms the fiendishly difficult into an enjoyably imaginative and potentially transformative marathon, winding the Golden Thread to heaven: Jerusalem’s gate—an erotic reading at best. Behrendt, above all, teaches the reader to study well the

23 Although all critics’ often “learned” responses entail such a subjectivity; e.g., a Christian critic reading Blake.
“minute particulars” with one’s imagination, heart, and intellect. He understands all of
Blake’s against the grain tenets and applauds them unremittingly—year after year after year.\(^{24}\)
His writing on the multivalence of Blake’s texts is of significant import, so I will begin my
study of against the grain topics with Behrendt’s “multi-stability”\(^{25}\) view.

The following several topics reveal Blake’s evolving feminist ideology and prescient
understanding of Jung’s depth psychology. Furthermore, they elucidate how Blake evolves as
a forerunner to both. Two against-the-grain topics I have included in the Appendix
following this chapter (Revolutionary Anger and Prosody) because they are relevant subjects
but not necessarily vital parts of my thesis. The topics of Multivalent Texts, Reorganization
of Time, Pre-Christian Stance, Body Monism, Gender and Sexuality, Reinscription of
Femininity, and Book Production all contribute to his entire consciously oppositional
mindset.\(^ {26}\) The chapter’s topics all support Jungian depth psychology (Chapter 2), his
evolving feminist ideology, as evidenced within the chronological trajectory of female
individuation (Chapter 3), and ultimately Jerusalem’s process of individuation, the core of
Jungian depth psychology (Chapter 4).

The first topic—the multivalence of the texts—comprises the structure that holds all
the other topics, which when combined funnel into and fuel my main argument: Blake is an
uncommon forerunner of both a feminist ideology and a Jungian depth psychology. Within
the multivalent textual structure, we find the second topic: Blake’s reorganization of time,
where we find the unconscious realm occurring in the visual, and his feminist ideology
occurring in the verbal. Within his reorganization of time, he creates the two time zones in
which Jerusalem’s collective unconscious, containing the archetypes, finds expression in the

\(^ {24}\) Three are enough.
\(^ {25}\) The word Behrendt often uses for multivalency.
\(^ {26}\) Steve Behrendt suggested this concept to me.
visual, and the narrative of her individuation finds expression in the verbal. Within the visual, we find the third topic: Blake’s pre-Christian stance, reflected in the fourth topic: his body monism, where we find his against the grain views of the fifth topic: his revolutionary views of gender and sexuality, which naturally lead to the sixth topic: his reinscription of femininity. All of these topics are possible because of my final topic—the seventh: his theory and practice of book production.

The combined topics’ evidence of Blake’s being a forerunner of both a feminist ideology and Jungian depth psychology occurs somewhat in separate parallel fashion, although the timeless (the visual) and the timebound (the verbal) are not happening at precisely the same time, obviously, because he is reorganizing time into two distinct “zones.” It looks something like this: the non-linear/non-chronological within the visual (the timeless), and in contrast, the linear organization/chronology, if you will, within the verbal (the timebound). But these two “time zones” exist together, side by side so to speak, on one engraved plate. We find within one plate the two different time zones in much the same way that we each as individuals contain a timeless unconscious while we exist within a time-bound consciousness. To illustrate, we see in Figure 1 Jerusalem’s personality (or psyche) totally disintegrated as Blake illustrates her being metaphorically squashed by the verbal text (reality) and sitting in the midst of her four Zoas’s fallen heads, occurring within her psyche/unconscious.27 Witcutt, in his *Blake, a Psychological Study*, concisely argues this, although contextually with Blake’s personality.28

---

27 Jerusalem’s reality of the verbal text, both at the top and bottom of the plate, symbolically squashes her, so much, in fact, that her head cannot be pressed further into her already compromised shoulder.

28 Oh, do I detect another multivalent reading: Blake’s individuation process reflected by Jerusalem’s?
For another way to understand the poem’s two time zones, let us consider the poem’s paired binaries, including unconscious/conscious, timeless/timebound, non-linear narrative/linear narrative, visual/verbal, world of archetypes/world of experience, and as suggested by Sklar: microcosmic stage/macrocosmic stage. The six topics develop as a result of the seventh topic: Blake’s theory and practice of book production, which comes full circle: first, the book becomes the body of the poem; second, the poem becomes Jerusalem’s body; third, her body becomes the poem; and finally, the poem becomes the dual expression of a feminist ideology and a Jungian depth psychology. Blake’s reinscription of femininity, the sixth topic, finds its ultimate embodiment in Jerusalem’s character as a liberated woman (he proclaims her name to mean “liberty”) who achieves individuation (the core concept of Jungian depth psychology). Figure 2 contains the least text of any plate, and Blake has engraved it with “JERUSALEM IS NAMED LIBERTY,” which is not visible in the illustration here:
The eponymous heroine becomes what a century later Walt Whitman would astonishingly express as follows:

and your very flesh shall be a great poem, and have the richest fluency, not only in its words, but in the silent lines of its lips and face, and between the lashes of your eyes, and in every motion and joint of your body (11)

The book becomes the visual and verbal narratives, becomes Jerusalem’s character, becomes the poem, and finally—she becomes the liberated archetype. Her conscious world provides a space for her to turn inwards to her unconscious, so she can proceed thru her process of individuation. And it is her successful achievement of it that enables her to, as T. S. Eliot writes, “after all our travels, arrive where we started and know the place for the first time” (Four Quartets 19)—her apotheosis. The poem, her body—one and the same, or as Yeats, who probably loved Blake as much as I, writes, “How can we know the dancer from the dance?
**Multivalent texts**

One contemporary feminist stance towards Jung finds his analytical psychology as an important means to empower women. For if women understand how the process of the “psychic journey” can ultimately free them from all inner and outer forces/constraints, they can apply it to create positive changes that ultimately transform themselves. A psychically balanced life understands equality and knows how to rail against inequality. Jung’s theory, which is one of many theories of the mind, applies to all variations of gender. Feminist Jungian analysts/scholars have written extensively for decades about his depth psychology and have insightfully applied it to centuries of mythological literature to bring about an understanding of humankind’s archetypal experiences. And Jungian analysts, through a dialogical relationship with their analysands, reiterate and recast many of Jung’s basic tenets in their practices with a variety of gender expressions today. Granted, some feminist scholars tend to be particularly critical of Jung’s work, since it assumes an essentialist gender divide (“male brains” and “female brains”) and assumes this as a physiological/psychological fact rather than something that Jung himself is imposing. But at last, this gendered criticism in no way affects the gist of my arguments that follow.

To begin our understanding of how Blake evolved a feminist ideology and wrote of a feminist individuation à la Jung, let us look again at his apotheotic *Jerusalem*, where the simultaneous multivalent readings challenge us with their original and significantly against the grain constructions, unmatched in the Romantic Era. Within *Jerusalem*, some post-

---

29 Dr. Julia Schleck suggested this to me in an email of 06.07.19.
30 Some critics never intellectually progressed from Blake’s earlier and occasionally misogynistic attitude to an understanding of his great honorific homage to feminism. Namely *Jerusalem*.
31 Native American author Lesley Marmon Silko comes to mind as the only author who also employs the visual with the verbal. Medieval texts, with their colored and illuminated pages, also contain both texts; however, the visual text is more decorative and often confined to the borders rather than expressing a separate textual narrative. As she writes, “I am intrigued with photographs which don’t tell you what you are supposed to notice, which don’t illustrate the text, which don’t serve the text, but which form a part of the field of vision
modernists refer to the multivalent readings as multistability interpretations, and they give Deleuze's rhizomatic critical theory a run for its money. But because of a need to delimit here, let us look at three ways of reading the text: 1) reading the visual text as the "main text" (specifically the plates featuring Jerusalem, with Jerusalem’s ego and its process of individuation, which is a feminist Jungian approach; 2) reading the verbal text with Jerusalem as Blake's archetypal anima—similar to Ahania in The Book of Urizen and Ololon in Milton, which is a traditional/masculinist Jungian/Cambellian approach; and 3) codeterminately reading both the visual and the verbal texts as a process of individuation. Of course, these are just a few possible readings of Jerusalem, focusing mostly on the eponymous heroine; however, there is also Los’s process of redemption from a Christian perspective, contrasted to Jerusalem’s heroic quest, considered from a pre-Christian stance since she unequivocally is not a symbolic Eve figure.

As with any work of art, we usually accept where we are when we read the text (or visual, also, in Blake's case). This is not to say that it is necessarily a reader-response reading, but rather a reading coming from a place of response from our worldview, our intellectual level of critical appreciation, and the specific stage in our individual psychic development. To understand a work of art, especially Blake’s intellectually, emotionally, and graphically sophisticated 100-plate poem, we might ask ourselves: How do we initially feel when we view Figure 3, in which we see three females pulling something out of a tortured-looking male? After musing, we can initially attempt to intuit its "meaning" and then secondarily intellectualize its polysemic language. Are the females winding up Blake's golden string, for the reading of the text and thereby become part of the reader’s experience of the text” (Sacred Water 80). The duality of texts and the reader’s codeterminancy with the author are but one of the similarities between Silko and Blake.
disemboweling the male (the undoing of the patriarchal body), or both?

We can read the plate's accompanying verbal text for some clues, and for this particular plate, the visual and the verbal texts share no common meaning, although Sklar, Wicksteed, and Paley generally view the visual text as Vala and her daughters, representing the Feminine, the individual, and pulling the umbilical cord or rather unweaving Albion, the universal man, representing the state. Within this visual metaphor, as Hélène Cixous writes about in her “The Laugh of the Medusa,” the females are shattering the “framework of institutions” (1954).

Before we continue further, perhaps a thumbnail synopsis of Jerusalem is in order, although we come to understand the poem through our experience of it. The multivalent text I will focus on is the individuation process of Jerusalem. By viewing the visual text (mostly in a linear fashion of the twenty-five plates, where Jerusalem is featured—Copy E),

---

32 To contextualize, Blake’s golden string refers to this: “I give you the end of a golden string, / Only wind it into a ball: It will lead you in at Heavens gate, / Built in Jerusalem’s wall.” The provenance of the golden string has several sources: 1) Ariadne, whose ball of thread would help lead Theseus out of the Labyrinth of Knossos; and 2) the Upanishads, which describe it as linking “this world to the other world and all beings. . . . The thread, therefore, may be understood as an archetypal symbol of the life principle stretching through time as a means of conscious orientation and a guide to understanding” (Stevens Ariadne’s Clue 4).
we gain a sense of how her psychic transformation occurs. The hundred-plate poem, divided into four chapters, looks like this, as explained by Suzanne Sklar:

Chapter 1: Jerusalem wails compassionately about her abandonment by Albion; Chapter 2: Jerusalem lives in furnaces, veiled, trampled, and defeated; Chapter 3: She goes mad; and Chapter 4: She waxes uncannily prophetic, and faces the great dragon Vala, her own shadow. (84)

Simultaneously, the multivalent verbal text elucidates Los’s journey of the hero within Albion’s fallen world, with Jerusalem as the female protagonist, Los the male protagonist, and Albion the anti-Christ. Transformation and forgiveness (promulgated by Jerusalem) are the two main concepts.  

Within the verbal narrative, we discover a densely layered epic poem, with its “multi-stability” revealing several multivalent readings occurring seemingly separately, yet simultaneously. Similarly, and to illustrate: when we synchronically view, let us say, Picasso’s portrait of his lover Dora Maar, we can see three different views of her face all at the same time; however, we also see them separately in profile to the left, to the right, and to the full-frontal view, where the three become one. The multivalent readings happening simultaneously are similar to those Picasso expresses in his cubistic style of painting.

33 To understand the bare bones of Blake’s epic mythology, we need to understand his organizing structure of his four zoas and the characters who personify them: reason (Urizen), emotion (Luvah), primal drives (Tharmas), and prophetic imagination (Los). Interestingly, these faculties are similar to Jung’s quaternity of personality: thinking, feeling, intuition, and sensing.
We see in the visual text of Figure 5, the title page—sequentially and synchronically—Blake’s conflated depiction of Jerusalem’s entire cosmogenic cycle: awakening (birth), stages of maturation, and rebirth, happening separately and all at the same time—all vital to the understanding of Blake’s visual text, although the combined experience of visual and textual allows for the greatest polysemy/multivalency. For in the visual we see the henopoetic portrayal, but within the verbal, it is a bit trickier to recognize, requiring considerably more effort to intellectualize and to experience, much like when we read Faulkner, Joyce, or Woolf’s stream of consciousness writings.

Blake’s poem's tripartition consists of 1) Jerusalem's process of individuation (from both a feminist and Jungian feminist model as well as a Jungian/Campbellian patriarchal
model); 2) Blake's recognizing and reclaiming his anima to complete his individuation (a patriarchal model)\(^{34}\) and to use a Derridean term—phallogocentric or a privileging of the masculine, a concept Blake previously expounded in his epic *Milton*; and finally, 3) the reader's codeterminate process of individuation. \(^{35}\) Three views, three readings, and three individuations happening at the same time—separately and simultaneously, as we find ourselves reading both texts—the visual and the verbal—synchronously and sequentially. Both works of art—*Portrait de Dora Maar* and *Jerusalem*—reveal unprecedented originality and maverick expressions, and vigorous portrayals, \(^{36}\) turning Blake into a literary rock star for the postmodernists by his stance against a limited and one-dimensional interpretation. With his consistently conscious opposition, he defies the phallocratic, patriarchal logocentrism.

![Fig. 1:6. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 57](image)

**Reorganization of time**

\(^{34}\) Perhaps best argued by Witcutt in *Blake: A Psychological Study*.

\(^{35}\) Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound* expresses it, “Methinks I grow like what I contemplate” (I.450-1). Also, on Plate 3, Blake writes, "I hope the reader will be with me . . . ."

\(^{36}\) Morton Paley’s comment on Plate 15: “Blake as the Bard of *Song of Experience*, ‘Who Present, Past, and Future sees’” (E 18) (*Jerusalem* 153) is another example of Blake's tripartite vision.
Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past . . . .
Time past and time future
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.

T. S. Eliot, “Burnt Norton” (Four Quartets 117)

Blake’s reorganization of time demonstrates his deep understanding of the unconscious à la Jung. As Witcutt, in his introduction to Blake: A Psychological Study, describes it: “The object of the present work is to indicate a path through the Blakean jungle, to provide a plan of the maze” (7). His path takes the form of Jung's analytical psychology, which becomes the key to an understanding of Blake. Beginning with a discussion of the nature of imagination, Witcutt explains, although it seems counter-intuitive, that it has definite rules, its own process, and a "logic of its own" (16). For millennia, this mappable territory—the unconscious—contains similarities in all people. Jung names it the "collective unconscious," where primordial images or archetypes reside. Within Blake's "prophetic books" are psychic patterns existing within all of us. Moreover, Witcutt continues, "The great value of Blake's poetry is that it provides a kind of outline of the unconscious mind. Blake explored this strange region more thoroughly than any before or since, and what is more, he knew what he was doing" (18).
I would point out that Jerusalem’s individuation actually happens within both time realms—the unconscious (the dredging up of remembrances, dreams, myths, archetypes) and the conscious (where her physical behavior takes place), which Blake depicts simultaneously. In resisting the traditional narrative organization—a largely phallocentric format—Blake reconfigures time, separating it into two levels: the “timeless” (the more untraditional, within the visual) and the “time-bound” (the more traditional, within the verbal). Together they become the eternal or happening on all three time levels simultaneously (like the portrait of Dora Marr): past, present, and future—where we can easily see how this is similar to the tripartition of multivalent readings. Jerusalem, the character, is often visually portrayed as a timeless being within a timebound setting. The timeless is not a new notion, for other authors have written about it, notably Silko and Black Elk, whose vision includes his nation’s “hoop” and its relation to the “experience” of the eternal in the present.

Blake, by simultaneously offering the reader both time zones on one plate (read page), is novel. The verbal text’s duality manifests itself seamlessly into the poem’s body, and because of the visual’s dynamism, his 100-plate poem almost becomes a living organism. Almost. The visual narrative can be read/viewed through a historical time reference. However, Blake’s destabilization of time, by repeating images and figures in the succession of poems, results in even fuller characterizations and philosophical tenets. And since the illustrations are rarely synchronized with the narrative, we challenge ourselves to mediate not only between the visual and the verbal texts, which are not only often and ostensibly on different trajectories (non-linear and linear), but also between one poem and another and

39 The visual is often cinematic—a silent movie, if you will, of beautiful nude bodies.
even further: “To infinity. And beyond.” His reorganization of time obviously reflects his awareness of the unconscious and the conscious happening simultaneously. The Jungian depths of the unconscious in the visual text blended with Jerusalem’s movements in the verbal text’s traditional narrative of the conscious realm blend to become Jerusalem’s body.

**Writing from a pre-Christian stance**

  Divinity must live within herself:

  Wallace Stevens, “Sunday Morning” II, 8

  Why stand we here trembling around

  Calling on God for help; and not ourselves

  in whom God dwells . . . .

  William Blake, *Jerusalem* 38: 12-13

Looking at still another against the grain trait, we find that although Blake based his worldview in a Christian context (although he adamantly rejected organized religion), he writes from a Christian stance in the verbal, but in the visual, we discover his pre-Christian stance or his view of a matriarchal culture. In his often outré prose, he writes, “Every thing is Atheism which assumes the reality of the natural & uninspired world” (Bentley, *William Blake’s Conversations* 58). He believes that divinity resides within the human body, not as a reflection of the Christ figure per se, but rather as a Christ residing within. Unequivocally, Jerusalem, in one reading, can certainly be viewed as the Christ figure within the poem, for

---

40 Buzz Lightyear, *Toy Story.*

41 Wordsworth was deemed an atheist/heretic for believing *only* in the “God” of the natural world (as a young man).
ultimately she embodies the redeemer character. However, within the visual text primarily, Blake writes from a pre-Christian stance. For one thing, it would have been entirely possible for him to have read the *Bhagavad Gita* because he would have had access to Watkins's translation. The references to Buddhism within the plates’ iconography are plenty. One of the more resplendent ones is found in Plate 53 (Figure 7) at the beginning of Chapter 3, where we find Jerusalem (or Vala) meditating on a giant sunflower. The background to her figure echoes the shape of an elephant's ears—perhaps another reference to India. Interestingly, the sunflower is suspended slightly above a blue sea—another Jungian reference to the unconscious. Also, the several quaternary/mandala shapes are much more in line with Asian and Native American “religions” than Christianity.

![Fig. 1:7. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 53](image)

42 Or Los, which is the more with-the-grain reading.
Joseph Campbell, the great historian of world myths and unparalleled chronicler on the world’s initiation stories, through his investigative writing and scholarship on the original matriarchal cultures and the mother-goddess religions, shows us how Blake’s writing and illustration of *Jerusalem* harkens back to those pre-Christian cultures by casting the female protagonist as the maternal redeemer. Campbell, employing myth as the earliest teacher of spirituality, writes, “This is the final secret of myth—to teach you how to penetrate the labyrinth of life in such a way that its spiritual values come through” (*The Power of Myth* 115).

Henry Crabb Robinson, in “William Blake, Artist, Poet, and Religious Mystic,” manages in ten pages to explain Blake’s Christian orthodoxy; however, he also writes, “His system thus remains more allied to the equanimity and patience of paganism than to the essential strength of Christianity” (598). Los and Albion, certainly, are aligned with a Christian idea of redemption, but Jerusalem in one reading can be considered a Jungian Mother archetype—predating Christ. Additionally, Blake’s use of a variety of other cultures’ iconography, specifically Egyptian and Buddhist, also adds to the argument of his writing from a pre-Christian stance in which the visual iconography is within the visual text, which is, as I have stated earlier, mostly drawn from a pre-Christian stance, whereas the verbal narrative, in the main, is written from a Christian stance.

The serpent iconography is especially relevant in arguing Blake’s writing from a pre-Christian ideological stance. Blake’s serpent images are dramatically and textually unlike Christian ones. Often, as illustrated in Figure 8: Plate 63, the serpent iconography signifies a non-threatening pose. In fact, here the serpent becomes a pleasurable partner as contrasted to an arch-seducer. As is often the case, in this plate we can rely on our visual sense to construct an interpretation. A sensorial presence thus enables us to understand the visual text. We see that the serpent is not harming Jerusalem but sensuously wrapping itself around
the entire length of her body in a non-threatening embrace. With her head thrown back and
her mouth slightly open (a pose often seen in the decadent Victorian fin de siècle female
portraits), we can also see and thus feel her enjoyment—or dare I say rapture?

Blake could also be suggesting an experience beyond alterity. I am not suggesting a
kind of bestiality any more than Blake was implying bestiality when he writes of “the lion old
and her bosom lick” in The Little Girl Lost. It reminds me of the French style of horse-back
riding, a style where a specifically female rider pushes outward from her groin onto the
horse’s bareback. This kind of connection between non-human and human is precisely that:
a connection. The human with the non-human in a kind of “joining” equals something more
than the two separate beings. It is a merging of species’ boundaries in which no hierarchies
exist. A union of equals. Merging with the “other” eliminates the alterity. Somewhat
similarly, the nudity in Jerusalem symbolizes all that is free, uninhibited, and certainly anti-
materialistic—a realm where character reveals itself rather than material possessions
revealing character. But most of all, Blake is writing about a universality where “every thing
that lives is Holy” (The Marriage of Heaven and Hell). And he is not referring to designers’ dead
crocodile handbags.

Fig. 1:8. Blake, Jerusalem,
Plate 63

However, Blake’s intentions are vastly different from the male Victorian artists, who generally denigrated
their female subjects. See Bram Dijkstra’s Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture.
Serpent imagery provides more examples of non-alterity. Joseph Campbell writes at length about the significance of serpent imagery. In *The Power of Myth*, he reveals his extensive scholarship into the figure of the snake, devoting one chapter to it exclusively—“The Serpent Guide” (47). He claims that it has positive psycho-cultural import, contrasted to the Christian view of arch-seducer, destroyer, agent of evil, and so forth. Historically, the image of the serpent is sacred to many of Native American traditions, to the Buddha, and to the ancient Sumerians. In Figure 9, Plate 46, we see the serpents drawn as wheels on Jerusalem and Albion’s cart. Clearly, Blake here illustrates an ancient Sumerian reference:

Fig. 1:9. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 46
However, in the Christian tradition, the image of the serpent becomes the seducer, along with the idea of the woman not as a nurturer but as a sinner.\textsuperscript{44} Within the Native American tradition, Leslie Mormon Silko writes: “Those who loathe snakes have been brainwashed by the Old Testament. Even ordinary snakes are spirit messengers to the spirit beings and Mother Earth” (\textit{Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit} 147). Additionally, the Hindu religion’s Kundalini snake represents all the best of sexual energy.

Looking again at Figure 8: Plate 63, we can see Jerusalem’s sacred sexuality with the sizeable serpent, luxuriating with her under the resplendent gold-illuminated sun. Additionally, we need to remember: the common assumption among Blakean scholars is that his use of gold pigment signifies enlightenment. In this plate, he uses it liberally—perhaps more than in any other plate. A century later Jung would define this as \textit{numinosity}.

Diametrically opposed, we find Blake’s \textit{Satan Exulting over Eve} telling a different story about the serpent relationship with the female. Here, we view the serpent’s malevolent look. Blake’s title is appropriate.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Fig. 1:10. Blake, Milton, \textit{Satan Exulting Over Eve}}
\end{figure}

\textit{Body monism}

O how couldst thou deform those beautiful proportions

\textsuperscript{44} Incidentally, in all of the world’s mythologies except Pandora and her box, woman is never considered "fallen." Pandora is not a sinner; she is “just trouble” (Campbell, \textit{The Power of Myth} 47).
Of life & person for as the Person so is his life proportioned

*The Four Zoas: Night the Ninth* (30-31)

As we shall see, Blake’s philosophy of body monism also contributes to his evolving feminist ideology. Easily recognizable, his body monism is found on various levels as different forms of bodies exist: textual, graphic, and eternal, as well as embodiments, divisions, and co-minglings. Additionally, Jerusalem's narrative is revealed and most easily discoverable through the visual text—the body of the visual. Witcutt postulates that Blake’s first conception of a poem was in the dimension of the visual, followed by the verbal, so the verbal text is only *in relation* to the visual (49).

To begin, let us take a look at Anne Mellor’s writing on Blake’s originally conflicting views on the centrality of the human body. Mellor’s argument is that “the conflict between his philosophical theory and artistic practice, between his [Blake’s] philosophical rejection of the human body and his aesthetic glorification of the human figure, posed a problem for Blake” (xvii). By examining chronologically his major texts, she shows how he arrived at the visual and verbal reconciliation of the two. Beginning with an explanation of energy as either a closed (tectonic) or open (atectonic) state, she conclusively demonstrates how many of the characters’ psychic maturing depends upon their attitudes, beliefs, and relationships (or lack of). Put simply, atectonic is all that is expressive, hopeful, expansive, open-minded, and sincere in the use of language. And in contrast, tectonic is all that is repressive, despairing, contractive, close-minded, and empty in rhetoric. Jerusalem is atectonic; Urizen, tectonic. Predominating Blake's art is the central symbol of the naked body, and his early, conflicting feelings toward the human body eventually led him iconographically to distinguish between

45 These correspond to the "prolific" and "devouring" of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.*
the Urizenic fallen body and the innocent, energetic, liberated body. Mellor argues how the atectonic state of divinity (or the infinite) is not only outside the body (“seeing eternity in a grain of sand”) but also within. In the broadest of terms, this “divine” atectonic body becomes a vehicle for salvation, not only of the self (triumphant individuation) but also of society.

Her study is important in a few areas in relation to the subject of body monism because 1) her discussions of the visual and verbal portrayals of the female characters (Thel through Jerusalem) has immense relevance as she writes about the female psyche’s maturing consciousness and body image. 2) Most critics write about either the visual or the verbal. She traces Blake’s maturing development of not only his artistic talent, but also his philosophy about divinity residing in the human body, as Chapter Four will demonstrate. 3) Her knowledge of Blake’s configurations, calculated symmetries, and iconography, specifically their elision, is essential in a discussion of the visual text’s “meaning.” And finally, 4) her argument regarding the centrality of the human body provides a means further to understand how the psychological state is influenced by the physical state.

Jumping forward in time to Yeats, both he and Blake not only celebrated the body and shared a marvelous love of it, but they also positioned it at the center of their art. Yeats’s “The Thinking of the Body” perhaps best illustrates this:

Art bids us touch and taste and hear and see the world, and shrinks from what Blake calls mathematic form, from every abstract thing, from all that is of the brain only, from all that is not a fountain jetting

---

46 Vala wears the veil; Jerusalem wears her body. (Arthur Miller said that Marilyn Monroe, the first time he saw her, was the only woman at the party “who wore her body.”)
47 Yogis call this Shakti energy.
48 The same as the ancient Greek maxim: a healthy mind in a healthy body.
from the entire hopes, memories, and sensations of the body.49

(“William Blake and the Imagination” 212)

Blake's anti-Newtonian and anti-Lockean stance is no more in evidence than in the visual text. Moreover, his open admonishment of the moral law finds its candid expression in his nude illustrations. Similar to Keats, Blake teaches us that "truth is beauty," for if we look at the nude illustration of Jerusalem in Figure 11, Plate 32, we understand how complete a truth Blake expresses here, or as Jacques Maritain writes, “In the presence of a beautiful work . . . the intellect rejoices without discourse” (57). However, discourse we must, if we are to understand the poem’s multivalent readings.

Fig. 1:11. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 32

49 He describes Blake making a religion of art, “preaching against the Philistines,” and decrying lethargies as unholy in the same scathing way as Jung, who in his Symbols of Transformation, writes that idleness is the most violent passion and the most mischievous (174), which, in a contrary way, reminds me of Blake’s aphorism “Exuberance is Beauty.” He first expresses himself in the visual. Interestingly, Yeats here writes of Vala’s beauty and entirely ignores Jerusalem.
Why does Blake portray most of his figures naked—other than to express his penchant for a neo-classical idiom? One answer might be that they become transparent with each other and their environment. For example, one cannot hide behind the veneer of wealth and privilege while naked. Little can be hidden or disguised or misleading when the body is nude. Yes, to some readers, Jerusalem in Figure 11 might look like a fine example of white privilege who appears to be the center of attention. Her beauty—is it simply inherited, earned, or a combination of both? Moreover, of literature’s great heroines—only Jerusalem is portrayed nude. Is it not difficult to imagine Dorothea Brooks nude? Not Beatrice, Glorvina, Bathsheba, or Cleopatra’s beauty can rival the beauty of the Medici Venuses, the nudes of Botticelli, Raphael, Velázquez, Ingres, and Renoir’s *embonpoint* sun bathers. Granted, mythological stories, portrayed in the visual arts, contain some

Fig. 1:12. Raphael, *The Triumph of Galatea*
stunning nudes. Raphael's *The Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 12) gives us a beautiful apotheotic character within a scene both lusty and lovely.50

However, unlike Raphael and many others, what is distinct about Blake’s nudes—and specifically the nudes in *Jerusalem*—is that their portrayals illustrate no romanticized softness with an appearance of air-brushed editing. Within a neoclassical idiom of perfectly proportioned physicality, Blake's nude figures are mostly anatomized drawings. Blake's women are not to be cuddled with but rather reckoned with. Appearing strong, serious, and inviting, the female figures exude a definite, one might say innate sensuality. The adjective that never comes to mind when describing the female characters in *Jerusalem* is *demure*. It takes a mature reader to understand Blake’s mature females (specifically, Jerusalem and her sister Vala). Additionally, the colors of flesh and blood give the water-colored tinting its remarkable power of expression, revealing his characters' inner life force/energy through the visual text. Revealing the truth of their physicality, including their indulgences, excesses, disciplines, and yes, even their sublime labor, we can appreciate both aspects of their beauty: the decadent and the delightful. Moreover, another reason for portraying characters in the nude where all the “Lineaments of the Countenances” can be clearly seen might be found in Blake’s own words:

> I entreat the spectator will attend to the Hand and Feet the Lineaments of the Countenances They are all descriptive of character and not a line is drawn without intention and that most Discriminate and

50 How those Renaissance artists loved to paint their females with a little Brie in their bellies.
particular as Poetry admits not a Letter that is insignificant so Painting admits not a Grain of Sand or Blade of Grass insignificant much less an insignificant Blur or Mark. (Complete Poetry and Prose 560)

We can find all kinds of personal choices evidenced in nude portrayals. How does a character regard her/his body? Is it, in fact, a vehicle for transformation and/or transcendence or a vehicle for showing compassion and corporeal acts of mercy, as Suzanne Sklar suggests? Can we cleanse our “doors of perception” by making intelligent, healthy choices and doing the necessary work for individuation? A resounding yes. Once, when I showed Plate 32 to a friend, she responded that the small side muscle right above Jerusalem's abdomen would take months to develop to its state of health, regarding its muscular development. Health, muscular development, and individuation require labor—some might say sublimity. Metaphorically, Blake illustrates sublime labor. We know his life's trials and works were testaments to it, too.

Furthermore, there can be little dissimulation when one is naked. Robert Essick succinctly writes, "His [Blake's] interest in physiognomy as the embodiment of character...." Additionally, as Tristanne Connolly writes in William Blake and the Body, the characters (in Blakean parlance named the Eternals), because of their nakedness, can enter into each other's interiors as well as their conversations. Moreover, as Blake writes: the Eternals are “reflecting each in each & clearly seen / And seeing’ (J 98: 39-40) and ‘they enter / Into each others Bosom / which are Universes of delight”51 (J 88: 3-4) (207).

51 Even John Mayall, writing for adolescent girls, shared this sentiment when he writes, "Your body is a wonderland, under a sea of blankets." Evidently, even in California, a young, male pop star unwittingly has a sense of Jung's beliefs. And slightly related is Swedenborg’s conception of heaven as one of personal transparency.
Blake, too, through his portrayal of the characters' nudity (only the Frontispiece, Plate 99, and a few others contain clothed figures), expresses that the spirit of love/affection is knowable through their faces and bodies. Portraying the characters' nudity is also a way of revealing their energy. Although Blake portrays the nude characters in a static medium, Connolly quotes Anne Mellor, who “argues that Blake's figures are never still” (24). Further, Connolly shows how Blake's conception of heaven is not God-centered but human-centered; therefore, because the imagination resides within a character's body, that character is freely able to move in and out of heaven rather than in a Christian context, where she/he can be barred eternally from heaven (201). Created by the imagination, time and space belong to the characters, who create their own heavens. And nude ones at that. And might I add: most probably a “universe of delight.” Blake, for all his many depictions in both the verbal and visual texts of torture, Satanic mills, demonic characters, outrageous rage, incest, rape, and duplicity, also gives us the other side of the universe of delight: the corporeal joys of “the Lineaments of Gratified Desire” (Blake's Notebook 474) and for the true libertines among us: the witnessing of bliss upon bliss.52

*Jerusalem*'s illuminated plates focus on the human body nude, and only occasionally clothed, as I have already mentioned. And since Christianity altered the conception of nudity, viewing it as shameful, in *Jerusalem*, Blake, against-the-grain, bucks off the Christian view of nudity by portraying Vala veiled and Jerusalem nude (Figure 14.) Vala experiences shame; Jerusalem, never. Blake's art, in a neoclassical idiom, stands in such contrast to the Romantic Era's art of both the picaresque and the Romantic. In *Jerusalem*, we find no pastoral scenes of Golden Guernsey cows contentedly grazing in the Lake District.53 Most of

---

52 Here, I am referencing Oothoon in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*.
53 Although the pastoral scene in *Little Girl Lost*, the plate of Lyca with both the domesticated animals and the beasts of prey (“the lion old and her bosom lick”), will forever be one of my favorites. Also, Dr. Gannon
the plates depict nude bodies individually or in groups, and they merge, fly, emanate, swim, theriomorph, challenge, disembowel, submit, swoon, collapse, die, and make love. Not simply metaphorically but physically, the nude body as a central figure is Blake's preoccupation in his visual text. And specifically, the eponymous heroine's body with its development into a mature (and healthy) physicality, a metaphor for her evolving psychomachia, comprises more than one-fourth of the visual narrative's plates—certainly enough to reveal her psychic development toward individuation, reflected in part, in her physicality. To illustrate—look at the startling differences between Blake’s drawing of the Lady in Milton’s *Comus* and his iconographic portrait of Jerusalem:

Fig. 1:13. Blake, (Illustration to Milton’s *Comus*), *Comus Disguised as a Rustic, Addresses the Lady in the Wood*

Fig. 1:14. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 32, “Naked Beauty Displayed”

suggested to me that “Jerusalem expresses a true, unnatural scorn for unregenerated and vegetable nature that makes the ecocritic cry. Indeed, the neo-Platonic idealism I perceive throughout makes it all the more difficult to argue that Blake is a material monist.” To which I reply that, within *Jerusalem*, Blake established the two realms of conscious and unconscious. Birds become symbols, not specific species, per se. And eco-criticism is something that is understood as a “personal ecology.” (Individuation as ecology.) The body as a microcosm of the macrocosm. Jerusalem ultimately representing balance, harmony, and health. Nature as *inside*. So, Blake is also prescient about ecology.
The Lady, fully clothed and with a demure posture and a blank facial expression, denotes little of Jerusalem’s full exposure, an illustration redolent of confidence and resolve. So, like the little muscle on Jerusalem’s side, let that be a metaphor for individuation (read a healthy psychological condition). This muscle symbolizes the apex of physical health, and it becomes a metaphor for Blake’s *Jerusalem*, the only poem, in his words, “finished,” and what he meant was it is complete, for “Every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place” (Plate 3, no line number). Blake’s engraving of *Jerusalem* had reached a point where he pulled the burin off the copper plate, so to speak: nothing was left undone, and nothing more could be added. Finished. Complete. Like the metaphorical muscle on Jerusalem’s side, representing her sublime labor’s work toward individuation, reflected in her beautiful physicality.

Jerusalem’s evolving physicality and her transforming psyche constitute one reading of the poem (within, of course, the visual text). We can see her physical beauty, and by poem’s end, we learn, as well, of her psychic beauty. She has come through to the other side of despair, heartache, and physical as well as mental collapse; however, eventually, through her assiduous labor, she achieves all those good things worth striving for: compassion, love, and an awakening to her sexuality/spirituality—two wings of the same bird. And hopefully a sense of humor.\(^{54}\)

The scientific evidence suggests that exercise, working the muscles (and certainly the heart muscle), stimulates hormones in the brain that are potentially sixty times stronger than street opium: endorphins. The hormone is legal, readily available, and can transform grumpiness and depression into a transcendent joy. Not a bad return for a brisk thirty-minute walk. In many of the engraved plates, we can “see” the vitality of the characters. For

\(^{54}\)Although the only humor in Blake is in his burlesque novel, *Island in the Moon*. 
example, Figure 15 vividly shows us how the tinting's colors (blue, rose, flesh) appear to give us the illusion of the colors of veins and blood. We, the viewers, can see the health of Blake's bodies.55

And several decades later, Walt Whitman (born in 1819)—another unequivocal body monist—would write:

55 In a similar way, in her *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*, Leslie Marmon Silko writes of health and beauty that is uncannily similar to Blake’s tacit expressions: “In the old-time Pueblo world, beauty was manifested in behavior and in one’s relationships with other living beings. Beauty was as much a feeling of harmony as it was a visual, aural, or sensual effect. The whole person had to be beautiful, not just the face or the body; faces and bodies could not be separated from hearts and souls. Health was foremost in achieving this sense of well-being and harmony; in the old-time Pueblo world, a person who did not look healthy inspired feelings of worry and anxiety, not feelings of well-being. A healthy person, of course, is in harmony with the world around her; she is at peace with herself too. Thus an unhappy person or spiteful person would not be considered beautiful” (65).
and your very flesh shall be a great poem, and have the richest fluency, not only in its words, but in the silent lines of its lips and face, and between the lashes of your eyes, and in every motion and joint of your body. (11)

Blake's visual text's portrayal of Jerusalem is the body of his epic poem—her body; however, Blake shows us her psychomachic progress in both texts. Unlike Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, freshly emerging from the clamshell's womb, and whose beauty is static, is not the artist also showing us her birth (perhaps in her mid-life or later), her transformation into a beautiful woman? The idea, the overarching idea, is that birth occurs when these females, and many more like them within literature and art (who can forget Chekhov's Nina, riding her horse onto the stage?), give birth to themselves, with their physical forms full-bodied. Eventually, they learn how to leave their Baudelairean “soft scented cradles” (Blake’s realm of Beulah), mother themselves, do the grueling work of individuation, and one might say intelligently and confidently body forth their bodies—both psychically and physically.56 Jerusalem leaves her home in Beulah, and after her abandonment and banishment from Albion, passes through the dark, Satanic mills, and through sheer force of her agonizing effort arrives closer to her safe place of psychic health. She is at home in her body and her peace of mind and realizes that love is the answer—the winning ticket—and her hard-won enlightenment insures that her “very flesh shall be a great poem.”57

In Blake’s *Notebook*, we can see his sketch of a female figure, presumably Vala, with a Gothic cathedral super-imposed on her sexual organs (Figure 16), reminding us of a similar body monism, or the ancient Sheila-na-gigs (Figure 17), the door-surrounds for ancient Celtic churches, where the church goer had to pass through the female vulva to enter the

56 Likewise, Arthur Miller, in his autobiography *Timebends*, writes that Marilyn Monroe was the only one at a party “who wore her body.”
57 She shows us what centuries-old Yoginis knew: the first spiritual law of yoga is the Law of Pure Potentiality.
church. As unique as his sketch of Vala and the Sheila-na-gigs, Blake’s body monism was unique among the Romantic writers. His regard for the female body, especially Jerusalem’s, was the ultimate destination, so to speak. The end of the golden string wound up at heaven: Jerusalem’s gate. The spiritual and erotic merged inside her body: body monism incarnate and carnal.

No other Romantic poet, including both female and male, could be considered a body monist. However, a couple of them wrote of beautiful female individuations, which will be considered at length later: Mary Tighe’s *Psyche: or, the Legend of Love* and Percy Shelley’s *The Witch of Atlas*. And who could ever forget the profound simplicity of Coleridge’s concluding stanza of his love poem to Sara Hutchinson, “Dejection: An Ode,” wherein he hopes for her joyful transcendence:
With light heart may she rise,
    Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!
    O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
    Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice. (132-39)

The only other poets who poetically address female individuations are not of the Romantic ilk but do show almost a devotional admiration for their female, poetic creations. For one, Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins recasts the Andromeda myth and places her at poem's center, where she not only saves herself but recognizes her vast pent-up anger, explosively releasing it at sonnet's end. Contrasted to Hopkins's heart-stopping sonnet (a marvelously constructed sonnet both in form and expression) is Edmund Spenser's “Sonnet LIX” from his Amoretti, in which he likewise places a female as the central figure, who, upon taking Spenser's advice, attains personal freedom and fulfillment, and yes, even that ever-so-elusive emotion/state—love. He stops our heart differently. And on the other side of the pond, we have Wallace Steven's splendid female in “Sunday Morning” where her body holds divinity:

    Why should she give her bounty to the dead?
    What is divinity if it can come
Only in silent shadows and in dreams?
Shall she not find in comforts of the sun,
    In pungent fruit and bright, green wings, or else
In any balm or beauty of the earth,
Things to be cherished like the thought of heaven?
Divinity must live within herself:
Nor visionary south, nor cloudy palm
Remote on heaven’s hill, that has endured
As April’s green endures; or will endure
Like her remembrance of awakened birds,
Or her desire for June and evening, tipped
By the consummation of the swallow’s wings. (Stevens II: 1-15)

Jerusalem’s obstinate refusal to accept the patriarchy surrounding her and her
willingness to take responsibility for her individuation both speak of a paradigmatic feminist
stance. Blake’s positioning her at the center of one multivalent reading is testament to his
conscious opposition to the existing patriarchy and its attendant moral law. With his global
framing of her, unprecedented in its scope (she brings all the countries of the world
together), she becomes a true model of his feminist ideology. And as he proclaims,
“Jerusalem is Liberty,” as she represents freedom at its most inclusive: physically and
psychically.

**Gender and sexuality**

The combined topics of gender and sexuality stand as another against the grain trait
of Blake’s outside-the-status quo’s paradigms. One of his earliest writings regarding gender
occurs on Plate 52 of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*: “The sexes spring from Shame and
Pride.” With gender we find his views problematic for most conventionally trained critical
readers (as Behrendt refers to them), and with sexuality we find Jerusalem, who ultimately
unfetters herself from the apparati of religion, culture, and politics. Blake creates a nineteenth-century literary feminist who singly governs her body. Considering his view of gender, his mythopoetic universe makes no distinction regarding gender differentiations. Mary Shelley’s statement (found in her “Advertisement” for Percy Shelley’s “Epipsychidion”) also describes a similarly myopic view. She writes that “a certain class of readers . . . must ever remain incomprehensible from a defect of a common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats” (*The Poetical Works of Shelley* 406). Also writing about the subject of gender, Anne Mellor writes of Keats and Brontë, as having written not from their biological identity but rather from their ideological identity, claiming they are “literary cross-dresser[s] but not transsexual” (*Romanticism & Gender* 186). How appropriately this applies to Blake. Since his characters, the eternals, exist in Eternity’s unfallen state, conventional critical ideas of gender are irrelevant. His opinions regarding sexuality are multivalent, but as for his view of female sexuality, its evolution can be traced through the poetic female protagonists within a trajectory, beginning with the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* and culminating in the character of Jerusalem. Susan Wolfson nails it when she writes her homage to Blake as a “railer against repression and the champion of sexuality without shame.”58 She writes about “female sexuality as a Blakean metafigure for the complexities and sometimes outright contradictions of reading ‘experience’” (261).

Not surprisingly, the female critics generally write more openly about Blake’s poetic expressions of sexuality.59 Helen Bruder and Tristanne Connolly compiled a collection of essays, many of which were (dare I say) bodied forth at the Sexy Blake Conference, staged in 2010 at Oxford. It is a difficult stretch at best to imagine Morton Paley and David Erdman

---

58 Wolfson further declares him as the Poet Laureate of contraries (261).
59 A more than notable exception is Stephen C. Behrendt, who in his “‘The Soul of Sweet Delight’: Blake and the Sensual Soul,” passionately writes of “the sensual and sexual agenda and activities” within Blake’s opus.
organizing a conference on the topic of sexuality in Blake. One of the essays that I particularly appreciate is Marsha Keith’s “A Secret Common to Our Blood: The Visionary Erotic Heritage of Blake, Thomas Butts, and Mary Butts,” wherein she refers to Mary Butts and Hilda Dolittle as The Daughters of Albion, who adamantly believed in the spiritual-erotic link. Her discussion of the correlation of sexual arousal to visionary capability reveals its link to the Moravian-Swedenborgian exoteric tradition. These maverick female essayists, much like Blake, believed that active creativity, uninhibited sexuality, and spiritual awakenings were all rapturously embraced together: The kind of rapture Blake writes about in Jerusalem. For after the doors of perception are cleansed and opened, and after we relinquish our egos (Blake chooses the word “annihilates”), then we can experience joy or as Joseph Campbell names it: rapture.

Campbell, in his The Power of Myth, after explaining the four functions of myth (mystical, cosmological, sociological, and pedagogical), discusses the process of individuation as the common denominator of all myths in our lives: “Myths inspire the realization of the possibility of your perfection, the fullness of your strength, and the bringing of solar light into the world” (148). In sum, Jungian individuation. Campbell’s strong belief in the empowering function of myths in our lives directly describes how Blake’s mythopoeia, culminating in Jerusalem, is pedagogical. For in his desire for his readers to stay with him (“I


Still another connection between Blake and Native American’s attitude is uninhibited sexuality. Leslie Marmon Silko writes, “Sexual inhibition did not begin until the Christian missionaries arrived” (Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit 67).

Of course, this emphasis on the personal—in Jung and Campbell—is specifically Euro-/Western, in contradistinction to the claim of universality. Other cultures put less stock in the individual and her/his “bliss.” Understanding Blake’s aim to transform his readers, another essayist—Catherine L. Mc Clenahan—writes, in her “Changing the Sexual Garments: On the Regeneration of Sexuality in Jerusalem, “His [Blake’s] aim is to demonstrate in hundreds of ways how regeneration of the sexes into ‘Human Forms’ (J 99:1, E 258) is possible and where and how it fails, but also to invite his audience to engage in this effort of regenerating our selves [sic].”
hope the reader will be with me” [Plate 3], he reveals, through his prophetic stance, ways we can free ourselves of handed-down patriarchal notions of sexuality. Our bodies, he must have envisioned, can know and experience the liberty (his other name for Jerusalem) of making our decisions regarding the pleasures in our lives. We are free to decide what can enable us to feel not only a regeneration—physically and spiritually—but also a liberation. Religious strictures and philosophical dictums can easily be rejected as not just unimportant but irrelevant if we but find the courage to structure our lives independently of others’ beliefs. Blake adamantly writes about an uninhibited sexuality: “Those who restrain desire, do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained” (MoHH 34: Plate 5) and further writes about the effect if, in fact, it is restrained: “And being restrained, it by degrees becomes passive, ‘till it is only the shadow of desire” (Witcutt 74). A radical idea? Of course. Appealing to individuals wanting to experience what they can imagine as contributing to their sense of well-being? Yes. Like Jerusalem, once we alter our eyes, we can alter all. Simple, yet profound. However, individuation precedes “alteration.” “Cleansing the doors of perception” comes at a great price, but the rewards are limitless—for sexuality, for love. Enobarbus eloquently speaks of this as he describes Cleopatra, for whom passions and love are inextricably fused, “her passions are made of nothing / but the finest part of pure love” (Antony and Cleopatra, I, ii, l 143-44).

As a New Historician, Mary Kelly Persyn, in arguing that Jerusalem be read as Blake's cultural critique of his time where sexual freedom was not just taboo but forbidden for women, shows us how the inculturation or social constructivism of chastity is not only harmful to women's sense of self, but also a death to their sexual freedom, imagination, and

64 Masturbation, also, was viewed by Blake as certainly not taboo.
eventual liberation. In her “No Human Form but Sexual: Sensibility, Chastity, and Sacrifice in Blake’s Jerusalem,” she focuses on Vala and Jerusalem and contends that, by society's enforcing the Druidical law of chastity, a female's repressed sexuality leads to effacement of individuality, resulting in behavioral and psychological states of either passivity or dominance. She concludes that both Vala and Jerusalem are tragic figures because they represent these two respective states. Either harm reigns over the harmless or death of spirit (imagination/desire) replaces joy. Citing the most dramatic examples in Blake's plates, she reveals how both brutal dominance and spiritless passivity replace rapturous sensuality. However, failing to perceive Jerusalem's psychomachia as a progressive state, as revealed in both the visual and the verbal narratives, her in-depth study of the sacrifices performed by the female characters is significant in terms of their being a result of loss or negation of sexual desire. Considering her acknowledgement of other critical opinions, as when she writes, "As Blake's critics have long recognized, his treatment of the female is ambiguous, tortured, and sometimes even seemingly self-contradictory," she marshals her argument, lifting the lid on this critically closed box and revealing Blake's unmitigated view on the deleterious effects of patriarchal attempts to control a female's sexuality. His female characters are anything but ambiguous, and Jerusalem is neither whore nor virgin.

Briefly outlining the critics and their debates over Blake's portrayals (treatments) of women, Persyn's study is essential to my further writing. Additionally, her scrutiny of several plates has already added to my understanding of Jerusalem's development within the visual

---

65 Of course to perceive that gender is socially constructed is liberating in itself, according to poststructuralist feminists.
66 Jungian analyst Dr. Carolyn Pincus Estés (in Women Who Run with the Wolves) writes that repression or negation of the creative imagination (Blake refers to this as sexuality) leads to psychic death or death of the Wild Woman archetype.
67 Persyn's best illustration of Blakean female characters engaged in brutal dominance is Figure 3 where like raptors they descend on Albion, torturously pulling out his entrails, symbolically destroying the patriarchy.
narrative. However, most importantly, she shows how Jerusalem’s individuation is a symbolic struggle against inculturation or social constructivism of gender and behavior.

Winding the proverbial Golden String to arrive at Jerusalem’s Gate is not a matter of fiction—not since Blake, as a forerunner to depth psychology and feminism, have we witnessed such a visionary, not only showing us (in the visual text) but telling us (in the verbal) of still another story or model of individuation. Jung’s depth psychology, with the process of individuation at its core, involves confronting one’s negative shadow which becomes the turning point. One has two choices: to confront it or not. To look the monster straight on and decide that one can either get on with the process of living or get on with the process of dying. A choice. A trial. Potential sensual joy for those willing to take on the heroine/hero’s journey. Individuation is inextricably linked to a feminist ideology of equality on all fronts, as Blake writes when he reinscribes femininity.

**Reinscription of femininity**

“Such a woman the poet could desire only by breaking the codes that negate her.”

Hélène Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa” (1946)

By reinscribing femininity, Blake is creating a feminist paradigm. A good starting point is the French intellectual and critic Hélène Cixous, who ironically makes no mention of Blake; however, in her “The Laugh of the Medusa,” her writing uncannily and unwittingly describes Blake’s reinscription of femininity, as she writes: “There has not yet been any writing that inscribes femininity; exceptions so rare, in fact, that, after plowing through literature across languages, cultures, and ages, one can only be startled at this vain scouting” (1946). Her hagiographic description of a poet who reinscribes femininity precisely applies to
Blake, for *Jerusalem’s* penultimate plate becomes harrowingly explosive in its depiction of her apotheosis:

There have been poets who would go to any length to slip something by at odds with tradition—men capable of loving love and hence capable of loving others and of wanting them, of imagining the woman who would hold out against oppression and constitute herself as a superb equal, hence ‘impossible’ subject, untenable in a real social framework. Such a woman the poet could desire only by breaking the codes that negate her. Her appearance would necessarily bring on, if not revolution—for the bastion was supposed to be immutable—at least harrowing explosions. (1946)

Upon first view, Blake’s drawing of a female (Peter Ackroyd thinks she is Vala) with a cathedral superimposed on her sexual organs is harrowingly explosive (Figure 16). Ackroyd writes that he also sees there an erect penis, but I don’t see it. In Blake’s *Notebook*, the female figure, wearing a crown, certainly represents a reinscription of femininity. Blake’s London was anything but supportive of the feminine. The patriarchal dictums dictated that it was all right for men to beat their wives, and if a patriarchal judge granted a divorce, the woman was rarely given custody of her children. In contrast, Blake expressed his reverence for the feminine, by placing a symbol of divinity inside her, placing a crown on her head, and portraying her naked beauty—psychically and physically. His reinscription dramatically, unequivocally shouted his intent. Eventually, his reinscription would find its full expression in the progressive trajectory of female individuation within his portrayal of the female characters. Saving the crown of his creation for his last work, *Jerusalem*, femininity inscribed,
stands as his symbol for his love of her entire being. We might even regard her creation as sublimely apocalyptic.  

Within the Romantic Era, several female characters have been poetically described in luxurious and honorific language. Of course, the usual ones come to mind: Percy Shelley’s Witch of Atlas, Keats’s Cynthia, and Mary Tighe’s Psyche, but none are as extensively fleshed out as Blake’s Jerusalem. Within his epic-length poem of 100 plates, room and time enough exist for him to develop her. His oeuvre’s females’ trajectory culminates in her. Within both the visual as well as the verbal, he not only showcases her femininity, he reinscribes it. And not incidentally, scholarly feminists such as Christine Gallant, Suzanne Sklar, and others laud Jerusalem’s process of individuation. Moreover, Blake hallows her femininity, by inscribing her with the role of the poem’s nurturer, and one might add the Great Mother figure and yes, even a signifier of the Feminine Principle. Representing the perfection of psychic and physical beauty, she can be understood as not just a female character, but as an archetype and a liberating archetype to boot. Blake’s apotheotic work is a feminist manifesto, and Chapter 4 will reveal the minute particulars of both her Jungian individuation and her becoming a feminist model for generations to follow.

Book production

“I hope the reader will be with me . . . .”

William Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 3

One would not ordinarily think that the theory and practice of book production could be part of Blake’s becoming either a forerunner to feminism or Jungian depth

68 See Willem de Kooning’s portrait of his wife Elaine for an uncanny similarity to Blake’s drawing.
69 These will be extensively discussed in Chapter 4: “Jerusalem.”
psychology. But by closely studying both we can come to realize how they, also, contribute, to both his idea of reaching one’s potential (process of individuation) and practicing an against-the-grain form of creation (i.e. book production). A close look at his theory and practice of book production shows how he consistently exhibited a form uniquely free of standard norms. He simply illustrates a female individuation (see the Title Page where Jerusalem’s entire cosmogenic cycle is beautifully rendered). And Jerusalem is becoming Blake’s creation of a liberated female: a feminist. In other words, his feminist proclivities enabled him to create liberated works of art. For within his theory and practice of book production, because of his dual and simultaneous texts, he is able to show and tell of a feminist individuation. We can hear it. We can see it.

To better understand his motive to produce a visual text, let us first look at his theory of art. In his two-page advertisement for his exhibition of 1809, beginning with his citing the lines from The Ancient Britons and pictorially describing his The Canterbury Pilgrims, his forthright candor appears at the bottom of page one in a quotation from Milton: “Fit audience find tho' few,” and page two, “The Invention of a portable Fresco,” describes the difference between fresco and oil—namely that fresco, because it breathes, can withstand the effects of time. Verifying that his sixteen designs are watercolors, which he states are essentially frescoes, he criticizes the wealthy members of the Royal Academy for prohibiting the exhibition of his paintings and further admonishes its members: “I demand of them to do me the justice to examine before they decide.” Moreover, he concludes his advertisement with a plea for a national recognition of his work because “Art is the glory of a Nation . . . Genius and Inspiration are the great Origin and Bond of Society.” Further on page two, he

70 By chance, I saw this fresco in a home in Scotland. Viewing it in total privacy, I felt I was on the edge of a bubble. The delicacy and deliciousness of feeling inches away from an original Blake was profound.
writes that he has recovered the lost art of fresco painting and then pays homage to Raphael and Michelangelo for enriching Italy with their frescoes. Blake's exhibition advertisement can be considered a preface to his “A Descriptive Catalogue of Blake's Exhibition.” He confidently asserts the importance and significance of exhibiting his works by deciding to stage his own exhibit after being rejected by the Academy. As he writes, he is “not so easily obstructed.” His 1890 exhibition took place after he began working on *Milton* and *Jerusalem.*

In sum, the Academy's members referring to his works as a “Madman's Scrawls” (which Blake alludes to in his advertisement) is appalling. Perhaps it requires our persistent vision to recognize Blake as a visionary.

Within Blake's books, he is experimenting with the production of books, consisting of copperplate engravings. Possibly, Blake is a precursor to Marx; after all, because of the hand-engraving, illustrating, and binding, Blake is ultimately rejecting commodification and capitalist reproductions. As a producer he finds himself wrestling with the idea of the assembly line or the repeated impressions of a given image. Thus with Blake there are often, instead of an “original,” several “copies” since the colorings vary from plate to plate of the same image; therefore, he was not part of a tradition he vehemently railed against: the modernity of mass production and if carried to the extreme: the dark Satanic mills.

Julia M. Wright's scholarship on Blake's theory/philosophy/act of engraving is especially well-articulated in her *Blake, Nationalism, and the Politics of Alienation,* in which she argues how Blake wants to engage both his compliant and active readers by slowing down their reading, by giving them lots of different images on each plate to ponder, by showing them the height of physical beauty, by providing a roadmap to individuation, by showing

---

71 It requires more effort and time to engage in reading the engraved text rather than in reading linear printing. I know, I am probably the first scholar to ever point this out.
emotion on the plates, and by offering narratives in different mediums. Citing Derrida, who ostensibly understands Blake's genius and his motives for his iconoclastic methods of portrayal and book production, she writes, “Derrida posits as dynamic interplay between form and content of a kind that has often engaged Blake scholars in readings that go beyond the text to the illustrations, erasures, and pagination of Blake's work” (3). Writing as a New Historicist, Wright aptly recognizes the connections between nationalism and its deleterious effects of repression upon imagination. As she explains, “Blake was very much concerned with the ways in which the nationalism promulgated by the state and its institution was not only repressive for the individual, in the Althusserian sense, but also a disruption of a nativist art and imagination as the uncorrupted expressions of individuality” (xv). Capitalist hegemony for Blake was a psychically crippling state. Wright’s statement that Blake’s characters’ “inner struggles are concealed from view” (xvii), we wonder whether she paid little, if any, attention to the visual narrative, where Blake provides the careful reader/viewer with much heightened as well as subtle drama that clearly delineates the characters’ body language and facial expressions. The characters’ inner struggles are certainly not ignored nor their various raptures. Also, his use of color, size of bodies, their placement on the plates, and so forth provide further clues to Blake’s meanings.

For example, when we look at Figure 18, we see Blake’s placement of the two female figures on the over-sized lotus, filling almost half of the plate. The significance of the two commingling bodies is evidenced by the space they occupy on the plate. Additionally, the golden sky, blue water, and the whiteness of the lotus all suggest the dream-like state of the unconscious or perhaps the region Blake refers to as Beulah—the place of peacefulness and dreams. If we look carefully and closely, we discover the two nude figures with long hair
embracing. The iconographic symbolism with its imagistic vitality of the lotus flower conveys its own unique significance.

Fig. 1:18. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 28

Wright redeems herself when she writes about Blake's resistance to the notion of linearity in art, both in practice and history. For example, Figure 5: Plate 2, the frontispiece, shows us Jerusalem’s entire individuation with its several phases. When viewing, we realize (actually “see”) her dynamic movement. Our eye does not so much see it all at once, although initially, that is possible, but rather we follow her figure’s progression, which reveals the fluidity of Jerusalem’s cycle through each of her various phases: the nascent stage of her cocoon-like birth, her winged flight, and so forth—all within a circle around the poem’s title. The artistic expression has everything to do with the individual and nothing to do with the nation, specifically its history of art and pedagogy. For Blake, nationalism was outside his sphere of creation because it represented the status quo—all that was dictating,
organizing, paradigmatic, and hegemonic—although he writes much about the egregious effects of nationalism. Also, I would read Ego (Urizen) and State as fairly analogous. As Wright’s prime example of Blake’s revolutionary method of composing and producing, she writes at length on his “Laocoön,” with its aphorisms arranged willy-nilly on the plate. Because of Blake’s creating outside the boundaries of a traditional printed book, no wonder many of his unimaginative contemporaries considered him mad. His iconoclastic printing of poems and epics was as full of imagination as his wished-for creative readers. We cannot reason our way through Blake. Rather, in a poststructuralist fashion, the visual text strongly indicates an anti-logocentric approach, with its “meaning” not expressed in words. Perhaps here we can understand the reason that so many traditional readers/critics are flummoxed by the poem since they are not only unaccustomed to reading a visual text but also unused to reading a verbal text that confounds with its relentless verbosity. And unless we adhere to Blake’s early suggestion that the poem is meant for the tongue of an orator, and thus read it as a drama, as Susanne Sklar suggests, we can easily become lost as to who is saying what to whom—much less where, why, or when.

Another significant study of Blake's ideas and practices of book production to command our attention is Joseph Viscomi, who has long been one of the good old boys among the traditional cadre of Blakean scholars. His finished work, Blake and the Idea of the Book, began as a dissertation, “The Workshop of William Blake,” although it never actually reached publication since Viscomi felt Robert Essick’s William Blake, Printmaker supplanted his own work. Writing from a New Historicist's perspective, Viscomi writes "that execution,

72 In sum, Wright succinctly explains Blake’s method: "By contesting the familiar, formal imperatives of mass-produced texts, Blake defamiliarizes both bibliographical conventions and the strategies by which theories of media and genre shape our perception of, and engagement with, words and pictures. He thereby generates a space for reading in which alternative strategies can be produced, rendering the modes of reading heterogeneous rather than uniform" (3).
with its pens, brushes, and impervious ‘ink,’ was as autographic as writing and drawing” (xxiv). The simultaneity of creative thought and creative execution, “the union of invention and execution” (43), reveal Blake's creative act as analogous to the creative act of the reader, where she/he is fully participating in the dynamic of both the verbal and visual texts—the external becomes the internal or, as Viscomi explains the process, “the act of discovery and the art of fixing and building upon what was found, without losing sight or the feel of the original image and impulse” (43). To understand Blake's composing process, Viscomi closely considers Blake's style of work on the plates. Did he transfer texts or not, how much did he practice drawing before illustrating, and what were the “practical and theoretical consequences” of these modes of expression? Viscomi’s close study of Blake's book production answers such questions as how he specifically printed the plates and color the impressions in various editions. Here, also, is an explanation of the division of labor between him and his wife. Additionally, Viscomi argues how those revisions did not alter the meaning of the book but rather altered Blake's “idea” of the illuminated book.

Additionally, the copious illustrations (with some in color) demonstrate many of Blake's maverick techniques of relief etching, white line illustration, and illuminated printing. Perhaps the most eloquent discussion found here is of Viscomi's total understanding of Blake's unconventional approach to printmaking, with its dominant paradigm of drawing from imagination and not from models or copies. Hence, the printmaking simply allowed Blake to give voice to his astonishing prophecies. Devoting an entire chapter to Jerusalem, “The Production and Evolution of Jerusalem, 1818-1827,” Viscomi elucidates how the chronology of Jerusalem is determined in large part by his research into the sale of plates and the eventual entire work and by commissions received by Blake to complete and deliver the illuminated work considered by Viscomi to be explosive. He gives us a sense of Blake's
indefatigable efforts of labor on what Erdman calls his greatest single work, his final major work during his last dying year. *Jerusalem* becomes his swan song in much the same way that Jerusalem, in the first full plate (Figure 19) of her figure, theriomorphs into a swan. In an Eliotian way, he arrives where he started and knows the place for the first time. A full circle of birth, death, and rebirth. Here we have another cosmogenic cycle, if you will, like the one on the title page of *Jerusalem*—where we can understand female individuation at its simplest, yet most comprehensive and conclusive level within his iconoclastic book production.

**Conclusion**

Clearly, Blake’s conscious opposition to these several areas are revolutionary enough, but when considered in total, we can begin to realize how he becomes a forerunner to both a feminist ideology and a Jungian depth psychology with its core process of individuation. Perhaps because of Blake’s feminist agenda with the character of Jerusalem, he was late (the 1960s) in being accepted into the orthodoxy of the white, male British canon. His iconoclastic ideas about homosexuality, masturbation, uninhibited sexuality, a feminist Jungian process of individuation—all reveal his final work’s two major themes: a feminist ideology and a Jungian story of depth psychology supporting it. Within *Jerusalem* these two against-the-grain themes negate their plurality, becoming—if you will—one and the same.

Blake against-the-grain? Yes. Unequivocally. His brilliantly defiant, revolutionary, visionary, revelatory, and limitless imagination, in both expression and production of *Jerusalem*, goes against every single grain of the Romantic Era’s cultural, social, and religious

---

73 The swan is a redolently symbolic reference, as being sacred to Aphrodite; thus, Jerusalem is a “poetic celebration of love. In India, the swan is the divine bird that laid the Cosmic Egg on the primordial waters from which Brahma hatched” (Stevens, *Ariadne's Clue* 364).

74 T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, V.

75 With the suffragette movement in the late 19th century, feminism in Britain gained a significant foothold.
status quo’s milieu. Blake asks much of us—his “now” future readers—but the imminent rewards of our brave souls willing to accept the challenge of the chaotic verbal excursion into *Jerusalem* can be life-altering—although, Blake, of course, phrases it much more poetically:

> The eye altering, alters all.

And once our eyes alter, we can begin to understand the more profound levels of how he is most of all consciously oppositional as he bodies forth an unparalleled female character gloriously hell-bent on individuating.

![Fig. 1:19. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 99](image_url)
APPENDICES to CHAPTER 1

\textit{Revolutionary anger}

Blake's expression of anger is, for the most part, consciously oppositional in its unique difference from the other canonical Romantic poets. Andrew Staufer, an especially insightful critic on this subject, in his \textit{Anger, Revolution, and Romanticism}, focuses on the vehement passion of anger and its role in the lives and writings of the British Romantic writers. Researching political and literary history, he discovers the sources of anger with the Romantic writers and how, within various genres, their anger was not only released but also articulated. From satire to poetry to novels, he shows the impact of anger on these authors and their works and how they individually expressed this emotion. Focusing on the patriarchal canon, he devotes full chapters to Coleridge, Shelley, and Byron, all who “reject anger as something experienced passively as a visitation upon the self and instead articulate angry emotions as positive and decisive enactments of the self upon the world” (5). These three wrote imprecations often viewed as madness or insincerity instead of being understood as their attempts to tell the truth of injustices. Often, they expressed their rage “because they were convinced of the dialogic relation between anger and truth” (8), fitting in with the general Romantic privileging of emotionalism. Summing up the French Revolution, Staufer writes how it demonstrated to the Romantics that its widespread societal anger only begot more vengeful rage and terror. Therefore, these poets chose a “private” angry discourse instead, not unlike McGann’s thesis in \textit{Romantic Ideology}. In both public and artistic discourse, anger, with its embodiment of inflammation, was not only a reaction, but also an agent for transformation, especially for Blake. Staufer's consideration of a few female writers—Joanna Baillie and Mary Shelley—is of some note, as is his contention that Wordsworth’s emotional
tenor lacks intense anger and indignation; however, one needs only to consider Wordsworth’s essay “A Guide to the Lake District” to realize that he, indeed, ably expresses his anger.

Significantly, we discover Staufer’s assessment of Blake’s anger as an active agent, a motivator for the creative imagination. After he constructs the binary of reactive anger and prophetic wrath, he argues that Blake's apocalyptic wrath transgresses, transforms, and transfigures reactive anger.

When we consider Blake's inscription of anger as inflammation and look at the visual text where colors denote anger, we see that Blake's use of arterial red is analogous to the pathology of inflammation. Expressing political, cultural, and psychological anger, many of Jerusalem's plates reveal his revolutionary anger. In Figure 20, we find Blake’s anger most

76 The dramatic impact of Plate 26, where Jerusalem is with Hand is of special significance, with its dark background and its blood-colored flames surrounding him. Significantly, it has the least verbal text. The colors
dramatically pictured, where a bellicose Hand,77 in what Paley refers to as a cruciform posture, is featured with Jerusalem, whose stance reveals neither fear of nor intimidation by his rage. Instead, her gestures reveal that she is adamantly pushing him away from her. Possibly this plate’s male figure is a metafigure of all the demonic forces Jerusalem overcomes. Yet Blake gives him to us early at the end of Chapter One. This plate contains no text separate from the illustration; however, engraved on the illustration we find

SUCH VISIONS HAVE / APPEARED TO ME / AS I MY ORDERED RACE
HAVE RUN / JERU / SALEM / IS NAMED / LIBERTY / AMONG THE SONS / OF ALBION78

As Staufer writes, “Reading his work via inflammatory pathology illuminates thus the ways that wrath and revolution are enmeshed in the structure of the Romantic imagination” (14). One must finally remonstrate, however, that, as Erdman has written, “The motif of Jerusalem is peace without vengeance.” Ultimately, Blake not only deals with his anger, he uses it as a means to arrive at love, embodied in the psychically mature Jerusalem.

**Prosody**

Blake’s consciously oppositional *modus operandi* would be sorely incomplete without a brief consideration of his prosody. The other Romantic writers appeal to our sense of hearing, for example, the musicality of Mary Tighe or John Keats, but Blake appeals to our broader sense of “being,” or if you will—“becoming.” Within his prosody, we not only feel

---

77 A name referencing all that Blake considers evil. Actually, Hand was the name of a reviewer who wrote disparagingly of Blake. Peter Ackroyd, in his biography of Blake, writes of Hand as a “fallen creature” (521).
78 Additionally, at plate’s bottom, Blake has engraved “HAND” under the male figure and “JERUSALEM” under the female.
the chaos of his verbal narrative, in terms regarding our often being barraged by his explosive litany of place names and so forth, but also, and more significantly, we are part of his at times chaotic environment. For during the experience of reading, we are one with his text. Our codeterminacy with Blake’s verbal text is unprecedentedly challenging. We feel the confusion, dismay, and certainly at times overwhelming frustration. He catapults us around from city to city, Zoa to Zoa, and character to character. We often feel that we are reading the index of *The New York Times’ Atlas of the World*. His narrative’s unsettling quality discombobulates us, and therein lies the challenge. He confronts us with the chaos of being in the time-bound experience, and perhaps many willing and earnest readers are not prepared and cannot summon the fortitude and patience to endure his verbal narrative with its at times abstruseness, cloyingly confusing characterizations, and place names that sound like new cheese formulations.

Regarding Blake’s prosody, his rhythms/“meters” in *Jerusalem* consist mostly of loose hexameters, obviously an attempt to do something like Homer’s dactylic hexameter in English. As for his ear, let us look at the following, a line that anticipates Swinburne in its rollicking rhythm and alliteration:

> And mighty preparations mustering multitudes innumerable (89:56)

In *Jerusalem*, Blake’s prosody lacks the lyrical simplicity of the shorter verses in his *Songs*, the lyrical genius of Wordsworth, the musicality of Mary Tighe’s Spenserian sonnets in her *Psyche*; and the verbal text lacks the architecturally beautiful imagery of Keats’s *Hyperion*, or the profound pathos of Charlotte Smith’s *The Emigrants*. And his lines in *Jerusalem* are not as beautifully lobbed toward us as are the lines in his *Songs*. In *Jerusalem* they are thick as sausage gravy; in the *Songs*, diaphanous as a bordelaise sauce.
CHAPTER 2

BLAKE and JUNG

“Jung taught us to listen to the oracle of the heart.”
Kathleen Raine, “C. G. Jung: A Debt Acknowledged”
(Sugg 168)

“What is the dream that is dreaming us today?”
Joseph Campbell, The Mythic Image (497)

“Man does not live in one world but between two worlds. You should
stand between them and uphold contact between them—just as
Siegfried exists between man and gods. Do you understand?”
C. G. Jung’s letter to Sabina Spielrein

*Blake’s and Jung’s philosophical forebears and milieu*

The Rebirth Pattern. The Initiation Pattern. The Heroine’s/Hero’s Journey. The
Night Sea Journey. The Quest Myth—all centuries-old names for aspects of Carl Jung’s
process of individuation with its timeless archetypal ubiquity. Considering that Jung
originated analytical depth psychology with individuation at its heart, my dissertation’s thesis,
in part, centers on Blake’s prescience of that. Therefore, I argue that Blake, as a forerunner
to Jung’s particular psychology, dramatically details within the uniquely simultaneous duality
of his texts the trajectory of female individuation, spanning his poetic corpus. Operas,
novels, plays, poems, fairy tales, religions, and myths all tell stories of individuation, but it is
Blake—unlike any artist or writer—who visually and verbally portrays many of Jung’s
precepts regarding individuation over a century before Jung codified them.

To understand further Blake’s and Jung’s commonalities, let us first place both
within a longer line of thinkers and their philosophical milieu. As Steve Behrendt wrote to me, we “see and hear the many echoes of not just biblical but a whole constellation of
classical and non-western mythological forebears.” Another way of describing Blake’s ideology: a Christian/pagan intuitive mysticism meets Romanticism. In other words, we can position Blake outside what is a traditional “line” of philosophical “thinkers”—unless we go back to the Gnostics, alchemists, and so on. Neo-Platonism is probably the best and most concise place for his philosophical milieu. Jung, an essentialist philosophically, also incorporates a Romantic philosophical tradition that runs from Goethe to Nietzsche.

Uncannily, William Blake wrote his poetic works at least half a century before Carl Jung’s birth in 1875. The commonalities between the two remain startling—the most comprehensive commonality: the psychological subject of the individuation’s process. For Blake to have written a trajectory of female individuation through his female poetic protagonists (Chapter 3), culminating in Jerusalem’s psychomachic triumph of the most successfully individuated heroine—an apodictic female archetype (Chapter 4)—reveals how he is a prescient forerunner to both Jung’s analytical depth psychology and a modern feminist ideology. Blake’s writings on the process of individuation positively contribute to the continuation of the ageless ritual of the journey of the hero(ine), or as I originally learned its name: the archetypal pattern of initiation and rebirth. However, before looking into the essential components of individuation, let us look at Blake’s sources before we consider the writings on Jung’s process of individuation.

79 Professor Behrendt wrote this in a letter to me in his evaluator’s response to my Combined Portfolio.
80 Henry Crabb Robinson, in “William Blake, Artist, Poet, and Religious Mystic,” manages in ten pages to explain Blake’s Christian orthodoxy; however, he also writes, ”His system thus remains more allied to the equanimity and patience of paganism than to the essential strength of Christianity” (598). In Jerusalem, Los and Albion, certainly, are aligned with a Christian idea of redemption, but Jerusalem in one interpretation can be considered a Great Mother figure, predating Christ, or a Jungian Mother unconscious archetype.
Blake’s sources

An understanding of Blake’s sources might help us to have a deeper awareness of his place and provenance. Blake himself wrote that Jacob Boehme was “his acknowledged prophetic progenitor” (Sklar 46). Now, for what others have to say about Blake’s sources, let us begin with one of the most comprehensive studies—Kathleen Raine’s highly ambitious study of 1958, Blake and Tradition. A hefty two-volume work of significant scholarly weight, it is part of Princeton’s Bollingen Series—which gives us more than a hint at her intellectual connections to Jung. Instead of our subscribing to today’s dominant philosophy of materialism, Raine reminds us that the arts can teach us the symbolic language of analogy—actually, “Divine Analogy.” Thus, the reader, intent upon understanding Blake, who obviously gives us no reference notes, must first be able to transcend corporeal understanding (xxix). Raine writes, “Blake lived in a world aware of many myths, many religions, and he could not fail to realize that all tell of the same reality” (xxx). Hence, we can realize the significance of Blake’s poem “All Religions are One.” She sums up her lengthy study of Blake’s sources best when she concludes: “Mythology, not history, is Blake’s cosmos” (xxv). This book, then, is a comprehensive study of ancient (orthodox) sources; however, Raine writes:

For Blake himself, no less than Ellis and Yeats, seemed to have a knowledge whose sources were not divulged, as knowledge of the ancient Mysteries was kept secret among initiates. I began to understand that in those Mysteries

---

81 Dr. Sklar refers us to “See MHH 21 and Blake’s September 1800 letter to Flaxman (K799)” (46).
82 They could be used in place of barbells.
83 Bollingen Series refers to the A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, annually delivered at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D. C. The provenance of its name hails back to Jung who built, as a personal retreat, a series of four towers in the village of Bollingen in Switzerland. Interestingly, Joseph Campbell’s A Hero with a Thousand Faces was also part of this series. Also, in the Bollingen series: Kenneth Clark's The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form, which neglects to mention any of Blake’s nude female portrayals.
84 I wonder: Can a Doctoral Candidate acolyte be considered an initiate?
was to be found the ordering principle. I know now that the key for which many have sought is traditional metaphysics with its accompanying language of symbolic discourse. (xxv-xxvi)

Simply stated, her study of Blake's sources highlights several important ones. First, some Romantic poets, including Blake, read and revered the translations of Thomas Taylor, which formed the bedrock for much of Blake’s early writing. According to Raine, his Christian polytheism found its source in Taylor’s “Orphism (Mystical Hymns of Orpheus) and the Neoplatonists” (73). She argues three main points: First, Blake and Taylor’s writing reveals more than a straightforward coincidence. Second, Swedenborg was, early in Blake’s writing career, an important source, and third, Neoplatonism helped to form Blake’s early poetic career. Other formative influences were “The Myth of the Kore,” Apuleius’s “Cupid and Psyche,” and she agrees that Boehme was an important influence.  

Historian E. P. Thompson, attempting to discover the sources for Blake’s writing and painting, initially lambasts Kathleen Raine for her citing “the scarcest and most inaccessible works . . . as central to her notion of “The Blake Tradition” (41). Squeals of jealousy ring loudly here. Searching for Blake’s sources, Thompson attempts to determine

---

85 Raines cites Blake as follows: “The Nature of my work is visionary or imaginative” (xxvii). See Livingston Lowe’s The Road to Xanadu, in which he explains what Coleridge calls “the hooks and eyes of memory” (qtd. in xxix).

86 However, Blake would later deride both the Greek classics and Plato. During his later years, he remained perplexed by Plato’s two contradictions in his thought: logos and mythos. Indeed, one could argue that Blake’s art/vision is a hierosgamos of logos and mythos.


88 In Richard Sugg’s Jungian Literary Criticism, Raine’s essay “C. G. Jung: A Debt Acknowledged” is largely an apology to Jung, for although she never considered herself a Jungian, through her study of Blake’s sources (Blake and Tradition), she became indebted to Jung for reinvigorating the tradition of “the learning of the imagination” (167). In sum, her unmitigated praise for Jung’s transforming influence is largely based on her belief that “Jung taught us to listen to the oracle in the heart” (168). Moreover, she emphasizes that the mundus imaginalis is what Jung and Blake philosophically share in common, and that it is an antidote to three centuries of secular materialism.
whether it is Blake’s autodidactism, Neoplatonism, proto-Marxism, antinomianism, the anti-
enlightenment and anti-evangelicalism of the Muggletonian Church, or his syncretic
polymathism that situates him intellectually. Seeing Blake as coming from “an ‘education’ of
informal tradition and collisions” (xv), his investigation considers Blake’s many possible
sources, including again Boehme, Gnosticism, and alchemy. He “argues that the poet’s most
important influences were not Neoplatonism or Thomas Paine, but a radical Christian
tradition that opposed and inverted the values of mainstream religion and learning.”

He might have it right on this point, for Blake writes, “Every religion that preaches Vengeance
for Sin is the Religion of the Enemy & Avenger and not of the Forgiver of Sin, and their
God is Satan, Named by the Divine Name.” Parenthetically, Thompson writes that, close
to 1810, Henry Crabb Robinson proclaimed that Blake’s “religious convictions had brought
on him the credit of being an absolute lunatic” (63). In sum, Thompson searches ad nauseam
for Blake’s “Tradition.”

Another possible source for Blake could have been Charles Wilkins’s 1785
translation of the Bhagavad-Gita, which Blake had read. For when we view the penultimate
plate #99 with Jerusalem being lifted upward out of the dark flames, Jerusalem's sexual
coupling with her divine lover in a conjunctio oppositorum, her coupling with an archetypal Wise
Old Man, or a reintegration of her animus projection coupled with a relationship—besides
other possible interpretations—we see her spiritual union with perhaps not a Christ figure
but referencing a much earlier Brahma figure and alluding to the day of Brahma:

On that coming of that day all things proceed from invisibility to visibility . . .

The universe, even, having existed, is again dissolved; and now again on the

89 Quoted from the book cover’s front flap.
90 Blake’s Preface "To the Deists" in Jerusalem.
approach of day, by divine necessity, it is reproduced. That which, upon the
dissolution of all things else, is not destroyed, is invisible and eternal. (Paley 
75-76)

Indeed, perhaps Blake is a prescient "Orientalist."\textsuperscript{91}

Moving from Blake’s philosophical underpinnings to his artistic sources and 
inspirations, let us consider Blake’s sources for his aesthetic philosophy of art and his view 
of the sublime, beginning with Julia M. Wright. As a New Historcist, her premise is simple: 

Blake was very much concerned with the ways in which the nationalism 
promulgated by the state and its institution was not only repressive for the 
individual, in the Althusserian sense, but also a disruption of a nativist art and 
imagination as the uncorrupted expressions of individuality. (xv)

\textsuperscript{91} Professor Thomas Gannon suggested this insight to me.
Political hegemony for Blake was a psychically crippling state. When Wright argues that Blake’s characters’ “inner struggles are concealed from view” (xvii), one wonders whether Wright paid little, if any, attention to the visual narrative, where Blake provides the careful reader/viewer with much dramatic as well as subtle drama that shows in the characters’ body language and facial expressions. (Also, his use of color, size of bodies, their placement on the plates, and so forth provide further clues to his meanings.) Especially in his illuminated epics, Blake dramatically reveals his characters’ inner struggles. However, Wright redeems herself when she writes about Blake's resistance to the notion of linearity in art both in practice and history. The artistic expression has everything to do with the individual and nothing to do with the nation, specifically its history of art and pedagogy. For Blake, nationalism was outside his sphere of creation because it represented the status quo—all that was dictating, organizing, paradigmatic, and hegemonic; in fact, he writes much about the egregious effects of nationalism. Also, I would read Ego (Urizen) and State as fairly analogous.

Significantly relative to *Jerusalem*, almost one-fourth of the plates feature the eponymous heroine, and this visual narrative unfolds her psychic individuation more than her role in the community. The verbal narrative ultimately describes her sense of community on a global level, where she aims to unite all of the world's humankind. In stark contrast within the visual, Blake portrays Jerusalem attempting and succeeding in transcending the human and social constraints. She is of it but not of it.

92 As her prime example of Blake's revolutionary method of composing and producing, she writes at length on his "Laocoön" with its aphorisms arranged willy-nilly on the plate.
Also of significance we find Wright’s ideas about Blake’s theory/philosophy/act of engraving. Blake wants to engage both his compliant and active readers by slowing down their reading, by giving them many different images on each plate to ponder, by showing them the height of physical beauty, by providing a roadmap to individuation, by showing emotion on the plates, and by offering narratives in different mediums. Because Blake created his works outside the boundaries of traditionally printed poems and books, no wonder many of his unimaginative contemporaries considered him mad. His iconoclastic printing of poems and epics was as full of imagination as his wished-for creative readers.

We find another highly possible source for Blake’s aesthetic theory of art and the sublime in Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1756). The editor, Adam Phillips, considers the importance of Burke’s aesthetics second only to Kant when he writes that,

> Even though the influence of the *Enquiry* is clearly identifiable in many of the most important works of the Romantic period, it has either been dismissed as an interesting but derivative piece of juvenilia or deemed to be negligible, indeed amateurish compared with Kant's powerfully serious *Analytic of the Sublime* published in 1790. (ix)

This reader considers it an essential work in the understanding of Blake’s aesthetic theory of art, most specifically the sublime. Actually, Blake addresses his aesthetic theory of

---

93 Wright writes, "Derrida posits as dynamic interplay between form and content of a kind that has often engaged Blake scholars in readings that go beyond the text to the illustrations, erasures, and pagination of Blake’s work" (3).

94 It requires more effort and time to engage in reading the engraved text rather than in reading direct printing. I know, I am probably the first scholar ever to ever point this out.

95 "By contesting the familiar, formal imperatives of mass-produced texts, Blake defamiliarizes both bibliographical conventions and the strategies by which theories of media and genre shape our perception of, and engagement with, words and pictures. He thereby generates a space for reading in which alternative strategies can be produced, rendering the modes of reading heterogeneous rather than uniform" (Wright 3).
art in his preface to *Jerusalem’s* Chapter One by equating fallen perception with humankind's fallen condition. Writing from a Christian stance, Burke, through his physiological theory, sets up the physical effects in contrasting beauty and sublimity: beauty is pleasurable and calming (e.g., the pleasures of love) whereas sublimity is painful and terrorizing (e.g., the loss of love). As a counter-revolutionary writer, he clarifies his study by explaining not only the how and the why of beauty's effect upon us, but also the effect of the pains brought on by reactions to the sublime, feelings, and interpretations—on both the individual and the societal level. Alternatively as Behrendt explains it, "While the beauty of a work of art may inspire love or admiration, the sublimity of a work of art may inspire awe or astonishment at its mystery and power."

Following Burke, Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (1790) expresses a subjective view of art similar to Blake’s, so it may well have been a source. Shall we ask ourselves the most profound question: Which came first? Blake’s egg or Kant’s chicken? Kant, the reigning lord of the German Enlightenment, certainly does not ascribe to the French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain's philosophical summary of beauty: "In the presence of a beautiful work . . . the intellect rejoices without discourse" (123). Discourse—almost *ad infinitum*—is Kant’s middle name. His third and final tome, often referred to as the "crowning phase of critical philosophy," systematically brings together his three *Critiques*. Divided into two parts, his foundational work for modern aesthetics consists of the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" and the "Critique of Teleological Judgment." The more relevant first part attempts to answer the questions "How do we judge beauty?" and "How can we remain objective about beauty?" Kant’s first step with aesthetic judgment concern

---

96 Daniel Schierenbeck elaborates on this in his "Sublime Labours: Aesthetics and Political Economy in Blake’s *Jerusalem*" (22). Schierenbeck contends that Blake, like Burke, "valorizes the sublime" (23).

97 This is from a handout from Professor Behrendt’s graduate seminar *The Greening of Romanticism.*
the object's quality, and not understanding through a cognitive or logical judgment, but rather through a subjective feeling. Rather, he proposes a simple basis of how one feels or the effect of beauty's presentation. He elucidates both his analytic of the beautiful and his analytic of the sublime, in fact titling them such. After discussing "moments" of observation (e.g., "First Moment of a Judgment of Taste, As to Its Quality," in Book II: "Analytic of the Sublime," he carefully distinguishes the sublime in art from the sublime in nature. In the simplest of summaries, he writes that an artist's spirit (geist) imparts the energy into one's work. To quote my favorite aphorism of Blake's: "Exuberance is beauty." Blake's visual text, being word-free, requires a subjective response from his reader. Moreover, the general linear narrative can be "felt" especially by looking at the consecutively ordered plates featuring Jerusalem. Yes, we can "see" her individuation visually. Blake accomplishes, within his verbal text, Kant's theory that an understanding of beauty comes to us subjectively.

We can perceive Blake's aesthetic theory of art through a Kantian lens. Blake's dynamic spirit is evident in both the highly dramatic and the softest of subtleties revealed not only in the intense action and colors of Plate 25 (Figure 25), where Albion's tormenters, Rahab, Vala, and Tirzah, are pulling out his guts, but also in the tender restraint of Plate 71, where the same swan nudging Jerusalem is the one in Plate 11.

19 I remember the first time I saw Plate 32, "Naked Beauty Displayed." At that moment, I experienced the Emily Dickinson line: "If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry." I knew the plate was the most beautiful work of art I had ever seen. It was an epiphanic moment and the dramatic impetus for my entire study of Jerusalem. In a Kantian way, I was affected by seeing Blake's visual idea of beauty. I did not think anything. I simply felt. Blake, at that moment, riveted my attention. I wanted to know more about that female figure. Who were those smaller females clamoring around her, and who was that female in the shadow with a veil? When I started thinking about it, of course, it reminded me of Botticelli's Birth of Venus where a female figure also was making a feeble attempt to cover or veil Venus in a similar fashion.
Fig. 2:22. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 25
It requires as much skillful control to play *pianissimo* as it does *fortissimo*, and similarly

Blake in *Jerusalem* subtly paints etherially light water lilies denoting a transcendent state as he
dramatically paints the bloody and black colors denoting madness and chaos. However, there are a few plates of ostensibly quiet stasis.\(^2^0\) One exceptionally "static" Plate (#14), shows befuddled-looking Los stretched out on the ground and flanked by two small cherubic figures as bookends of sorts. He is imagining Jerusalem, who is in a cartoon-like bubble above him, revealing not her beautiful physicality, but her demure, clothed figure wearing a "housedress" with pom-poms. One might also note that Blake's humor is both robustly poignant and beautiful.

Looking at another highly possible source for Blake's aesthetic philosophy, let us consider Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* [1764], written twenty-six years before his *Critique of Judgment*. This little jewel (a mere seventy-one pages) of aesthetic theory is much less heavy-footed and pedantic than his great Critical trilogy. The sage of Königsberg's subjectivist aesthetic represents a startlingly original view, differing from those of his two great rationalist predecessors: Longinus and Burke. Their philosophies were deductive, descriptive, and empirical; Kant's was inductive, prescriptive, and *a priori*. For Kant, a sense of the sublime and beautiful does not originate in a logical understanding of the perceived object but in a personal *feeling* or intuitionism, ironically emanating from the mind rather than the senses.\(^2^1\) We already know that Blake believes we come to believe from our heart and not our brain, and although Blake and Kant agree on this maxim, we have no definite proof that Kant was a source for Blake, only that they shared this similar idea of perception, which informs our "judgment."

\(^2^0\) By intentional design, Blake sometimes chooses to portray a static energy where the spirit is quelled to denote passivity and sad-sack gloom rather than a positive vitalism.

\(^2^1\) After reading Longinus, Burke, and now Kant, my favorite aesthetic one-liner is Kant's: "The sublime *moves*, the *beautiful* charms" (47).
Additionally, Kant believes in the universality of this aesthetic, for he writes, "These principles are not speculative rules, but the consciousness of a feeling that lives in every human breast" (29). So, like his moral imperative (also universal), there is an "aesthetic imperative" of sorts. Going on to say that beauty and virtue are woven together with morality, his aesthetic is tied in with the ethical. Goldthwait, the translator, goes so far as to write in his summary of Kant's aesthetic philosophy, "The sublime emerges as an important moral component of a person" (18).

Regarding the eponymous heroine, Jerusalem, and her sublimity, perhaps the reader is both in love with her and simultaneously in awe or afraid of her, for she is simultaneously charming (she’s beautiful, self-assured, and magnanimously loving) and terrifying (she disembowels Albion)—unequivocally a sublime experience. Her psychomachic quest is both ancient, timeless, and sublimely archetypal. Is it little wonder that Blake's portrayal of her both visually and verbally is his oeuvre's sublime crown? Surely, Kant would tip his hat to her.

As I’ve mentioned before, Susanne M. Sklar, in her "Blake's Jerusalem as Visionary Theatre: Entering the Divine Body", writes of Jerusalem’s mythopoetic antecedents: women in the Bible, Eve, various virgins, Bathsheba, Sophia—and describes the several primary sources for Blake’s writing of the poem: The Book of Revelation (especially with its totality of redemption),

---

22 Perhaps unwittingly, his generalizations are appalling; for example, women are considered fairer and more agreeable than men, and "Her philosophy is not to reason but to sense" (79). He then adds to this miasma by generalizing the characteristics of countries: "English, Spanish, and Germans embody the sublime, the French and Italians the beautiful. The Dutch are untouched" (19). Is his over-generalization (to be sure) stemming from geography and climate and place? Taine, the literary historicist, later explains the “characteristic” melancholy of the British character as derived from a rainy/foggy/depressing climate.

23 Jerusalem is not a whore, although the jealous Albion calls her one. We see her trials with Los, Albion, Hand, and Vala, but they are never because of her lapse in morals. One of the hallmarks of her moral character is her magnanimity, revealed when she attempts to bring together all the countries of the world. Her behavior is prompted by love and not salacious gratification of her senses. Yes, we see her making love in a couple plates; however, she is more like a Greek goddess of love than a sinning Christian woman, which is additional support for my contention that Blake is writing from a pre-Christian stance.
Rosicrucians, Boehme (Blake’s prophetic progenitor), Freemasonry, alchemical texts (with their theatrical and visionary elements), and Blake's primary inspiration, *King Lear*, obviously relating Albion to Lear and Jerusalem to Cordelia. If these works are not sources for Blake, they generally share a connecting thread of thought. Their definitions of the sublime are uncannily similar to how Blake exhibited them, especially in his illuminated epics.

A possible early source for Blake could be Longinus’s foundational work "On the Sublime," written in the first century A.D. and originally published in 1554. Blake could very likely have read it because, as Walter Jackson Bates writes in his summary of the sublime, “It stresses the importance of emotional transport, of imaginative grandeur, and of the sympathetic reaction of the individual reader or hearer” (59). Sounds like Blake to me.

Becoming especially popular after the middle of the eighteenth century, this early contribution to literary criticism addresses the sublime in rhetoric rather than in the visual arts. After first discussing the false sublime and showing how pity, grief, and fear are of a lower order (66), Longinus defines the sublime as “elevation of style” and then elaborates on elevated language's five primary sources (59): great conceptions; strong and inspired passion; expressions of figures, which include thought and expression; noble diction (use of metaphors, amplifications, and elaborations of language); and "dignified and elevated composition" (66).

Moreover, Longinus explains how this elevated language can lead us to transport, not persuasion. Suggesting the two extremes of language as tumidity (pomposity) and puerility (childishness), he then discusses how another defect of language is *parenthyrsus*, an

---

98 Blake, on Plate 3 of *Jerusalem* ("To the Public"), asks for the sympathy of his readers: "I also hope the Reader will be with me."

99 For the seminal treatise on the sublime in the visual arts, certainly in addition to John Ruskin's, Morton Paley's *The Apocalyptic Sublime* is the go-to, especially with the subject of paintings.
"unreasonable and empty passion" (64), as exhibited during intoxication. Offering many examples from Homer's *Odyssey*, he finally proclaims, "The judgement of style is the last and crowning fruit of long experience" (65). Moreover, "Sublimity is the echo of a great soul" (66), and the loftiest tone is genuinely passionate. He asserts that a combination or "union of figures for a common object" (69) contributes to the elevation of style. Eighteen centuries later, Blake would illustrate all of this.

Conclusively, *Jerusalem*, in both the visual and the verbal narratives, is a superb example of the Longinian aesthetic ideal of the sublime for the qualities enumerated in Longinus's fragmented treatise. Additionally, we can come to understand Blake's neo-classical idiom within his visual art. As a "visionary apprentice" (Bindman, *Blake as an Artist* 11) working as a young boy in both James Basire's studio and in Westminster Abbey and later as a student/engraver at the Royal Academy, he became accustomed to studying and copying Classical art with its perfectly proportioned human forms. Later, his reiteration of the Classical models makes Blake the only poet/artist who gives us a double shot, straight up, of the sublime.100

**Process of individuation**

In looking at Jung’s pattern of psychological development—known as the process of individuation, let us consider A) Jung’s definition of individuation; B) Joseph Campbell’s historical studies thereof; C) others’ writings on Jungian individuation; D) Jung’s feminist writings on individuation; E) feminists’ writings on the subject; and for good measure, (F) Blake’s *The Book of Urizen* as a contrary example of self-willed individuation; and finally G)

---

100 Writing about Longinus, Pope says, his "own example strengthens all his laws; / And is himself that great Sublime he draws" (qtd. in Longinus 60). And when Longinus, writes about the majority of half-hearted individuals who deify money and pleasure, his expression is both timeless and sublime.
individuation’s essential components: 1) the collective unconscious with its main archetypes: persona, shadow, anima or animus, and self—where the individuation occurs; 2) quaternity; and 3) psychological transformation/transcendence.

As I will argue, since the archetypal pattern of individuation’s eternal nature spans countries, cultures, and centuries, many artists and writers propounded ideas similar or related to both Jung and Campbell. Its presence, albeit satirical, appeared recently in *The New Yorker*.

![Fig. 2:25. Boz Chast, The Hero's Journey, 2018, The New Yorker](image)

Jung explained the dynamics of individuation; Campbell documented examples of the pattern. A close friend once said, “If you’ve read one initiation pattern, you’ve read them all.” Maybe true. Hence, Campbell appropriately titled his seminal study *The Hero with a*
Thousand Faces. Jung is the first psychiatrist to write exhaustively (twenty-one volumes) about its processes and components.

Additionally, Jung is the first to enumerate its collective and individual unconscious processes as well as add unparalleled scholarship to its personal (individual) unconscious patterns of development/growth. Jung, Campbell, and Blake were mavericks in their respective fields in writing conclusively and comprehensively about individuation: Jung writes its psychological philosophy, Campbell its historical record (both human and mythological), and Blake its versions for both male (Milton in Milton, Los in Jerusalem) and female (Jerusalem in Jerusalem). All three—the psychiatrist, the historian, and the poet/artist, within their respective fields, ultimately define the archetypal aspect of individuation’s timeless pattern of psychological development.

Many writers—both females and males—have written about various initiation patterns/rites before, during, and after Blake’s lifetime. To mention only a small handful: before—Edmund Spenser (16th century); during—Mary Tighe (1772-1810), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), Shelley; and after—Hopkins, Wallace Stevens, Thomas Mann, Maud Bodkin (1875-1961), and Marie-Louise von Franz. Additionally, contemporary feminist writers—both male and female—have written insightful and academically essential studies on the subject: Edward Edinger, William Witcutt, Esther Harding, Clarissa Estés, and Eric Neuman, to mention only a few.

Uncannily, William Blake (1757-1827) wrote most of his poetic works almost a century before Carl Jung’s birth in 1875. The commonalities between the two remain startling—the most comprehensive commonality: the psychological subject of the process of individuation, as I have mentioned, with its components of quaternity, the collective unconscious, and psychological transformation (transcendence). For Blake to have written a
trajectory of female individuation through his poetic protagonists (Chapter 3), culminating in the most successfully individuated heroine—Jerusalem (Chapter 4), reveals how he is a prescient forerunner to both Jung’s analytical depth psychology and feminist ideology.

Blake’s writings on the process of individuation positively contribute to the continuation of the ageless ritual of the journey of the hero(ine), or as I originally learned it: the Initiation Pattern.

**Jung’s writings on individuation**

The heart of Carl Jung’s analytical depth psychology is the process of individuation. One of the more lucid definitions is by Anthony Stevens, psychiatrist and Jungian analyst who, in his *Ariadne’s Clue*, writes of individuation as the “term used by Jung to designate the process of personality development which leads to the fullest possible actualization of the Self, the central nucleus of the personality which contains all the archetypal potential with which an individual is innately endowed” (235). In Chapter 3, I will argue how Blake, through his *oeuvre*, gives the circumspect reader a trajectory of female individuation, progressively developing it first with *The Book of Thel* (1789); *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (Oothoon, 1793); *The Little Girl Lost* (Lyca); *The Little Girl Found* (1794); *The Book of Ahania* (1795); and culminating in *Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (1820).

Before we look at Blake’s potential heroines and one fully individuated one, it might be meaningful to consider the impulses, motives, and driving forces bringing about the process of individuation by asking ourselves: Why would one strive for individuation? Is it straight Darwinism built into the DNA? Why/how does one person complete the process and another does not? Where does the motivation and courage to begin the process come from as well as the courage to continue? Does one’s culture, genetic makeup, intellectual
aptitude, or character come into play? Is one a potential heroine/hero even before beginning the process? What sparks the motivation to build one’s character? Why seek the goal of personal freedom? The process of individuation requires nothing short of sublime labor, and not everyone has the desire or perhaps even the capacity (dare I say aptitude) to freely engage in sublime labor. Instead of doing the labor, one can resort to a shortcut to the baser means of transcending, which we realize are short-lived. However, if we consider transcending as another name for transformation, then yes, the temporary means of transcending cannot lead into transformation or at least one that lasts past the last drink or the last pill, or even the last lay. James Baldwin, in his short story “Sonny’s Blues,” writes that his younger brother, a heroin drug addict, felt he was “most in it” when he was “most out of it.” Baldwin, a heavy drinker, knew of what he was writing. All the usual addictions—sex, drugs, alcohol—are only short side trips into a sometimes-euphoric state that deceive the individual into believing she/he is “most in it” or is living her/his most authentic self. The user when “high” likes the feeling of feeling good, of feeling above the fray. It is a quick way of transcending one’s day-to-day reality, but undeniably it does not lead to a psychic transformation. Unless one becomes sick and tired of feeling sick and tired and makes a quantum leap into attempting a process of individuation, no lasting and genuine transformation is possible.

Blake answers these provocative questions through his poetic works and specifically for this study the ones that show us a trajectory of female individuation, and he does provide for us a model, a prototype if you will, for individuation. His writing reveals that extricating oneself from the dragon’s belly is not a simple task, but if one is willing to labor sublimely, then one can endure the cosmogenic cycle again and again and again for the sake of

101 Blake’s name for Jerusalem. See Plate 26.
successful individuation. With the character of Jerusalem, Blake creates a monumentally
grand heroine, an archetypal model, or as Tennyson would say a “great soul.” After all, she
emanates from the Giant Albion (the ancient name for Britain), and her mother is Beulah,
who represents a paradisiacal realm. Let us say that Jerusalem comes from some
extraordinary stock. She is no housewife in Gretna, Nebraska frying potatoes and pork
chops for her hungry brood; her father is not stocking shelves at Wal-Mart; and her mother’s
psyche is not soaking in valium while she watches FOX news and eats Russell Stovers’s
chocolate/pecan turtles. But actually individuation is possible for all.

Jung answers these questions surrounding the motives and capacity for successful
individuation in his *Aspects of the Feminine*. Here, he writes that

> the secret of psychic development is a question of individual capacity. . . .
> Psychic life is a development that can easily be arrested on the lowest levels.
> It is as though every individual had a specific gravity, in accordance with
> which he either rises, or sinks down, to the level where he reaches his limit.
> His views and convictions will be determined accordingly. . . . Nature is not
> only aristocratic, she is also esoteric.¹⁰² Yet no man of understanding will
> thereby be induced to make a secret of what he knows, for he realizes only
> too well that the secret of psychic development can never be betrayed, simply
> because that development is a question of capacity. (53)

Jung’s writing on an individual’s inherent capacity to individuate is somewhat
disturbing because it sounds like a prelude to the eugenics movement in the U. S. and later in
Nazi Germany:

¹⁰² This is quite Nietzschean in its implicit elitism.
Thus it is that every period of life has its own psychological truth, and the same applies to every stage of psychological development. There are even stages which only the few can reach, it being a question of race, family, education, talent, and passion. Nature is aristocratic. (52)

Jung surely cannot be referring to aristocracy as one who is from noble birth. For Jerusalem comes (emanates) from Albion, signifying ancient Britain, or denoting Everywoman, or Everyman, or EveryBrit. Perhaps first Blake is saying that a person’s psychological development has little or nothing to do with one’s ancestors. An abusive father is an abusive father, regardless of his financial, political, cultural, and religious stature. A person striving for a better life, laced with the joys of sensuality (including the joys of the flesh) can earnestly attempt self-willed individuation regardless of parentage. All it initially requires is a strong will for something better for oneself—an honest desire to work for a beautiful life. One can either get on with the business of living or the business of dying.103

Blake is setting up an analogy of Jerusalem’s individuation with the reader’s individuation, as well as Blake’s by poem’s end. Reading the verbal narrative and musing the visual is not easy to navigate, comprehend, or endure. As Stephen Behrendt proclaimed, “Reading Jerusalem is fiendishly difficult.” Many readers have lost their way and given up early. What Blake shows us is his monumentally sublime labor: the tedious engraving of one hundred plates, most with intricately detailed drawings and colorations. Moreover, all this accomplished when he was ill and probably hungry and cold; however, he persevered and accomplished his task. Sixteen years of work. I think he knew it would not be well-received.

103 Perhaps Jung’s notion of aristocracy is true in some way for a limited number of individuals, both females and males, who are capable of achieving successful individuations. Also, great literary heroines can be counted on two hands. We can ask ourselves: Can only the exceptional accomplish the exceptional; or why does only 1% of the world’s population earn a Ph.D.? 
His determination remains relentless and driven, almost beyond our imagination. His accomplishment can be our *vade mecum* if we choose to run the grueling intellectual road race with him. He reveals to us, his now future readers, that the freedom (liberty) individuation engenders is no idle dream. We can become our dream. Perhaps we begin with trust, and for many of us who have been wounded, abused, and psychologically scarred, we can know that Blake believed in our holiness. (“All things that live are holy.”) He engraved *Jerusalem* letter by letter, day by day, even hour by hour for us, his “Now, future readers.”

Before considering the differences between a female’s psychic development and a male’s, let us first look at Jung and then the other major writers who have extensively written about the process of individuation.

In Jung’s *Four Archetypes* (Volume 9, Part I of *Collected Works*), formerly a lecture and published in 1938, he begins with defining the two levels of a person's unconscious—personal and collective. The personal originates from previously repressed experiences, whereas the deeper collective differs because it contains an innate characteristic—an archetype—and therefore is universal, whose contents also find expression in myths and fairytales. On a personal level, the archetypes cannot be integrated simply by rational means but require a dialectical procedure, a real coming to terms with them, often conducted by the patient in dialogue form, so that without knowing it, he puts into effect the alchemical definition of the *meditatio*: 'an inner colloquy with one’s good angel'. (5)

Proceeding from these brief definitions in his *Four Archetypes*, Jung, in very basic terms, begins with the mother archetype. Considering its psychological aspects, he first gives a historical account, along with an explanation of an archetype as more of a form than a
specific content and the primordial image of which is then "filled out with the material of conscious experience" (13). He then delves into several of the more characteristic types, including both "good" and "evil" ones. After a brief consideration of the mother-complex, he distinguishes between how both sexes manifest it, and argues that it is not necessarily related to injury and illness. Its positive effects are numerous. He stresses the importance of maintaining an awareness of primordial images—archetypes—as well as the importance of becoming "conscious" and believes "emotion is the chief source of consciousness" (30). Jung is adamant about emotions as a source of consciousness and not logical thinking. Logos, then, not only hampers a healthy development of consciousness but also make it nearly impossible to achieve an apotheosis when Logos is considered as the primary source for engendering individuation.

As Jung continues with his description of individuation’s process here, he offers a brief explanation of the psychology of rebirth (with fascinating commentary on the practice of yoga to promote and/or achieve a specific psychic effect to induce transformation [cf. "The Psychology of Eastern Medicine"], subjective transformation (diminution of personality), enlargement of personality, identification with a group, and the "phenomenology of the spirit in fairytales" (85).

Jung's writing here is especially important for a two reasons: first, the mother-complex of the daughter Jerusalem with her mother, Beulah; and second, the rebirth and transformation of Jerusalem's individuation process leading to her expansive consciousness. In Chapter 4, I will argue how Jerusalem's apotheosis is archetypal within the poem, and by

---

104 In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung more comprehensively describes and documents the Mother archetype attributes.

105 As a side note: In his final essay "On the Psychology of the Trickster Figure," he concludes by writing about the primitivity, shadow component, and divine/animal nature of this archetype.
its end, she not only concretizes the mythically dimensioned mother archetype, but also (and alternatively) in the penultimate Plate 99, she reconciles with her animus (her “inner male” bridge to the unconscious), unites with her Divine Lover, or what Jung describes as her recognizing “a greater personality” (56). Hence, the significance of the Jungian archetype of the “wise old man” is also relevant.106

Jung’s treatise *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* is of a particular value for us today. In a Western world that values material achievement more than psychic development, he contends that "psychic reality as the most important achievement of modern psychology, though scarcely recognized as such" (191). He begins with a chapter on analytical psychology, including an extended definition and defense of the existence of the unconscious psyche and concludes with his concerns about modern humankind's moral squeamishness about doing “soul work.” Especially after the devastating effects of the World Wars, he feels that humankind in general needs psychic repair, but he also contends we generally don’t have the moral fortitude to consider our psyches as vehicles to possible happiness. However, he stops short of saying we are psychologically demolished. Indeed, with our lust for material things, possession and dominance of others, and blind religious and philosophical leanings, his argument to turn inward (via analytical psychological introspection) is a remedy for what ails us. Anything short of that results in half-lives, unresolved complexes, and dog-chasing-her/his-tail-behavior that looks for love in all the wrong places. In sum, any psychological growth stopped before arriving at a complete individuation results in a world full of war (political) and psychopathology (personal).

Jung address the avoidance of the process of individuation either by rational choice or by naïveté in his *sine qua non* Chapter 8—"Psychology and Literature." Here, Jung

106 Jung writes that “When a summit of life is reached . . . then, as Nietzsche says, ‘One becomes Two.’“
distinguishes between the two types of artistic creations—psychological and visionary. The source of the psychological one is human consciousness/experience/the understandable, and the visionary creation's is the unfamiliar/archetypal/uncensored experience. Blake's *Jerusalem* is a visionary creation because he completely works out the psychomachia of Jerusalem's individuation and, as she claims her animus's values at poem's end, perhaps Blake, too, realized and integrated his anima's values instead of projecting them onto his wife, Katherine. Blake’s visionary mythology is his means to persuasively point out our obscuration of spirit and head us toward the right path, because, after all, the Kantian/Urizenic model does not work anymore. We cannot rationalize our way to salvation. We cannot talk ourselves into saving our own asses. His formidable mythology becomes easier to understand as we turn inwards to do the necessary work leading to salvation (read individuation). If Jung were alive today, he would be more adamant than ever about how "we" need a "soul," a "spirit," a true sense of our psychically healthy selves. Our current world is generally unhealthy: the earth, the seas, the air, the people. Our beloved animals are nearing extinction at alarming rates. With our world filled with senseless wars; world-wide poverty with its attendant starvation, dominating power and influence by the wealthy; plagues and diseases wiping out tens of thousands; pervasive expressions of violence—culturally, politically, militarily, religiously, personally; and Facebook buffoonery—Jung is needed more than ever. Also in *Jerusalem*, Blake, in what I would argue through a Jungian process, reveals how the female protagonist achieves a healthy soul (psyche) through her successful individuation. Psychically she repairs herself and becomes an archetypal heroine—an individuated character. She is a prototype for a successful Jungian

---

107 In *Jerusalem*, Urizen represents all that is of thought only or reason minus feeling, intuition, and or sensation—a Dick Cheney type of frightening character.
individuation, who represents what Blake names her: liberty. She is both a Jungian and Blakean vision of what is potentially possible.

**Joseph Campbell’s historical studies of individuation**

In his *Pathways to Bliss*, Campbell simplifies Jung’s key concepts, e.g. anima (the female ideal in the masculine unconscious), animus (the male ideal in the female unconscious) (75), shadow, "the landfill of the self . . . and also a sort of vault: it holds great, unrealized potentialities within you" or better yet—"the backside of your light side" (73), and individuation (for starters: releasing all ideals and projections) (79). The most valuable definition so far of individuation is this: "To see people and yourself in terms of what you indeed are, not in terms of all these archetypes that you are projecting around and that have been projected on you" (76). After writing a brief historical outline of mythology’s role in world cultures, he explains the process of individuation as the common denominator of all myths in our lives: “Myths inspire the realization of the possibility of your perfection, the fullness of your strength, and the bringing of solar light into the world” (148).

In his historical study *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, first published more than seventy years ago (1947), Campbell investigates the process of the hero’s journey from a wide range of cultures and centuries. As my colleague Dr. Tom Gannon said, "If you’ve read one example of an archetype, you’re read them all." In Campbell’s comprehensive study of a hero’s journey, rarely does he use the feminine pronoun, although he does occasionally refer to female figures in the world’s myths, stories, and folktales. Retelling dozens of

---

108 Of course, this emphasis on the individual—in Jung and Campbell—is specifically Euro-/Western, in contradistinction to the claim of universality. Other cultures put less stock in the individual and her/his “bliss.”

109 As my colleague Dr. Tom Gannon said, "If you’ve read one example of an archetype, you’re read them all."

110 "For Blake, the sublime is male, the pathos female. Together they compose a complete human identity, but separated they are a source of torment” (Paley's annotation in The William Blake Trust's edition of *Jerusalem* 283).
ancient/primitive tales as well as a few more modern versions, Campbell enables us to read the “grammar of the symbols,” and, “as a key to this mystery I know of no better tool than psychoanalysis” (xii). When he writes of the “Cosmogonic Cycle,” he outlines how “the symbolism of mythology has a psychological influence” for us moderns (219). Furthermore, the modern interpreters of this mythological symbolism, Freud, Jung, Stekel, Rank, Abraham, Róheim, and Estés, have all shown that archaic humankind’s so-called “chimeras” are still in the modern consciousness's background. Fairy tales, myths, and the unconscious logic thereof are indisputably relevant today, as Campbell goes on to say, for they provide a pathway not only into the depths of the unconscious but also as a way to safely return.

Still another study of individuation by Campbell is his *The Mythic Image* (1974). Campbell is such a delight to read, and this one, although yet another iteration of many of his previous writings, is no different. Looking at the mythic and folk themes from the earliest civilizations to the present one, he illustrates his text with artworks chosen from art’s history. It is a comprehensive study of the significance of dreams, myths, and archetypal awakenings, spanning countries, centuries, cultures, and religions. Campbell preliminarily argues that dreams open the door to myths (certainly, Blake’s mythopoetic writings), and ultimately to the unconscious, eventually leading us back into life awakened. He carefully looks at the distinction between myth’s two orders: “non-literate, oral, folk tradition” (xi), and the “monumental, literate civilizations” (xi), studies Asian and Occidental interpretations

111 Of special interest is Campbell's inclusion of illustrations, which he has chosen from a broad range of mediums (carved marble and wood, gouache on paper, paint on silk, bronzes, frescoes, and a rock engraving), countries (Italy, Greece, Nigeria, India, Japan, France), and dates (as early as 10,000 B.C.). Coupled with the text, these symbolic visual referents act as an aesthetic binary similar to Blake's simultaneously existing visual and verbal texts. Additionally, they provide further evidence of the world-pervasiveness of the archetypal initiation motif. These art illustrations are sometimes great fun to view. For example, the wooden bas-relief with the male figure holding his severed penis in his hand prompted me to ask: Is Campbell trying to ask, "How far can the archetypal rite of passage go?"

112 Campbell's inspiration for the book was *Where the Two Came to Their Father: A Navajo War Ceremonial*. 
of the hero(ine)’s journeys of individuation, and reveals the significance of the practice and study of yoga as an approach to the “psychological reading of the symbolisms of mythology” (xi). He comparatively studies myth’s two orders’ treatment of the idea of a sacrificed god (Frazer), and he eventually restates how myths come from dreams, become life, and finally how the waking is a paradoxical mystery and symbolic of individuation. The startling recurrence of the journey of the hero(ine) through time and peoples is at once almost mystifying in its mythic magnitude, yet simultaneously comforting in its ongoing universality. As Campbell writes, “As we are told in the Vedas: Truth is one, the sages speak of it by many names.” Campbell unequivocally establishes the archetypes of myth as always accessible for those so inclined. And what a pleasure to look at Campbell’s illustrations, ranging from A. D. second century to late 20th century.

One more book-length study by Campbell, *The Power of Myth* (1988), came about over the course of twenty-four hours of interviews with Bill Moyers. This book, especially, helps us realize the importance of Blake’s mythopoetic writing with Jerusalem. As Moyers writes, "He agreed that the 'guiding idea' of his work was to find the commonality of themes in world myths, pointing to a constant requirement in the human psyche for a centering in terms of deep principles" (xvii). Campbell's aim, then, was not so much to "help people search for the meaning of life," but rather to help them find the "experience of being alive" (xvii). To illustrate, he tells the story of an American social philosopher who told a Japanese Shinto priest he did not understand his ideology or theology, to which the priest responded, "We don't have theology. We dance" (xix). In just such a way, Blake has little/no theology; he writes verse, he engraves, he paints. Explaining his view of the four functions of myth

---

113 That is the kind of rapture Blake is talking about in *Jerusalem*. After the doors of perception are cleansed and opened, and after one relinquishes one’s ego, then one can experience joy or as Campbell names it: rapture.
(mystical, cosmological, sociological, and pedagogical), Campbell especially emphasizes the idea of “following your bliss” as he did in previous works. With Moyers, he discusses the process of individuation as the common denominator of all myths and the importance of myths in our lives: “Myths inspire the realization of the possibility of your perfection, the fullness of your strength, and the bringing of solar light into the world” (148). In sum, Jungian individuation. His inclusion of stylistically disparate works of art, ranging from Chartres Cathedral’s massive rose window to a buffalo robe of the Plains Indians, to a Flemish painting of the thirteenth century, all illustrating mandala-like symbols, representing the Self, the “center,” the goal and source of individuation, is particularly impressive.

In addition to Campbell’s discussion of Ariadne’s thread (which is similar to Blake’s golden thread in Jerusalem), this work is especially significant for us. First, Campbell’s telling of Black Elk’s vision of his nation’s “hoop” is parallel to Jerusalem’s enveloping the world in Plate 79, Chapter 4, relating to the “experience” of the eternal in the present. Second, Campbell’s strong belief in the empowering functions of myths in our lives directly describes how Blake’s mythopoeia, culminating in Jerusalem, is pedagogical in nature, for Blake writes, “I hope the reader will be with me” (Plate 3), thus telling us we will learn (grow) with him. Campbell succinctly writes, “This is the final secret of the myth—to teach you how to penetrate the labyrinth of life in such a way that its spiritual values come through” (115).

One more work by Campbell well worth our time is his essay “The Fashioning of Living Myths,” (included in Richard Sugg’s Jungian Literary Criticism) where he writes about “Jung’s principle that visionary art compensates for the imbalances of its age” (75), and

---

114 Black Elk says, “I saw myself on the central mountain of the world, the highest place, and I had a vision because I was seeing in the sacred manner of the world.” Moreover, the sacred central mountain was Harney Peak in South Dakota. He concludes with, “But the central mountain is everywhere.”
how the shaping of personal myth can offer freedom from the traditional status quo of an unindividuated life.\(^{115}\)

**Others’ writings on Jungian individuation**

Northrup Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* is significant for our understanding of individuation for three reasons: 1) Frye’s statement "We have identified the central myth of literature, in its narrative aspect, with the quest-myth";\(^{116}\) 2) "Literature has an upper limit, a point at which an imaginative vision of an eternal world becomes an experience of it" (45)—*Jerusalem* is that experience; and 3) Frye’s discussion of the two views of literature—Aristotelian (concerned with literature as a product, catharsis) and Longinian (concerned with literature as process, ecstasis or absorption)—is also helpful in identifying the Longinian aspect of *Jerusalem*.\(^{117}\) Additionally, Frye’s "four seasons" schema (spring/comedy, summer/romance, fall/tragedy, winter.satire-irony) has a place in a discussion of quaternity. Frye’s regard for Jung is mixed. First, he proclaims, “This emphasis on impersonal content has been developed by Jung and his school, where the communicability of archetypes is accounted for by a theory of collective unconscious—an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism, so far as I can judge” (111-112), but then conversely writes that Jung’s

\(^{115}\) Campbell cites Joyce and Mann as being the most monumental examples. Campbell looks at Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (where Joyce’s protagonist escapes an Irish-Catholic environment and develops his inward life); Thomas Mann’s *Tonio Kröger*, who disassociates himself from both his family and the literary world and finds himself lost; and Mann’s opus *The Magic Mountain*, in which Hans Castorp, in a tuberculosis sanatorium, undergoes an alchemical transmutation (77). Included in this listing, I must not neglect to mention Joyce’s *Ulysses* and *Finnegan’s Wake*, as well as Mann’s *Joseph and His Brothers*. In sum, a Joycean hero proclaims, "When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets" (78).

\(^{116}\) Leitch, *The Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism* 1312-1313.

\(^{117}\) Frye defines this as "a state of identification in which the reader, the poem, and sometimes, at least ideally, the poet also, are involved" (67).
Transformation and Symbols of the Libido is importantly and primarily a study in literary criticism—not exactly great praise. Jung’s book is largely literary criticism?

Anthony Stevens’s high qualifications to write perceptively about Jung include a medical degree from the University of Oxford, two psychology degrees, and a thirty-year career as a Jungian analyst and psychiatrist. In his On Jung, Stevens focuses mainly on Jung's process of individuation. His historical exposition of Jung's intellectual and psychic growth is distinctive as he enlightens the reader about many of the enigmatic stages of Jung’s complex development, specifically the import of Jung's family on his eventual maturation—or should I say, individuation?—into one of the 20th century's greatest intellects and practitioners of modern psychiatry. Although this study provides only an outline of Jungian psychological theory, which Jung covered in twenty-one volumes in his Collected Works, the reader can gain a clear perception of Jung's basic tenets. Concluding with a summary of the predominant criticisms hurled against Jung by his top-ranking nemesis Richard Noll, Stevens offers the reader compelling evidence to counter Noll's adversarial claim that Jung's "psychology is a twentieth-century regression or degeneration to nineteenth-century Naturphilosophen."

Moreover, this connection can be read as a positive—that is, as one more crucial connection to Romanticism and Blake.

**Jung's feminist writings**

Critics often accuse Jung (and psychoanalysis in general) of sexism. Obviously, they have not extensively read his works. For if we circumspectly read his writings on women’s psychology, we realize the contrary. Well, not entirely, but partially, at least. Evidence shows that he neither loved, revered, or even understood women as did say Shakespeare, Wallace Stevens, and Blake. After all, no one ever claimed Jung to be a poet, but he did provide,
whether we want to recognize it directly or indirectly, a solid road-map for both male and
female individuation, so in that respect, he provides us with liberating archetypal models of
individuation. He was not an anti-feminist; he was merely as much of a feminist as his
capacity allowed him. He supported Sabina Spielrein to pursue her educational goal of
becoming a psychiatrist, at that time a rarity. However, he was also sleeping with her on the
side. But did he believe in true equality? Probably not. However, his legacy for women was
his writings on individuation, which would enable them to become enlightened, following an
often-harrowing amount of psychic work, and be well-equipped to embrace feminism as
their guiding ideology. He is not a full-blown card-carrying feminist, for his various writings
suggest he has a limited understanding of woman’s psychology and he frankly admits to it.
To begin, what he writes in his introduction to Dr. M. Esther Harding’s (a Jungian analyst
herself) *The Way of All Women* (1970) indicates his intellectual gratitude toward her for an
understanding of a woman’s psyche in ways in which he was incapable. In 1932 he writes as
follows:

> Moreover, the actual soul with which we have to deal in life and in reality, is
> complexity itself. For example, a psychology of woman cannot be written
> without an adequate knowledge of the unconscious backgrounds of the mind
> . . . . Only one half of feminine psychology can be covered by biological and
> social concepts. But in this book, it becomes clear that a woman possesses
> also a peculiar spirituality very strange to man [shades of Freud’s “dark
> continent”]. Without knowledge of the unconscious this new point of view,
> so essential to the psychology of woman, could never have been brought out

118 A movie about Jung and Spielrein, *A Dangerous Method*, suggests their relationship was unconventional for an
analyst and analysand.
in such completeness. But also in many other places in the book the fructifying influence of the psychology of unconscious processes is evident.

(xvi)

Moreover, Jung’s ultimate praise for Dr. Harding’s book reads as follows:

It is a foregone conclusion among the initiated that men understand nothing of women’s psychology as it actually is, but it is astonishing to find that women do not know themselves. However, we are only surprised as long as we naively and optimistically imagine that mankind understands anything fundamental about the soul. . . . On the basis of a rich psychotherapeutic experience, Dr. Harding has drawn up a picture of the feminine psyche which, in extent and thoroughness, far surpasses previous works in this field.

(xv-xvi)

Then, returning praise, Harding writes of Jung’s understanding of a female’s significance: “but he alone among psychologists, clearly differentiated between this subjective significance and the objective reality of the woman herself and defined clearly the type which can most readily carry for the man the significance of his own subjective and unconscious values” (4). This tacit honesty suggests that she accepts his limitations of understanding a woman because he writes from his male point of view. What that implies is that he is not a sexist in large part because he recognizes that his understanding comes from his “maleness” without the offensive implication of his being a sexist with all its accompanying pejorative connotations. Harding goes on to say that women have fortunately developed from a Genesis idyll, a primitive femininity, where the woman is secondary to the man, to a modern consciousness “of herself as a separate entity—an ego” (5) with individual values separate from a man’s.
Therefore, an understanding of individuation—the core of Jung's analytical depth psychology—is of high importance as we analyze the trajectory of Blake’s poetic female’s individuation, culminating with *Jerusalem*. Because the heart of this study is the eponymous heroine, Jung's description of her archetype is fundamental to the analysis and understanding of her timeless character as she matures into, in part, an enlightened sensibility and an eventual transcendence. Before reviewing contemporary feminist writings, let us take a close look at Jung’s writing about the feminine. Generally, some myopic critics still consider Jung a sexist. Granted, the bulk of his writing concerns the male; however, what is less known is his writing about female psychology and female individuation.119

In *Aspects of the Feminine*, Jung, in articles, extracts, and essays dating from 1921, writes of the anima/animus, the worship of woman, the mother archetype, the mother complex, the shadow, the Syzygy, and others. This collection includes his writing on the female structure of individuation with an emphasis on the animus's positive influence. Although female colleagues of Jung—Emma Jung, Esther Harding, and Toni Wolff—were concurrently researching and writing about the psychology of women, this collection of Jung's writings affords the reader an understanding of his views on the psychology of women prior to his later findings and insights published in his subsequent work *Aion*, but even there Jung does not delineate the actual phases of a woman’s individuation. Especially in *Aion*, his writing regarding the female is generalized as follows: “There are corresponding feminine figures in a woman’s psychology” (225). A woman seeking advice regarding her individuation process would most probably turn to contemporary feminist Jungian writers for guidance. Jung is theoretical and supports his claims with geometric diagrams, which

119 See also Maggy Anthony’s *Jung’s Circle of Women: The Valkyries* for a discussion of not only women Jung influenced, but also stalwart women who influenced him.
suggest a psilocybin mushroom-induced vision at best. However, his prescient brilliance often surfaces in statements like the following: “The ‘transvaluation of all values’ is being enacted before our eyes” (233).

However, returning to *Aspects of the Feminine*, in his Chapter "Woman in Europe," Jung writes, "She longs for greater consciousness, which would enable her to name her goal and give it meaning" (275). Jung’s analysis of female archetypes (the anima, the shadow, the Kore) is essential to understanding the women in Blake—Jerusalem in particular—for she is the one who ultimately achieves individuation, leaving behind most of the other characters with their *sentiments d'incomplétude*. She embodies not a chimerical behavior, but instead a positive vitalism and reveals herself to be, in many aspects, the mother archetype. Jung more fully describes and documents the mother archetype in his *Symbols of Transformation*.

Again, as Chapter 3 considers Blake’s female protagonists, a detailed discussion of Jung’s “positive animus” will be more fully discussed there.

**Feminists’ Jungian writings**

One of the seminal feminist authors writing about a female’s individuation process—Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés—in her *Women Who Run with the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype*—writes passionately from a Jungian analyst’s point of view about the "wild" woman as an endangered species. She should know, for this book-length study comes

---

120 Which, if I understand correctly, he stole from Nietzsche.
121 These archetypes will be fully discussed in Chapter 3 where the female figures in Blake’s writings will be discussed in terms of their various stages of individuation.
122 Interestingly, Jung here first discusses various types of love, its forms of relationships, and its positive/negative consequences for the individual's psyche: narcissistic masturbation, platonic love, free love, marriage and finally as it applies to Jerusalem: "Sexuality dished out as sexuality is brutish; but sexuality as an expression of love is hallowed."
123 Again, Chapter 3, by way of a discussion of Jung’s female archetypal components, will reveal how they correspond to Blake’s female protagonists. Also, an explanation of the “positive animus” will be studied.
124 A friend renamed it *Women Who Run with the Poodles*. He obviously had not read it or ever intended to.
from her biological study of wildlife, particularly wolves. Her aim here is to enable, encourage, empower, and embolden women to claim our wild, instinctual, and creative nature, one with “innate integrity and healthy boundaries” (8) and which emanates from the psychoid unconscious. Expounding on the various ways a woman’s psyche can be broken (by family, society, religion, predators, and self), she retells fairy tales, stories, and myths from various cultures and centuries so that women can overcome the devastations and carnage of their past and better understand their present predicaments. For example, the story around "Bluebeard” teaches us about the dangerous power of predators. According to Estés, it is by listening to stories with archetypal characters that we can learn how to heal our ravaged psyches. In other words, her writing offers possible solutions for how we women can reclaim one of the spiritual laws of traditional yogic wisdom named "pure potentiality."

In part, through an understanding and belief that our lives can become aligned with our dreams and goals and through living the creative life of the imagination that we can live a wild, instinctual, imaginative life of unfettered energy emanating from the force of "positive vitalism," as Blake would have wanted it. The process of individuation can be coaxed along by several things: yoga, meditation, counseling, reading, listening to stories, or birding.

Blake’s Jerusalem is indeed a variation of the Wild Woman archetype, and her transforming into it reveals her particular pattern of individuation: her separation from (yet eventual acceptance of) the other characters, her descent into and triumph over the dragon, and her triumphal/apocalyptic transformation as depicted in the visual text. The poem took Blake sixteen years to complete (the most time he worked on a single work), and her “song” is the only one he proclaimed “finished.” The poem is complete, and by its end, Jerusalem herself achieves a full and successful individuation—certainly a completeness—and is then, as Plate 99 reveals, ready to join a lover—divine or mortal, herself or “other.”
The first sentence in the Introduction of Diana Hume George’s *Blake and Freud* (1980) is a colleague’s question, “But why aren’t you working on Blake and Jung?” And she answers that Blake more closely aligns to Freud than Jung: Freud’s empiricism vs. Jung’s antiempiricism and Freud’s theory of analysis vs. Jung’s theory of synthesis. Identifying herself as a feminist, she realizes her study is not compatible with mainstream feminist psychologists, who reject Freud (with the notable exception of Juliet Mitchell). Her psychoanalytic study of Blake is grounded in Northrop Frye’s *Fearful Symmetry*, especially as she makes the strong distinction between how her purpose shows that mimesis is prophetic, and Bloom’s shows how prophecy is mimetic. Her most compelling reason for choosing Freud over Jung is as follows: “Freud was . . . the first to acknowledge that he was preceded in his psychological discoveries by the poets and artists whose works embody psychic phenomena” (27). As she extensively offers the reader quotations from Blake’s work on one side of the page and her exegesis on the other, she confirms that women represented the majority of Freud’s clientele and finds his opinion of women seldom being worthy of men alarmingly disingenuous, especially since he believed in “original bisexuality.” Her study concludes with this direct quotation from Freud, “The business of analysis is to secure the best possible psychological conditions for the functioning of the ego; when this has been done analysis has accomplished its task” (228), to which George responds, “That best possible functioning ideally included unrestricted capacity for enjoyment and productivity, but this was seldom the case.”

As a feminist, she reverentially writes of Blake (and thus Jung somewhat by default) when she sums up her thoughts on Blake’s Jerusalem: “[Jerusalem is the emanation of

---

125 This was only revealed in his private letters after his death.
everything human for Blake, the mediatrix between humanity and regenerated nature, the ever-present potential for movement and growth.” Hence, an ongoing Jungian individuation.126

Contrary to self-willed individuation: The net of Urizen

In contrast to self-willed individuation, we find the “net of religion” best portrayed in Blake’s *The Book of Urizen*. Written in 1794 when Blake was 37, it is the crux of his mythology as he destabilizes the link of reason to knowing and replaces it with feeling and intuiting as a more legitimate source of knowledge.127 This parodic tale in nine chapters is an anti-Genesis account of the world’s beginning. As contrasted to “Let there be light,” the Urizenic genesis begins in darkness:

Of the primeval Priest’s assum’d power,
When Eternals spurn’d back his religion
And gave him a place in the north,
Obscure, shadowy, void, solitary. (Plate 2, 1-2)

and ends in darkness:

No more could they rise at will
In the infinite void but, bound down
To earth by their narrowing perceptions. (Plate 25, 45-47)

126 See also Toni Wolff, *Studien zu C. G. Jung’s Psychologie*; Emma Jung, *Animus and Anima*; and especially Esther Harding’s *The Way of all Women* (1933) with a complete description of the animus’s developmental history, and Marie-Louise von Franz’s *Projection and Re-Collection in Jungian Psychology: Reflections of the Soul*. According to Deidre Bair’s immensely readable *Jung*, von Franz was one of the women Jung most admired. With her encyclopedic knowledge, she positioned “herself carefully as the official explicator of his psychology, which she indeed became after his death” (555). According to C. A. Meier, “She has given a most impressive typology of the feminine psyche” (112).

The exiled Urizen, the embodiment of cold, calculating reason, creates laws for his newly created world—laws which Blake calls “The Net of Religion.” However, Urizen realizes “that no flesh nor spirit could keep / His iron laws one moment” (Plate 22) and that there are consequences for laws inhibiting individuals, for a false morality parading around as a spiritual guide, and for a popery and Anglican Church dictating behavior. Hence, Urizen's failure, resulting in his journey of exile, leading to his “darkness clos’d . . . And his soul sicken’d” (Plate 22).

*The Book of Urizen* is harrowing in its impact, with depictions both visual and textual of descent into a life-defeating stasis. No inner radiance shines through these hellishly self-forsaken characters, especially Urizen, who manifests Joseph Campbell's statement: "there is the idea that the fate of the individual is a function of his psychological disposition." Urizen dooms himself in a rationalist egohood cut off from the psyche’s repressed powers of emotion and intuition.

The characters in *The Book of Urizen* reveal Blake’s belief that the “net of religion” is a hindrance to delight, pleasure, and yes, even to transcendence. *The Book of Urizen* is Blake’s unmitigated indictment of “laws of morality” and their pernicious possession of weak-willed, NON-individuated individuals. It is a stance that instead champions against imagination,

---

128 For a more comprehensive look at this, see Edinger's *Ego and Inflation* where he discusses ego alienation/inflation.

129 Prior to this, he writes, “There is a point of accord that makes it possible to speak of modern depth psychologies in the same context with yoga” (*The Mythic Image* 278).

130 With *The Book of Urizen*, Blake’s illustrations evolve into more dramatic and highly colored portraits of titanic characters. The colors, reaching a deeper saturation of darkness with his characteristic sienna-red, blood-like pigment, depict an energy in the dramatic action not seen before in his prior works. Opening with the giant-like figure of Urizen, the title page reveals him long-bearded and droopy-eyed, crouching over his heavy tomes of laws. Following is the frontispiece plate, titled “The Prelidium,” an especially lovely drawing of a symbolic mother and child. Beautiful in the visual lyricism, the mood is calm with the mother figure guiding her little baby toward her with a gentle one-hand embrace. Could Blake be implying that this heavenly female figure is leading her tiny baby into a different world or that the female might prefigure the eponymous heroine Jerusalem, who Blake prophesizes will usher in a transformational new world of beauty, compassion, and love? It is in stark contrast to the howling, torturously contorted physical forms, whose faces reveal not only despair but also torturous madness in his *The Book of Urizen*. 
creativity, sexual pleasure, love, and the process of individuation. Once again, as he did in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, he is laying the groundwork for his overarching themes in *The Song of Jerusalem*: Jerusalem’s maturing consciousness and the compassionate co-existence of societies.

The text, comprised of 27 plates (as contrasted to *Jerusalem*’s 100), reads like a short story, with most lines averaging six words. (*Jerusalem*’s number twice that.) Consisting of a progressive narrative of *Ages*, the concluding refrain for each is “And a --- Age passed over, / And a state of dismal woe,” with the effect being the sound of a negative mantra. One can sense the depth of the quantum level, where the devastating effects of despair can become the breeding ground for disease.

Additionally, the yogic Kundalini power bastardizes into a killing force rather than life-enhancing energy. Here the shakti energy is not present; therefore, no psycho-spiritual growth is possible. Blake’s frequently seen Kundalini serpent is here seen as an evil dominance, strangling characters of life, especially in Plate 7 where three characters descend downwards into the underground, strangled by separate serpents. Here, Blake shows the serpents’ heads with extended tongues and menacing visages. *The Book of Urizen* is Blake’s statement of darkness (blindness), devastation, and death for both the microcosm and the macrocosm. Above all, this is the ego in stasis/paralysis, refusing individuation, the journey. Almost three decades later, he will reveal how, through arduous physical and

---


132 For a dramatic contrast, see Plate 63 in *Jerusalem*. This plate is illuminated in several areas with gold, which for Blake signifies enlightenment. Here, we see the serpent winding sensuously, embracing the entire length of Jerusalem’s body. No death grip here. Her one hand is lightly resting on the serpent’s massive body, while she languidly lies under a golden sun.
intellectual labor, one can come to realize individuation, a mature consciousness, and self-enlightenment as he portrays within the full flowering of Jerusalem.

**Individuation 101**

Let us begin with a solid working definition here: The goal of individuation is "to see people and yourself in terms of what you indeed are, not in terms of all these archetypes that you are projecting around and that have been projected on you" (Campbell, *Pathways to Bliss* 76). In other words, individuation as releasing all ideals and projections throughout one’s lifetime (79). Taking off the rose-colored glasses.

1. **the collective unconscious with its main archetypes**

   Jung originated the term *collective unconscious* “to designate the phylogenetic psyche (those aspects of the psyche which are inherited and common to all humanity)” (Stevens 434). A writer who has an insightful take on the subject is Brenda S. Webster, who ironically in her *Blake’s Prophetic Psychology* does not mention Jung but writes that Blake’s writing “is an astonishingly translucent description of the unconscious.” She then goes on to write, "Not only is he profoundly in touch with the unconscious, but he also reveals it at a level of reality that even the most courageous minds have not been able to reach" (8).\(^{134}\) Jung’s collective unconscious contains four archetypes:\(^{135}\) 1) the ego—that person (or role) we consider ourselves to be in normal waking consciousness and the one we show to the world; 2) the shadow (or landfill of one’s personality), that figure of the same sex as the ego who embodies negative or positive traits that might have been conscious but which have now

\(^{134}\) From the 30's on, Jung's analytical psychology was gaining ground as a valid critical approach, but psychoanalytical/archetypal criticism is not part of her argument.

\(^{135}\) See also Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Pattern in Poetry: Psychological Studies of Imagination* for an intellectually elegant discussion of the unconscious.
been repressed; generally, it is one’s same sex. Campbell’s definition is “the landfill of the self . . . and also a sort of vault: it holds great, unrealized potentialities with you” or better yet—"the backside of your light side” (Pathways to Bliss 73). The goal is to overcome the tabooed characteristics of one’s shadow—one’s bête noire—which is a lifelong task; 3) the anima, “the woman within the man” (Witcutt 43), that feminine unconscious with which he has to come to terms, or as Campbell define it, “the female ideal in the masculine unconscious” (Pathways to Bliss 75)—or the animus, the woman’s masculine unconscious where she projects the animus figure onto another person in her life and of whom an awareness generally occurs in the second half of her life; and finally 4) the Self, that perfect wholeness which the individual can encounter, when she has reconciled herself with her shadow and animus and become her own potentiality for being. Generally, with the woman, her individuation will reveal a “great mother archetype.” To become conscious, one needs to reconcile each component so that one can pass from the unconscious to the conscious. As one interacts with the unconscious—the symbols thus function, according to Jung, as a transcendent function.

2. quaternity

Quaternities are rampant in Jerusalem. It organizes the structure of both the epic poem and his Zoas, which uncannily resemble and align with Jung’s four functions of the personality. The concept of the Zoa or psychic function is part of a desired wholeness or integration that Jung referred to as individuation. Blake’s aim, through the portrayals of his female characters, is to give us parts or rather stages of the individuation process. He shows

136 The Jungian psychiatrist Dr. C. A. Meier has contributed widely to the study of individuation. One notable book, coming from his long practice of psychotherapy, is Personality: The Individuation Process in the Light of C. G. Jung’s Typology.
us how some functions are lacking and some are injured in others. Through these portrayals, we can actually “view” how the Zoas inform (if incorporated, assimilated properly) or deform (if absent or disintegrated). Of course, the ideal is to integrate all harmoniously, so the personality (Jung) or psyche (Blake) is in a state of health, wholeness, or harmony. If one is dominant, the balance is off, resulting in a character with sentiments d’incomplétude. This harkens back to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*’ definition of “temperance”: nothing is excess, nothing deficient.

Symbolically, Blake sometimes depicts the Zoas as heads in the visual text. In Plate 92 (the first plate of the final Chapter 4), Jerusalem, at one of her low moments in the poem, collapses on the ground with four dead-looking heads surrounding her, symbolizing her near psychic disintegration.

Any discussion of the quaternity would be sorely inadequate if we did not praise W. P. Witcutt, who in his *Blake: A Psychological Study*, succinctly describes the four Zoas of the
personality and how an early, initial trauma inevitably causes an imbalance in the psyche—the beginning of the personality’s disintegration. His synopsis of Blake's four daemons/Zoas looks like this: 1) Urizen/thought/air, 2) Luvah/Orc/love/feeling/earth, 3) Tharmas/sensation/the body/water, and 4) Los/Urthona/prophecy or intuition/fire, which correspond to Jung’s (also St. Augustine’s) description of the psyche's four functions: "thought, feeling, sensation, and intuition" (31). Witcutt discusses the anatomy of disintegration by describing an initial trauma (Freud), sin (Catholicism), or shattering psychic event and its resulting turmoil (Jung and Blake) as causing a disorientation of the soul's powers (the imaginative functions). In sum, the psyche is not balanced because the four Zoas are misaligned.  

Yeats and Ellis significantly discuss quaternity by arguing that understanding—especially of the Prophetic Books—is not hidden from the reader’s corporeal understanding. Early on they emphasize that an understanding of Blake's nuclei—his central symbolic system, namely the four Zoas and/or humanity's four functions—is the prerequisite for an attempt to comprehend the heart of Blake's mythologizing. They discuss his four-fold vision and how it relates to the senses, elements, qualities of mind, compass points, and on and on.  

It should be obvious that psychic balance depends on the equilibrium among the psyche’s four Zoas. In sum, this balance understandably reveals the microcosm analogous to the macrocosm. A prime example is found in a woman’s menstrual cycle as a reflection of a lunar cycle. The entire world corresponds with this balance.

---

137 Luvah/Orc are associated with the image of the serpent.
138 Additionally, Witcutt also considers Jung’s definitions of extrovert and introvert in their various incarnations and sums it up with a brief discussion of Blake’s intuitive introversion.
139 Blake obsesses with the conflict among the four Zoas as the primary symbols of the unconscious. Other poets are concerned with other symbols. For example, Shelley, an intuitive introvert, is primarily interested in the images of the Anima and Puer Æternus-Hermaphrodite.
Although Northrop Frye's influential study *Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology* is more than sixty years old, his mythological/archetypal critical approach does not show its age in its relevance to Blake's *Jerusalem*, for Blake's mythopoeic poem reflects the heart of Frye's credo. Following his mid-century watershed work *Anatomy of Criticism*, this collection of essays considers as well other English mythopoeic poets—e.g., Spenser, Milton, Byron, Dickinson, Yeats, Stevens, and Joyce. His study shows us the genius of his literary and anthropological skills, and how he digs all the way back to the archetypes and sees "literature, not only as complicating itself in time, but as spread out in conceptual space from some unseen center" (13). His expression of these represented archetypes lead us, of course, to his famous table, which has close similarities with Jung's fourfold functions of an individual and Blake's four Zoas. Frye aligns the four periods of a day, the four seasons, the four corresponding myths and archetypes, and finally the four general forms of literature: 1) dawn/spring/birth of the heroine or hero/romance (rhapsodic and dithyrambic poetry); 2) zenith/summer/triumph or marriage/pastoral, comedy, and idyll; 3) sunset/autumn/death (or the heroine or hero's death)/tragedy and elegy; and 4) darkness/winter/dissolution and the "triumph of these powers"/satire (16). The poems of complete individuation, quest journey of the heroine/hero, and archetypal initiation pattern weave into this fourfold structure. Additionally, to understand the bare bones of Blake’s epic mythology, we need to understand his organizing structure of his four Zoas and the characters who personify them: reason (Urizen), emotion (Luvah, primal drives (Tharmas), and prophetic imagination (Los). Interestingly, these faculties are similar to Jung’s quaternity of personality: thinking, feeling, intuition, and sensing.

140 Similarly, Yeats, when he arrived at an archeological site with Lady Gregory, turned to her and said, "Down here is where the Mothers are." I would imagine she fell in love with him at that sublime moment. But historical accounts tell a different ending.
The four chapters of *Jerusalem* (more quaternity) dovetail seamlessly into this archetypal pattern. Blake illustrates this on his title page, so from the very beginning then we see Jerusalem’s somewhat physical and psychic development in the four phases (again, an illustrative example of quaternity in Blake’s fourfold vision).

3. transformation (transcendence)

Transformation (transcendence)—or as Joseph Campbell names it, bliss—is covered more than adequately in his *Pathways to Bliss*: His overarching thesis is his belief "that myths offer a framework for personal growth and transformation, and understanding the ways myths and symbols affect the individual mind offers a way to lead a life that is in tune with one's nature—a pathway to bliss" (xii); therefore, it leads to realizing the *transcendent divine*. However, before this is possible, an individual must possess health—both physical and psychological. Propounded by the German psychiatrist Karlfried Graf Dürckheim, who continued Carl Jung’s and Erick Newmann's work (xvii), this state of health (read unblocked energy) could then cause one to become "*transparent to the transcendent*" (xxii) if one were receptive to the energy flowing through myths. Bliss, then, is achievable because the transcendent wisdom is already within us. Citing many references to the Indian Vedantic tradition and Christianity, he elaborates on which pathways work and which do not. Catholicism does not, as Oddly enough, Jung—from a long line of Protestant ministers—loved the Catholic Church’s ritual and ornament—as more “archetypal” than Protestantism.
mythological models to guide us, he offers sage advice on how to acquire them.\textsuperscript{142} And he does this by tracing through the various world religions the genealogy of myths, finally concretizing his conclusion: it is the Indian gurus and Japanese Zen masters, pointing to our insides for answers, who are "running off with all the chickens" (42).

Campbell pleads for us to love and pity our imperfections as well as others' (a potent idea in Blake) and says that Thomas Mann defines this opposition as "erotic irony" (78). In sum, his definition of bliss—that state of transformation/transcendence—is \textit{Ergiffenheit}, "being seized by something so that you are pulled out" (89). He cites the prime example of Paul Gauguin's flight to Tahiti.\textsuperscript{143} And I cite Jerusalem's apotheosis.

Individuation is "getting rid of one’s projections and ideals" (\textit{Pathways to Bliss} 79). And one can only further develop once she realizes she has projected her animus onto another. As Esther Harding expresses the nature of the capture:

Unconscious contents have a great tendency to be projected to the outer world, where they fasten onto any convenient character which presents a suitable hook. When this occurs the mantle of Prince Charming falls upon some man in the outer world and the woman falls violently under the spell of this current incarnation of the prince. The nature of the spell varies. (49)

In his \textit{The Hero with a Thousand Faces}, after enumerating the numerous passages into consciousness (read individuation), Campbell lets the reader realize that one can become a Nietzschean Cosmic Dancer, one whose psyche can easily leap from the deep penetrating plunge of the "causal" deep recesses of the psyche over to the contented insight of the present reality, and realize the Blakean realm where "every thing that lives is holy." This

\textsuperscript{142} The acquisition does not happen by watching \textit{Keeping up with the Kardashians}, the television show largely responsible for women’s favorite cosmetic surgery—butt augmentation.

\textsuperscript{143} Campbell's is quite an eccentric, “religious” version of Jung, at last.
cosmic dancer, after completing the cycle, can then live according to Nietzsche’s belief "as though the day were here" (337). The heroine/hero (cosmic dancer) is one who has successfully navigated her/his journey into a higher consciousness (read transcendence) and is simultaneously of this world and not. The transcendence Campbell speaks of is attainable through such disciplines as meditation and yoga rather than through the aid of any outside sources (alcohol, drugs, hallucinogens). In fact, Campbell offers many references to yoga and meditation as a means of an internally driven transcendence, as does Jung.\footnote{Jung writes about transcendence in his \textit{The Psychology of Kundalini Yoga}.} His book offers one of the best guides for Jerusalem's psychic journey of individuation. (On a personal note, his writing is a much more enjoyable and more accessible read than Jung's.)\footnote{Further important reading can be found in Jung’s \textit{Kundalini Yoga}, Anthony’s Stevens’s \textit{Ariadne’s Clue’s} section titled “Individuation and Transcendence,” and Joseph Campbell’s compelling discussion of the shakti energy in his \textit{The Mythic Image}, Chapter IV; “Transformations of the Inner Light,” section 1. “Psychology and Yoga” and section 2. “The Serpent Guide.”}

Both Blake and Yeats concerned themselves with the making of one’s soul. In Yeats’s “William Blake and the Imagination” (1897), he writes that this is why we read the great poets and that writings on individuation come alive in our study of Jerusalem’s \textit{becoming} a soul. Both Yeats and Blake believed in, revered, and understood the essential nature of the physical body regarding beauty, pleasure (both sensual and sensuous), and memory. Both had a deep awareness and understanding of the overarching energy of the libido that could be our link with divinity and therefore transcendence. After all, it is only Blake’s Jerusalem who ultimately transcends the world and the worldly (the verbal text) through what Suzanne Sklar calls her “angelomorphic” sensuality (45).

Furthermore, recognizing, accepting, and expressing one’s rage releases one into another stage of transformation.\footnote{Hopkins’s sonnet traces the development of the eponymous Andromeda, who finally releases her rage “to alight disarming, no one dreams / With Gorgon’s gear and barebill, thongs and fangs.” Nothing timid in her transformation.} Once the female hurls the goddamned frog prince
(projected animus) against the bedroom wall, the way becomes clearer. Not accepting (internalizing) patriarchy, instead rejecting and ridding one’s life of it, makes possible the necessary impulse to move forward (upward). A woman can become her own Prince Charming once she rejects and wrests back into herself the animus that no longer serves her individuation. If we consider this concept further, Wallace Stevens, writing about the female protagonist in his poem “Sunday Morning,” indicates this vital stage in a female’s individuation thus:

Why should she give her bounty to the dead?
What is divinity if it can come
Only in silent shadows and in dreams. . . .
Divinity must live within herself . . . . (53)

As indicated earlier, many readers accuse both Blake and Jung of sexism—a myopic view at best as a result of not having read widely of either. In Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s monumental feminist work *The Madwoman in the Attic*, they write, “For Blake the eternal female was at her best an Emanation of the male creative principle” (12)—an encapsulation of the “standard” reading I will be arguing against in the following two chapters. Blake, through his prescient understanding of Jung’s analytical depth psychology, writes an unparalleled trajectory of female individuation in which his several poetic characters (excluding Jerusalem) are all unable for their individual, unique reasons to reach mature psychological developments (Chapter 3). And finally in Chapter 4, I will show how he writes a liberating archetype of successful individuation via his eponymous heroine. Therefore, it becomes an important intervention regarding Jerusalem vis-à-vis Jungiansim and feminism.
In sum, Jung occasionally transcends his often blatant sexism when he writes of transformation’s joys for a female, confirming that he is not a card-carrying sexist. Yes, he has his moments of blatant sexism. And now and then, he writes beautifully and compassionately about females:

> Because of her merely unconscious, reactive attitude toward reality, her life actually becomes dominated by what she fought hardest against—the exclusively maternal feminine aspect. But if she should later turn her face, she will see the world for the first time, so to speak, in the light of maturity, and see it embellished with all the colours and enchanting wonders of youth, and sometimes even of childhood. It is a vision that brings knowledge and discovery of truth, the indispensable prerequisite for consciousness. (Four Archetypes 33)

Jerusalem’s apotheosis enables her to “turn her face.”
CHAPTER 3

BLAKE AND WOMEN

I hope you will go out and let stories, that is life, happen to you, and that you will work with these stories . . . water them with your blood and tears and your laughter till they bloom, till you yourself burst into bloom.

—Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Women Who Run with the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype

The way is not without danger. Everything good is costly, and the development of the personality is one of the most costly of all things.

—Carl Gustav Jung, The Secret of the Golden Flower

Your nature, princess, is indeed noble and true; But events fester, and divinity is sick.

—Euripides, Iphigenia in Tauris

Introduction

The previous two chapters showed 1) how Blake was an iconoclastic artist and revolutionary thinker during the Romantic era, and 2) how, after a look at Campbell’s historical studies of male’s individuation and Jung’s analytical psychology’s core tenet of individuation, a feminist approach to Jung’s analytical psychology emerges and paves the way for this chapter. For it is Blake’s trajectory of a feminist individuation that I will apply not only to this chapter on his female poetic subjects but also to his eponymous heroine in the concluding chapter, “Blake and Jerusalem.”

To begin our study, then, we will first look at the views of contemporary critics writing about Romantic era writers and their works; second, study the Romantic female writers; third, analyze Romantic poetic female characters (excluding Blake’s); fourth, look again at female individuation: its stages and differences from a male’s; fifth, continue with an
exposition of Blake’s poetic females’ trajectory of individuation; and conclude the chapter with a restatement of the dissertation’s argument: how Blake is a forerunner of both Jung’s analytical psychology and feminism; and then introduce how Chapter 4 will model both points of my argument.

For centuries, critics considered female writers to be inferior artists—at best, and not until the middle of the 20th century with its burgeoning feminist ideology did scholars of both sexes assiduously work to reclaim them and their literary works. By uncovering them and bringing them into the light, these female writers gained their way into not only our hearts but also into the Romantic literary canon. All the displaced, dismissed, depreciated, and disparaged female writers of letters, journals, sonnets, plays, and novels are now available for us to enjoy and learn from, especially in what Letitia Landon writes of as an era of “consciousness raising” (5). However, it is one British Romantic writer and artist who has given us not only a look at female successes and failures of psychological development by way of his poems and drawings, but also one of the greatest heroines of all time—the crown of his creations: Jerusalem, a truly individuated and liberated female.

*Contemporary critics writing about Romantic era writers and their works*

If we are to understand how Blake’s feminism and prescience of Jung’s theory of individuation evolve, let us first look first at what our contemporary critics write about Romantic era writers and their works. Is Blake part of a continuing movement during this time to try to raise women’s consciousness, thus hopefully enabling them to bring about change? By looking first at Stephen Behrendt's *British Women Poets and the Romantic Writing Community*, we find a mother lode of information about women writers, writing and

---

147 See Behrendt’s *British Women Poets and the Romantic Writing Community* for a more comprehensive study of this.
publishing about the crucial issues in their lives—not necessarily for profit but rather for their edification as well as their readers. On the national level, they wrote about British imperialism, the colonialist enterprise, and the slave trade; on the personal—loss of friends, children, and lovers. The poets are from widely different socio-economic backgrounds, from Mary Robinson, whose lover was the Prince of Wales, to the Irish Quaker poet Mary Birkett. A number of these proactive feminists, including among many others Anna Seward and Charlotte Smith, became forces in public activism following the French Revolution. Their proto-feminist poetry, especially in sonnet form, which Behrendt calls the poetry of social commitment, became a vehicle to help right social wrongs.\textsuperscript{148} By understanding this era's prevailing ethos (what Anne Mellor calls "feminine Romanticism"),\textsuperscript{149} we can see how their pacifist ideology informed their prevailing attitude, which was "grounded in the notion that none should be harmed or injured when it can be prevented."\textsuperscript{150} Collectively, the poets comprised a community of writers through their shared beliefs and convictions and created another sort of community through individually formed empathic relationships with their readers. Furthermore, Behrendt elucidates their non-linear, non-masculinist traditional narratives in their poetry as proof of their feminine tendency (like Blake's) to write a "rhetorical constellation or array" (134).\textsuperscript{151} Their writings, especially the sonnets, create a performative experience with the text: author and reader co-existing in an unmediated relationship.\textsuperscript{152} (Again, Blake also does this with his "sympathetic reader," as he addresses her/him early in his \textit{Jerusalem}). Behrendt gives us a comprehensive view of how these female

\textsuperscript{148} See, especially, Mary Hays's \textit{Female Biography; or, Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women of All Ages and Countries} (1803).

\textsuperscript{149} See Mellors, \textit{Romanticism and Gender}.

\textsuperscript{150} Behrendt 43.

\textsuperscript{151} Elaine Showalter's "Towards a Feminist Poetics" further advances this argument (as well as French feminist theorists).

\textsuperscript{152} Behrendt calls this the "reader's empathetic co-performance" wherein the reader simultaneously values the aesthetic aspects (129).
writers wrote of their concerns for gender equality and a pacifist ideology that could potentially lead to a form of freedom of spirit—certainly defined as a Jungian individuation.

Let us now turn to Paula Feldman and Theresa Kelley writing about other Romantic writers in their Romantic Women Writers: Voices and Countervoices. Feldman and Kelly also write about a form of equality not only for their lives, but also for their writings. Twenty years ago, this collection was probably at the forefront of helping to reclaim the ignored, unacknowledged, and unknown works of female writers during the Romantic Era. These critical essays aim at situating these writers within a general and a particular frame of Romanticism. Notably, critics in Great Britain did not ignore these writers as did those in America—for example, Felicia Hemans. The critical hubris and patriarchal dominance of the male critics in America held court until writers like Jerome McGann and others exposed the heartless exclusion of many talented female writers. Feldman and Kelly's study comprehensively "offers us the opportunity for rethinking what Romanticism is and who we are as its critics" (7). The essays in Part One, "Reimagining Romantic Canons," consider the gendered assumptions at odds with Wordsworth's model of the sublime and its Romantic notion of selfhood and poetic subjectivity that exclude female subjectivity. Feldman and Kelly make an important contribution towards furthering our understanding of the milieu surrounding Blake in his attempt to portray evolving females.

When we look at Anna Letitia Barbauld's writing on Burke's theory of the sublime, we see she reveals his phallocentric nub of reference (8). Additionally, Behrendt, in his essay "Mary Shelley, Frankenstein, and the Woman Writer's Fate," considers the how and why

153 Interestingly, Blake was not included in the Romantic canon until the 1970s. Little wonder since he was such a forerunner for creating liberating female archetypes. Moreover, it was not until 1983 that Jerome McGann in his The Romantic Ideology, of the same year, said that British Romanticism should challenge its critical construction (3).
women write and how their anxieties (personal and social) related to their creations. In Part Two, "Textual Strategies," William McCarthy argues that faulty essentialism exists when we perceive feminist writing as always being from a generalized and gendered female's point of view. Again, the poet Barbauld figures largely here. Part three, "Nationalism, Patriotism, and Authorship," examines how women's discourse takes several forms outside the standard poetic genre (e.g., travel writing and "sketches," to name two). Women writers such as Lady Morgan, Helen Maria Williams, and Janet Little knew well the "hazards to their health" if they expressed ideas outside the established literary paradigms. Part Four, "Performance and the Market Place," includes essays illustrating how Mary Robinson, Joanna Baillie, and Harriett Abrams impacted their careers by their choices of expression and how female writers and performers expressed their views on the contemporary issues of law, medicine, religion, government, and education. Their often heroic courage was undaunted as they tried to make sense of the deleterious effects of this patriarchal dominance. In sum, Blake, too, a contemporary to many of these women writers, also deprecated the patriarchal dominance; moreover, in an often-parallel fashion, he created and placed a healthy, brave, and intelligent heroine at the heart of his final epic poem.

When we turn our attention to Anne Mellor, who takes a slightly different tack in her *Romanticism and Gender*, we discover that she writes about the differences between masculine and feminine writing, which she contends are necessary to distinguish if one is to appreciate English Romanticism. In Part I, "Masculine Romanticism," Mellor follows the usual party

---

154 I borrow this brilliantly original phrase from Behrendt.
155 Feldman writes, "Wordsworth's 'Preface' to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* appropriated without acknowledgment Baillie's call, two years earlier, for the use of natural, spoken language in literary art . . . . Tighe's style and choice of subject influenced Keats throughout his poetic career, that Charlotte Smith revolutionized the sonnet in English; and that Coleridge used Smith as his standard when trying to learn the form" (4-5).
156 Blake's most notorious tyrant is Urizen and in second place comes Albion, or possibly the composite Hand.
Western culture's definition of gender is used to write about the binary sex (biological) differences. Thus, her unoriginal binary becomes male/female, man/woman, masculine/feminine, and her generalizations become female/nature/spirit and male/mind/rationality. In her view, the canonical, male Romantic poets write of an idealized female lover who, being possessed by him, create a union “that necessarily entails the elimination of Otherness” (27). However, Mellor fails to realize that this Romantic quest of finding a female lover (also, a search, really, for an inner anima ideal) is a search for the ideal: the best. Her opprobrium of this is puzzling. Are not poets as Shelly writes, “the happiest and best minds”? Moreover, would they not seek the happiest and best minds in their lovers and marriage partners? Mellor would answer with a resounding “no.” Her Christian bias toward agape as the ideal love does not always jibe with these poets, who often hope for a bit of Eros to mix in with agape and to avoid the yoke of marriage. It sounds to me like her born-again petticoat is showing. In Part II, "Feminine Romanticism," the usual suspects are Wollstonecraft, Austen, and several “minor” others whom she applauds for their grounding efforts toward equality, beginning with the family structure. Mellor’s summation shows how female authors stressed rational love over erotic passions and that "Reason, virtue, and caution" (born of Protestant dissent) were the desired hallmarks for their readers to learn (60). Finally in Part III, "Ideological Cross-Dressing: John Keats/Emily Brontë," Mellor discusses Keats and Brontë as having written not from their biological identity but rather from their ideological one. She claims they are “literary

157 Shelley in Epipsychidion writes, “We shall become the same, we shall be one / Spirit within two frames, oh! wherefore two?”

158 Here, I am reminded of Mary Shelley’s statement (found in her “Advertisement” for Shelley’s “Epipsychidion,” “a certain class of readers . . . must ever remain incomprehensible from a defect of a common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats” (The Poetical Works of Shelley 406).

159 Nina Auerbach argues that Austen mainly is writing of Romantic imprisonment for women (223). But just try arguing that with your friends in love with Ms. Austen.
cross-dresser[s] but not "transsexual" (186). However, her general conclusion is that Feminine Romanticism was a bourgeoisie movement that did not consider working class women (212).160

Finally, Carol Wilson and Joel Haefner, in their outstanding Re-Visioning Romanticism: British Women Writers, 1776-183, aim to reexamine Romantic literature and to provide some answers as to why female writers were not only underrepresented but also ignored and excluded from the traditional canon. This collection of essays, more than two decades old, covers the usual dated critical discourses. The first part, "Reading Women's Texts," offers a look into Mary Robinson's becoming an author of not only poetry but also a memoir. Moreover, she wrote at a time when critics touted "poetic genius" as being solely a male writer's attribute. Additionally, she recounts the lack of institutional support she and other female writers received. The second part, "Gender and the Cultural Matrix," includes Marlon Ross's scrutiny of the more popular of published female writers of the day, such as Hemans, Barbaud, and Tighe, and concludes that the "anxiety of influence" was more about the male writers' anxiety over the popular and wide publications of these women. An essay by Anne Mellor discusses the keen differentiations between male and female ideas of romanticism and a concise argument for Hélène Cixous's theory of écriture féminine. The third part, "Re-Visioning Romantic Aesthetics," offers one of the most memorable essays by New Historicism writer Jerome McGann, who, in "Literary History, Romanticism, and Felicia Hemans," argues that "we have fictionalized the history of Romantic criticism. Even the narrative we have provided here—with its underlying strategies of dominance/repression

160 Mellor writes, "Keats almost seems to feel that before one can become a poet, one must occupy the position of a woman and a mother" (176). For more on this see also Mellor's Romanticism and Feminism. Blake writes from both a feminine and masculine poetic identity. Like Keats, he too is giving birth to his characters and mothering them.
and 'periods' of Romantic studies—is a reconstruction and fictionalization of the instabilities of critical viewpoints on Romanticism" (7). And with this, the feminists already were up and running, two decades before Hew Historicism and McGann.

In sum, these critics generally empathize with the feminist leanings of the writers they consider. Within the Romantic era, through the helpful erudition of contemporary critics, we can better understand how Blake was not only indebted to some of these female writers but also carried forward their initial expressions of feminism into his own female poetic portrayals.

**Romantic female writers**

If Blake’s visionary writing helps to pave the way for females’ independence, we might look at how Romantic female writers attempted the same. So let us now start with one of England's first widely read feminist authors, Mary Wollstonecraft, who, in her *The Female Reader* (1789), written before her more famous *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, outlines her tenets for female education. Her milieu—the Rationalist Enlightenment and the cult of domesticity, where the dreadful patriarchal institutions made possible the historical subjugation of women in eighteenth-century England—prompted her to write this polemical work with the hope of improving the status of not only the lower class but also bourgeois females' status.¹⁶¹ Interestingly, aristocratic women were able to attend elite boarding schools and study the arts and the finer points of decorum¹⁶² since there was no necessity to prepare them for menial employment. Encouraged by the Dissenters, Wollstonecraft's confidence as a woman and writer grew as she wrote about her experiences to advance the deplorable

---

¹⁶¹ During this time, a husband had the legal right to use violence toward his wife. Also, women had no legal rights concerning their children.

¹⁶² Sheesh!
conditions for women. Her Reader, an anthology of narrative and poetic selections, is ostensibly a female education handbook, consisting of three parts or books, all selected to stress the importance of reading, reasoning, and speaking, ultimately enabling them to make beneficial decisions. She wanted women to have the liberty to fashion a life of their choosing without restrictions, fears, or subjugation to the institutionalized patriarchal system, including orthodox religion. Hers was a landmark contribution toward not just equality but something transcendent, something beyond all the rampantly repressive forces of her time, something harkening back to a pre-Christian era. As a revolutionary thinker, she aimed to help women realize their full creative potential, which we know reveals successful individuation.

Wollstonecraft's Original Stories from Real Life: with Conversations Calculated to Regulate the Affections and Form the Mind to Truth and Goodness (1788), which Blake illustrated, originated from her concern about women's lack of equality in several English cultural spheres. Her didactic intentions in Original Stories of proper conduct remind me of Ruskin's two lectures in Of Sesame and Lilies, where he, too, stresses the need for virtuous action and reliance on Christian morality to guide that behavior. Wollstonecraft's book is almost the Nicomachean Ethics for children in storybook form. Writing with an undeniable and at times a naïve charm, Wollstonecraft titles one chapter "The Inconveniences of Immoderate Behavior": and this coming ironically from a woman who later would indulge her passions in two love affairs with married men.

163 Interestingly, Blake wrote the poem "Mary" for her (circa 1803), in which he describes her beauty, virtues, and mostly his profound empathy for her. So when Mary asked him to illustrate her Original Stories from Real Life, he complied with black-inked intaglios, revealing a simplicity of drawing much as we find in his Songs of Innocence and Experience and certainly in his ones for Milton's Comus. Blake fills his illustrations with long dresses, lots of bonnets, and domestic scenes within charming cottages. No bacchanalia portrayed here.

164 Jung would later identify this behavior as part of an overdeveloped Eros within the mother-complex of the daughter or hypertrophy of the maternal element.
Wollstonecraft's most famous feminist work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects* (1792), opens with this charming statement: "I earnestly wish to point out in what true dignity and human happiness consist" (9). This early (well, second half of the 18th century early) feminist tract on equality—educationally, physically, sexually, and politically—introduces us to Wollstonecraft's main argument: "If she be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge and virtue" (4). Is deist-centered Wollstonecraft, who repeatedly emphasizes the cultivation of virtue, referring to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* or another moral philosopher’s definitions? The reader never discovers. Writing about chastity as a virtue, she fails to name any others. If we consider her milieu (as mentioned earlier)—the Rationalist Enlightenment and the cult of domesticity—then, yes, it is no surprise that her concept of independence most often links into the social bonds of marriage. Although considered a progressive reformer by historians, Wollstonecraft stresses the exercise of virtue as enabling a woman to be a better companion to man. She proclaims that if individuals were equal and esteemed each other in marriage, males would not seek the attention of whores, and females would not seek attention through coquetry.

Wollstonecraft derides the French, berates Rousseau, and questions Milton, who regarded women's equality with men ambivalently. Writing from a proto-socialist perspective, she focuses on the co-education of the middle class, thereby revealing her not-so-pretty bourgeois petticoat. She argues for liberty as do Blake and Jung. She writes "Independence

---

165 Certainly, Blake does not consider chastity a virtue per se.
166 Ironically, in 18th century France, Paris salons were the domain of smart and powerful women, who "were the arbiters not only of elegance, but of ethics, of politics, and of all the arts. No man could rise to prominence except against the background of a salon, and over every salon a woman ruled" (*Talleyrand* [New York, 1932]: 19, qtd. in *Vindication* 3.)
167 Virginia Woolf, writing about Wollstonecraft and Imlay, reminds me of how I felt when I finished reading *Vindication*: “Tickling minnows he had hooked a dolphin, and the creature rushed him through the waters till he was dizzy and only wanted to escape.”
is the basis of every virtue" (3) and “Liberty is the mother of virtue” (37). Her contribution to a feminist ideology is momentous.

Although the collection of her letters (The Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft) do not directly address a feminist ideology as such, these letters reveal the rich inner life of the preeminent 18th-century Enlightenment feminist. However, unlike the letters of Frances Burney and Jane Austen, who wrote prolifically about quotidian matters, Wollstonecraft's letters reveal her turmoil, triumphs, and what Todd refers to as her struggle for "self-mastery" (xiii). Wollstonecraft's unrequited love affair with the enfant terrible Fuseli, her second love affair with Gilbert Imlay, and finally her marriage to Godwin are all documented here, exhibiting a revelatory style. Significantly, Godwin relied greatly on her correspondence as an aide-mémoire for his writing. Collectively, her letters comprise a candid autobiography of a brilliant feminist maverick whose overarching concern is for women to achieve their independence.168

Continuing with another remarkable Romantic feminist writer—this time a poet—is Mary Tighe, who in her Psyche; or, the Legend of Love (1805), writes of a fantastical feminist maverick. Often during the reading of this quest-romance poem, I felt I was reading Keats: the marvelous imagery, the lush figurative language, and the heightened awareness of sensuous (and sensual) feelings. Moreover, as it turns out, Keats admired Tighe,169 and

168 It is a disappointment for my study that there are no letters to and from Blake. I was hoping to discover the details of their relationship, considering that they were friends and that he illustrated her children's book, Original Stories. Interestingly, the index makes no reference to this book and only provides references to Blake in the author's endnotes; however, one endnote reveals that Blake and Fuseli were good friends. Still, when I'm old and gray and nodding by the fire, I will return and leisurely read more of her letters, containing her revolutionary story with its sad ending, for, after two attempts at suicide, she died while giving birth to Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin Shelly.

169 Keats honored Tighe in his poem "To Some Ladies."
research indicates that she influenced him. In this long poem (3,300 lines), the technically accomplished Tighe recasts the ancient Apuleian fable, employing Spenserian stanzas. Telling the tale from Psyche's point of view, Tighe diverges from the original plot by showing Psyche traveling on her journey of trials accompanied by Cupid rather than traveling alone. Tighe writes of the female on her quest not so much for transformation, resulting in individuation, but simply—happiness. Moreover, the two are not necessarily the same. Psyche, by not succumbing to forces she knows and intuits to be harmful to her, learns the power of resistance and/or confrontation. Tighe represents characters embodying a kind of Platonic love that not only shapes their characters but also effects positive changes in others (both individually and communally). Additionally, Psyche is part of the rich heritage of females not only saving themselves but also aiming for a psychological state that is "other."!

What a pleasure to now consider Charlotte Smith whose poem "Beachy Head," although more widely canonized than The Emigrants, has much the same emotional poignancy about personal poverty and social injustice. Although Smith is an accomplished writer of sonnets, her form here is two books of blank verse, in which she lambasts the English aristocracy and reveals how England will find the same fate as France if it does not fairly and respectfully treat its people. She writes about Versailles, Louis XIV, and his estimated 10,000 groupies whom he wined, dined, and screwed. Contrastingly, she writes of liberty as both a virtue and a social condition. She spells out the people in power's atrocities.

---

170 In Paula Feldman's British Women Poets of the Romantic Era, she writes, "Her [Tighe's] influence, both in conception and style, even on his most mature poetry, has been well documented" (759). Additionally, Duncan Wu praises the poem "as one of the great love poems in the language" (Romantic Women Poets 372).

171 To mention only a few: Hopkins's Andromeda, the female in Spenser's Amoretti sonnet "LIX," (Thrice happy she, that is so well assured / Unto herself and settled so in heart: / That neither will for better be allured, / Ne feared with worse to any chance start), the female in Emily Dickinson's "The Soul Selects Her Own Society," and the female in Wallace Stevens' "Sunday Morning." Also, of interest: Psyche is Tighe's first published work, and correspondingly Jerusalem is one of Blake's last. Well, maybe not so interesting.
toward and subjugation of the poor people in England. Growing up as one of the landed
gentry herself, she experienced the many positive physical and educational advantages of
having come from privilege and wealth. Then her father married her off to a rogue, and as
Paula Feldman writes, "The marriage, in which there was no fondness on either side, was a
disaster, and the cause of almost all her future miseries" (671). Smith's profligate husband
was able to sire her ten children but did little else either to or for her. Having to support
herself and her large brood, her publishing, which was critically successful (more than thirty-
two novels and several collections of poetry), managed to keep them all afloat.\(^{172}\)

Her deep empathy for those who lived in poverty and suffered the slings and arrows
of outrageous fortune pervades *The Emigrants*. Deriding the vapidly wealthy and those in
positions of abusive power, she calls on her memories of the French Revolution to warn the
people of England about its perhaps imminent demise. She writes of the beauty of solitude
and love of nature with a mature sensibility and tender charm of emotion that reminds me of
Keats, Tighe, and Wordsworth. It is no surprise that she influenced Wordsworth. Moreover,
Smith and Blake both share an abiding love of liberty. Blake, hell-bent on personifying
liberty via his character of Jerusalem, and Smith both know and write about the debilitating
effects of capitalist patriarchy on individuals if they are not free from fear and poverty and if
they lack the strength on several levels to defend themselves against tyrannical forces. Smith
knew the heartache of being cold, indigent, and struggling daily to take care of ten children
by herself, yet she remained determined to write not only about the injustices she knew first-
and second-hand, but also write about the natural beauty she often craved.\(^{173}\)

\(^{172}\) A note of interest: Smith also wrote *The Natural History of Birds, Intended Chiefly for Young Persons* (1807); a
detail I learned from Dr. Thomas C. Gannon's *Skylark Meets Meadowlark: Reimagining the Bird in British Romantic
and Contemporary Native American Literature*. Where did she find the time? And motivation? And strength?

\(^{173}\) Similarly, Blake, too, over a period of sixteen years, composed *Jerusalem* when he was poor and often sick,
and yes, suffering the infirmities of being in his 60s.
To add to our consideration, let us look at one of the more uninhibited (sounds like a male construct) writers—Mary Robinson, who in her 1799 *A Letter to the Women of England and The Natural Daughter*, written in the midst of British Romanticism's misogyny, informs her readers of a vital need to understand and act where the rampant social, educational, religious, and legal inequalities of women exist. Writing as acerbically as Wollstonecraft, she condemns her society's patriarchal ideology: "The barbarity of custom's law in this enlightened country has long been exercised to the prejudice of woman" (42). Moreover, Robinson's inflamed critique of Rousseau's *Émile* is as virulent when she names Rousseau a Sensualist, one who is "the most dangerous of tyrants" (41). Ouch. Robinson's writing is clearer, more impassioned, and more directly expressed than Wollstonecraft's. This scholarly edition, edited by Setzeris especially helpful in situating it historically and critically. Additionally, Setzer's appendixes of additional selections of Robinson's writings (a few of her memoirs and selections written in tribute to the profligate Duchess of Devonshire), inclusions of other female contemporaries of Robinson's (namely Helen Maria Williams and Priscilla Wakefield), and reviews of her *Letter* all help to expand the significance of Mary Robinson's writings during this time of foment. Additionally, Robinson's "List of Female Literary Characters Living in the Eighteenth Century" is especially revealing of her familiarity with other like-minded authors. Reading still one more Romantic feminist tract buttresses our awareness of the significance of Blake's evolving feminist ideology, reaching its apex in *Jerusalem*.

Of additional significance we find Felicia Hemans, who although not of the maverick-feminist ilk, significantly matters as still another female writer, writing within the

---

174 My favorite quotation (although I abhor the truth of it), which refers to a male character, is from the accompanying novella, *The Natural Daughter*: He "has debauched more wives and daughters than any man of his age in the three kingdoms" (133).
milieu of a masculinist culture and tradition. Hemans, who started her writing career when she was fifteen, became the "nineteenth-century's most widely read and most profitable woman poet who from the beginning of her career devoted herself to celebrating her nation's virtues: military, economic, artistic, intellectual, and of course domestic," according to Behrendt in his *British Women Poets and the Romantic Writing Community* (xx). Hemans' popularity and financial success were unmatched in the nineteenth century. As an accomplished stylist, she wrote her longest work, *Records of Women, and Other Poems* (1828), in the Spenserian stanza form, consisting of over a thousand lines. In her *Records*, the poems are often about her humanitarian concerns of equality and justice, ancient Greek characters, historical women, and yes, birds.

Adding to our list of benchmark female writers who are concerned with the psychic health of their sisters, we need to recognize Mary Hays who gives us her ambitiously confident title of *Female Biography; or, Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women of All Ages and Countries* (1803). Her biographies of 294 women excludes Mary Wollstonecraft. *Female Biography* includes a range from ancient (ninth century BCE) to contemporary women—mostly French and English. Some of the more interesting include Italian Professors of Law from the 14th century, Joan d’ Arc, Lady Falconberg (daughter of Oliver Cromwell), Elizabeth Dancy (scholar and daughter of Thomas More), Laura Sade (French, 1310-1348, muse to Petrarch), and Matoaka (Native American, 1585-1617, who “assisted Jamestown settlers”). Hays’s research and writing about females shows her commitment to not only studying their lives but—more importantly—also preserving their histories for generations of females to come. We can appreciate Hays and Blake having been acquaintances. Her

175 Probably not good Catholic girls.
176 He preferred them young.
177 And later regretted it, as did her kin for generations to follow.
rebellious nature, feminist ideology, and worldview beyond the confines of bourgeois
London probably resonated deeply with Blake. If only we knew which women read Jerusalem.
Perhaps not even one during his lifetime, since only one copy made its way out of his
London apartment. Imagine how the leading cadre of feminists would have valued it.

Looking for one more ambitious Romantic feminist author, who also echoes Blake’s
major themes, we find Lucy Aikin who, writing in Her Epistles on Women, Exemplifying Their
Character and Condition in Various Ages and Nations, with Miscellaneous Poems (1810), directly
address the repressive forces of her milieu. The niece of poet and essayist Anna Laetitia
Barbauld, Aikin composed her epistolary sonnets in heroic couplets.178 As a technician in
verse, she has the poetics down, resulting in immaculate prosody. Her intention for this
work, as announced in her introduction, is as follows: "To mark the effect of various codes,
institutions, and states of manners, on the virtue and happiness of man, and the concomitant
and proportional elevation or depression of woman in the scale of existence, is the general
plan of this work" (4). Aiken's "versified historiography," as Behrendt in his British Women
Poets and the Romantic Writing Community names it (170), begins with Aiken's retelling of the
Creation and Fall tale. In Epistle I, she writes of Milton's joyless Adam before he sees Eve.
Here we find her feminist ideology combined with a Christian conviction. The other epistles
include subjects of North American Indians, Greek and Roman heroines, ancient German
women, and so forth. Her Epistle "Lucretius" is especially beautiful. Describing the sons and
daughters of Albion, Aikin's didactic sonnets have a more insistent tone when she writes of a
man, emphatically saying, "Rise . . . O Woman, rise! be free!" (44). The volume concludes
with sonnets written on the subjects of futurity, fortune, sunrise, and midnight thoughts. In

178 The Critical Review gave it a favorable review in 1811.
her poem "Lucretius," her first stanza speaks about the sons of Albion empowering women and then in the second stanza instructs "blessed" women to

Press eager on; of this great art possest,
To seize the good, to follow still the best. ¹⁷⁹ (43)

How contemporaneously in accord Blake was with the female, feminist poets. So not incidentally, as a friend of Mary Wollstonecraft, he illustrated, as we have seen, the second edition (1791) of her *Original Stories from Real Life: With Conversations, Calculated to Regulate the Affections, and Form the Mind to Truth and Goodness*. Perhaps *Jerusalem* was his "vindication" to help raise the collective consciousness of England. If his eponymous heroine could metaphorically and mythically recover from being in the bowels of a symbolic dragon and then go on to thrive and figuratively create a community of countries as she does in Plate 72,¹⁸⁰ then could not the reading public, especially the females, rise above the masculinist dominations over their lives? Therefore, from a more psychically reformist stance rather than a politically revolutionary one, their outrage poured into their poetry, and as they became more individuated, they found their poetic voices, too, and railed against the injustices and the predators in their lives.¹⁸¹ Blake's field is on the mythic and psychic levels, whereas Romantic-era women poets' field takes place on the physical level (as revealed in Behrendt's subtitle, *Romantic Writing Community*, where the symbiotic relationship of poet and reader takes place but, of course, also affects the symbiotic individuations for both poet and

¹⁷⁹ Sonnet LIX in Spenser's *Amoretti*, is similar, too, in its didacticism, as he instructs women toward self-actualization and incidentally, Hopkins wrote a marvelous and female-empowering sonnet where he recasts the myth of Andromeda, entitled "Andromeda."

¹⁸⁰ Or as Jung writes, "Individuation does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to oneself" (*The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, CE 8, 226).

¹⁸¹ And hopefully kicked a lot of their sorry asses out the door.
reader). So, too, Jerusalem, through her own assiduous physical and psychological efforts, triumphantly reaches individuation; so, too, could Blake's readers.

**Romantic era poetic female characters (excluding Blake's)**

Let us now turn to look at as poetic subjects of the Romantic Era created by male poets—specifically Keats and Shelley. In part functioning as a comparison/contrast study to Blake’s female characters, the obvious observation reveals how other poets portrayed female characters. Keats's *Endymion* (1818) is charmingly beautiful: bodies, dreams, and kisses. It has been known to make grown women cry. It is rustic, pastoral, romantic—and Romantic.

Divided into four books of almost equal length, this “poetic romance” is a recasting of the Greek myth of Endymion. A polished cameo in Keats's oeuvre, he wrote the poem when he was twenty-six. Keats's duality of love (heartache and bliss) centers on Endymion who, in his wearing-it-on-his-sleeve yearning for affection, falls for the moon goddess Cynthia (Artemis), who later morphs into an Indian maiden. With exquisite sensory language, the happy wooer swoons "Drunken from Pleasure's nipple; and his love / Henceforth" is “dove-like” (II,868-70). How does the poem relate specifically to Blake's evolving feminist ideology? At the epicenter is the belief that love, ultimately, will save the day. It is a lofty notion, but both poets write a pretty good case for it. Although Keats focuses on love on a personal level, Blake for *Jerusalem* focuses on an archetypal one. Additionally, the journey references are numerous (usually in the form of a voyage). One could see the eponymous hero's journey as one of individuation, but by poem's end, he has transformed little. One might ask what Jungian significance is here. Does Keats successfully wrest the anima values from these ostensible anima figures? Probably not. Yes, he yearns for relationships with the

182 This is very much like Jung's concept of quaternity as well as Blake's use of quaternity in *Jerusalem*. 
two prominent female characters, but it is solely a romantic yearning for the moon goddess and familial love for his sister. The poor fellow simply wants to be loved by a pretty gal.

Another poem with a fantastical female is, of course, Shelley’s *The Witch of Atlas* (1824). Shelley dedicates this poem to his wife, Mary, “on her objecting to it upon the score of its containing no human interest” (366). Mary writes that the poem, written in three days, “is peculiarly characteristic of his tastes—wildly fanciful, full of brilliant imagery, and discarding human interest and passion, to revel in the fantastic ideas that his imagination suggested” (882). If in fact there is no “human interest and passion,” there is the overarching theme of love as a dynamic, healing power. Moreover, it is Shelley’s heroine who wields this power. From the poem’s beginning, she is hatched whole much like Athena from the brow of Zeus, Spenser’s heroine in his sonnet “Thrise Happy She,” and Botticelli’s *The Birth of Venus*, where Venus emerges full-bodied from that more than ample clam shell.

Shelley’s beautiful dark-haired witch’s love takes the form of pervasive playfulness, which is evidence of her, as the yogis name it, Dharma. Reuniting lovers, convincing priests to write pastoral letters about birds instead of preaching, causing misers to shake off evil, enabling lying scribes to betray their lies, reuniting envious friends, and enabling timid lovers to fulfill their desires, she is imaginatively playful. Shelley, naming her a "lady witch," a "great Queen," and a "wizard maiden," describes the chaste witch living alone in a cave until she journeys in a pinnace (cf. Asia in *Prometheus Unbound*—“the lightest boat / whichever upon mortal stream did float” (295-96) and kneads together fire and snow to give

---

183 Edmund Spenser, Sonnet LIX in *Amoretti*. Both Shelley’s poem and Spenser’s sonnet, by the way, use the metaphor of sailing (specifically, their boats) to denote the ego’s journey towards individuation.
184 See Bill Brandt’s 1947 gelatin silver print *Campden Hill, London* for a contemporary iteration. Interestingly, the archetype even shows up in Venice Beach, California.
185 The Law of Dharma (Purpose in Life) is one of the seven spiritual laws of Yoga. “Increasing compassion, wisdom, and playfulness are evidence that one’s life is flowing in accordance with the Law of Dharma” (Chopra and Simon 69). This playfulness is also a characteristic of the Native American trickster figure.
186 And apparently quite busy.
birth to an image, a Hermaphrodite whom she places at the boat’s prow. Together they travel until they arrive at the lake of Austral waters.\footnote{This relates to the southern hemisphere.}

Shelley describes her thus:

her spirit free
Knew what love was, and felt itself alone—
. . . this lady—like a sexless bee
Tasting all blossoms, and confined to none.
Among those mortal forms, the wizard-maiden
Passed with an eye serene and heart unladen. (568-592)

Her Shelleyan voyage can be understood as a mini-variation of a voyage of reiterated individuation. Applewhite, in his *Seas and Inland Journeys*, describes how in the Romantics’ poems of landscapes, a voyage can be viewed as a process of individuation.\footnote{Additionally, Applewhite writes, “The structural impulse of the English Romantic poetry . . . is to assimilate the external environment for the purposes of the psyche . . . ” (71). A very textbook Jungian reading, one might add.} Interestingly, the poem’s ending is similar to *Jerusalem*’s, but on a much less heroic scale: whereas the Witch performs pranks, turning serious endeavors into light-hearted fancy, Jerusalem reunites whole "countries" (of the psyche). The Witch is fully hatched from the get-go, whereas Jerusalem’s individuation (although the title page displays her complete psychic cycle) is developed through the one hundred-plate poem. The poem of the Witch’s journey, in ottava rima, is but sixteen pages in length. *The Witch of Atlas* is uncomplicated and fanciful; Jerusalem is mythical and archetypally profound.

Blake, like Keats and Shelley, enormously loved women—so much so, in fact, that he wrote, for his hoped-for future reader, these poems about women. His didacticism takes
on a passionate stance, demonstrated in his complete portrayal of not only the successes and failures within a trajectory of female individuation but also a portrayal of successful individuation within one mythically-sized female. His owner’s manual for individuation, if you will, provides for his hoped-for future readers. Because of his love for his wife and female contemporary writers, he knew what and why he loved, so he set out to show how his female poetic characters either 1) failed to develop from their challenges or 2) what they finally enjoyed once they had successfully developed. From the beginning, he hoped for their health (both physical and psychological), contentment, happiness, sexual joys, and enthralling companions—both four-legged and two, e.g., a divine lover (Jerusalem: Plate 99) and a little lamb:

Little Lamb

Here I am.

Come and lick

My white neck. (“Spring” 19-22)

Thus he set out to write about the women’s silencers, suppressors, predators, killjoys, and killers. His visionary mysticism enabled him to dream dreams for women, create scenes of tender physical affection and sexual passion, display the joys of being with animals, and reveal power at resisting predatory and psychically unhealthy people and situations. He loved women, and appreciated the sexual differences, although his idea of eternity contained no gender distinctions, but that is another story to be told, another time. Two centuries later, we can realize that what Blake as a prophet, mystic, dreamer, poet, and artist has contributed

189 Felicia Hemans, who never met Blake, valorizes him in her “The Painter’s Last Work—A Scene.” Also, Paula Feldman, in her article “Felicia Hemans and Mythologizing of Blake’s Death,” suggest that Hemans might have heard of Blake from Wordsworth during one of their Lake District walks.
190 And probably another lifetime, given my age.
to an on-going feminist ideology is marvelous. Blake gives his reader a blueprint for individuation and by way of that his maturing ideology of feminism. The following several poems will reveal precisely how he accomplished this—because he loved women, and he wanted them to know that happiness is achievable. And when all is said and done, is this not his selfless love, revealing the greatest part of his mature individuation?

**Female individuation: stages of and differences from the male’s**

Before we look at each of Blake’s female poetic subjects, an understanding and appreciation of a female’s psychological development will help us navigate our way through the core of Jung’s analytical psychology—the process of individuation. However, Jung’s androcentric perspective does not include the specific stages of a woman’s individuation. Of course, he writes about the significance of female archetypes\(^{191}\) but certainly not about the developmental stages on her quest for her higher self. In Chapter 2, we looked at a feminist perspective on Jungian individuation and specifically how a female’s differs from a male’s. Moreover, to help us understand this, Joseph Campbell, who writes extensively on the universality of the *male’s* initiation pattern, which is, of course, a variation on Jung’s depth psychology, published his *Goddesses, Mysteries of the Feminine Divine* in 2013. He contends that scholars have not adequately written about women’s psychology because “there are no models in our mythology for an individual woman’s quest” (xiv).\(^{192}\)

---

\(^{191}\) His writing on the Mother archetype in his *Four Archetypes* is near perfect in its description: “These are three essential aspects of the mother: her cherishing and nourishing goodness, her orgiastic emotionality, and her Stygian depths.”

\(^{192}\) Unfortunately, Campbell fails to recognize the Pueblo/Laguna myth “The Yellow Woman.” In Leslie Mormon Silko’s 1993 retelling of it, we recognize another iteration of the Kore myth (“Persephone and Demeter”). Paula Gunn Allen names “The Yellow Woman” “The Spirit of Woman” in her *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (227). Additionally, there are some similarities between the Yellow Woman and Jerusalem. The former is the daughter of the ruler Hochoni, and Jerusalem is the daughter (emanation) of Albion. Significantly, neither women ever looked back once they began their journeys.
environment generally does not have an ego as strongly developed as a male’s. The female’s sense of self, in large part because of the dominating influences of a patriarchal system, has a difficult time fully developing as early and completely as a male; therefore, she has little sense of her agency, which is usually not validated as much as a male’s; therefore, her psyche is not strongly based on her ego, which is the starting point for individuation.

Thus in writing about a woman’s individuation—a reclaiming of her soul—let us become familiar with Jungian female analysts who generally rewrite the traditional, linear process coming from a patriarchally clinical logos perspective into a more creative and soulful, if you like, perspective of non-linear exploration. For women generally, individuation often does not necessarily occur in a linear fashion but rather in a spiral or a constellated gyre. Jerusalem in the visual text (representative of the unconscious) precisely illustrates this pattern.

One writer who understands this dynamic difference is Demaris S. Wehr, who comes from the academic disciplines of religion and psychology. It was not until she read the feminist theologian Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father* that she was able to write *Jung & Feminism, Liberating Archetypes*. Here she announces, "My aim in this book is to build bridges . . . the most obvious is a bridge between feminism and Jung. This bridge, built on insights from feminist theology and psychology, can strengthen Jungian psychology's application to women" (x). Although liberation theory (such as feminism) seems to be at odds with Jung's psychology, dealing with eternal archetypes, contextual and the empirical, Wehr acknowledges that "Jung's psychology does pose a threat to traditional Christianity" and that the androcentrism of god as a father and Christ as a male promotes patriarchal sexism.

Interestingly, Jungian theological feminists argue that Jung's psychology is his religion—and this "is the foundation on which [her] feminist critique rests" (xi). Jung's
concept of individuation, "the core process of analytical psychology" (49), is not necessarily gender-specific, and his ideas on the "feminine" and "anima" are generally not at odds with feminism. Recognizing that women within a patriarchal culture, society, and family internalize pernicious sexism and consequently live oppressed lives, Wehr argues that Jungian psychology can be a means of empowering females by providing them with a process that can lead them to self-knowledge and thus their liberation. Both female and male critics focus their examples of Jung's occasional sexism, philosophical stance, and belief in spiritualizing sexuality (like Blake), as contrasted to Freud's sexualizing spirituality (the source of their parting ways). Overall, she contends that a closer look at Jung's core concept of individuation (if possible within the short span of a 142-page book) is necessary if one is to appreciate his contribution to a woman’s liberation. Importantly, Wehr praises Jung as a "pioneer in a holistic psychology of the self and of nations" (125), as Blake poetically posits in Jerusalem. Wehr emphasizes, “Sexism conceals a deep fear of the female.”

Notably, Erich Neumann, an analytical psychologist, writes in-depth about this in his book The Fear of the Feminine and other essays on feminine psychology. Some female Jungian analysts/writers have provided us detailed and in-depth information on the subject. Dr. Clarissa Pincola Estés, herself a Jungian analyst for several decades, writes comprehensively of the female’s stages. As she expresses them in her Women Who Ran with the Wolves: The Wild Woman Archetype, they can be summed up in the nine distinct “tasks” an ingénue needs to complete as she travels to maturity—a timeless trope: 1) allowing the too good Mother to die, (the psychic Mother will become unnecessary, but the Wild Mother—source of one’s imaginative life—must be found and reclaimed; 2) realizing

193 A few other notable female writers, writing about a female’s psychological maturation, include Marie-Louise von Franz, Esther Harding, and Christine Gallant (The Wounded Woman, Erotic Mentoring).
194 In Chapter 3, Neumann will be discussed further.
and exposing the crude and harmful shadow; 3) navigating in the dark underground of one’s unconscious; 4) facing the wild hag (“Letting the frail and too sweet child die back even further”); 5) serving the non-rational, and recognizing one’s innate powers, 6) learning discernment, “separating this from that” (the syzygy of animus and anima within one); 7) asking the mysteries (accepting the mysteries, e.g. the cosmogenic cycle of birth/life death and its continual repeating pattern); 8) “standing on all fours” (discovering one’s powers); and 9) “recasting the shadow” (81-114).

In order to be further prepared to understand the following discussion of Blake’s poetic females’ trajectory of individuation, it might be helpful to look again at a recap of the male’s initiation pattern, according to Campbell’s patriarchal model: 1) leaves the Mother figure, 2) travels to a sacred site with a mentor, 3) confronts the monster, 4) scars psychologically, and 5) returns home and joins with a symbolic brotherhood of sorts. Since this is a quest journey, we must not skew it to fit a female’s; instead we need to look at a female’s process from a feminist’s point of view to insure no skewing. Interestingly, men, also have challenged an androcentric position—notably James Hillman, Edward Whitmont, and Eric Neumann.

195 Most 20th century 12-step rehabilitation programs generally follow this pattern—for both men and women.
Within the poem’s stories, we will see how Blake depicts a stage or two of individuation successfully passed through or not and reveals how each female protagonist becomes part of a larger story of conscious development. Conclusively, his dramatic portrayal is a conscious attempt at revealing not only to himself but also to his much hoped for future reader that he had a plan (whether conscious or unconscious, or Big Buddha help us: both) in mind. Moreover, his plan is discoverable when we read these several poems. Rather than a masculinist chronological sequence, Blake gives us a feminine circling pattern of development (écriture féminine) before arriving at his end goal: Jerusalem’s individuation. And that plan, also, resulted in his maturing not only as a visual and a poetic artist.

He sets up a series of stories, if you will, or little myths, superficially separate but, upon closer look, we find a linking element: a trope of psychological development (or lack of it). Each poem contains its own unique setting, central female character, and plot, and within
them Blake’s gender distinctions are dramatic—almost stereotypical—all didactically intentional so he can make his argument. He becomes for us a marvelous feminist and a man whose deep understanding of a female’s individuation is nothing less than prescient.

Blake’s idea of sublime labor requires the reader to be steadfast and resolute in her/his discovery of individuation’s pattern. If we stay with him as he instructs us at the beginning of Jerusalem, “I also hope the Reader will be with me,” we can eventually understand his method. Throughout the course of the following several poems, we can come to understand the psychic (and physical) stages and then in the concluding chapter read of Jerusalem’s entire psychological maturation. So now, let us begin our work of understanding how Blake portrays a Jungian depth analysis, as he simultaneously develops his maturing feminist ideology.

As we will see, we cannot only understand Blake’s trajectory of female individuation within his sequence of several poems within the verbal text but also within the visual. And not incidentally, as his poems expansively progress in their poetic development and sophistication, mostly paralleling the psychological development of his females, so does his artistic, visual style with the drawings of females becoming more detailed in their portritures; therefore, a constellation of multivalent maturations is taking place: Blake’s poems stylistically, his illustrations artistically, his female protagonists psychologically—as well as Blake’s and yes, let us not forget ours, his readers’.

For example, look at the differences between the drawing of Lyca in the plate from The Little Girl Found (Figure 36) and of Jerusalem (Figure 37). Stylistically, his poems' design elements change from muted colors, simplified design, and undramatic "movement"—one might say they reveal a stasis rather than a dynamism. Both the female figures and the entire plates' illustrations are as different as the moon and the sun. The former is gentle, pastoral,
and undramatic—if indeed, one can appropriately use such adjectives to describe a visual piece of art.\textsuperscript{196} In contrast, the illustration for \textit{Jerusalem} contains little, if any, colors related to the earth and are instead dramatic, not of the earth (other-worldly—e.g., the sea, the sky), wild, and chaotic. The colors of the psychic world (the unconscious), apparently for Blake, do not include colors of the earth: grass-green and daffodil-yellow.

In \textit{The Little Girl Lost}, big bovines tenderly lick Lyca, and in contrast, one finds in \textit{Jerusalem} a larger-than-life raptor inches away from hotly devouring her liver.\textsuperscript{197} Further, Blake does not illustrate anywhere in \textit{Jerusalem} pastorally bucolic scenes; instead in wonderful contrast, a luscious love scene between two figures takes place on top of a suspended water lily (Plate 28), for in large part, this is a story of her psychic transformation. Blake’s illustrations, in the visual text, signifying the unconscious—depict nude bodies mostly in unearthly realms (again: the sky, the sea), cavorting, soaring, and making love.

Now, look at Blake's individual female figures’ attempts at character development within both narratives. Again, as his visual style matures, so do his female characters' psyches or as Jung refers to them: “psychological peaches.”\textsuperscript{198} With each poem, a stage or two of the individuation process successfully materializes or fails, taking place not chronologically but instead cyclically. These Blakean female figures all have titles naming or referencing them. So we unequivocally know that Blake is featuring them within “their” poems: Thel (\textit{The Book of Thel} [1789]) makes a futile attempt at development; Oothoon (\textit{Visions of the Daughters of Albion} [1793]) makes dramatic attempts toward vocalizing her injustices; Lyca (\textit{The Little Girl Lost}...
and *The Little Girl Found* ([1794]) eventually comes full circle; Ahania (*The Book of Ahania* [1795]) has only a vision of transcendence; and finally Jerusalem (*Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* [1820]) makes an archetypal home run: ultimately becoming a fully mature heroine.

Blake's prescience of Jung’s theory of an individuation’s trajectory of consciousness development, including (in various combinations) physical, libidinal, and psychological, reveals itself poem by poem not in a chronological trajectory but rather in a looping back before progressing forward.199

**Lyca**

In the form of a trajectory, the first poem of Blake’s compelling sequence of poems begins with the tender Lyca,200 portrayed in both the two prophetic companion poems, signifying the two halves of the cosmogenic cycle—half-death, half-life for the central female character. We see her archetypal initiation into womanhood, whose spiritual transformation has much in common with North American Indians’ rites of passage that take them “into a more sacred self.”201 Lyca's girl/child persona is a universal symbol of the soul's complete transformation into a higher state of "innocence."202 Moreover, her story is a simple one, consisting of three pages of thirteen quatrains of a rather loosely written iambic pentameter. In *The Little Girl Lost*, Lyca wanders through the wild desert, falls asleep, and is taken to a cave by wild beasts. The first two plates show us Lyca fully clothed with a nude male and

---

199 I am paraphrasing Behrendt who wrote this in his response to my Capstone Oral exam.
200 The verbal and visual texts vary with different copies. Here, I am using the two poems in *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, copy B on *The Blake Archive*.
202 Jean Hagstrom writes in William Blake Poet and Painter, *An Introduction to the Illuminated Verse,* it was Blake's mission to preserve and refine Innocence to carry it intact and fresh through the death-valley of Experience into the new Eden, where it becomes imperishable. The very breath and finer spirit of both the new and the old Innocence is Imagination, and Experience cannot be more succinctly described than to call it the death of the artistic spirit" (139-40).
then, in the second, fully clothed resting among the trees. The first plate of *The Little Girl Found* is the bottom half of the second plate of *The Little Girl Lost*, where we see a lion, and, in the second plate, Lyca is resting nude with two tigers and three other young nude figures. The verbal text describes how her parents, aided by the lion, journey to find her. However, the title page for *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* strikingly reveals a nude female crouching on the ground face down with a nude male hovering above her and also facing downward. Through her ontological transmutation (of course, the poem is usually/often read as about her actual death and the lion as Christ redeeming her mortal soul), Lyca successfully journeys through despair and symbolic death and then arrives in a wild place content with the beasts sensuously licking her.

In *The Little Girl Lost* she has a woman's body and is clothed with her lover, but Blake shows her nude in *The Little Girl Found*, where she chooses wild nature, reflecting her wild psyche. Here, she feels safely at home and thus sleeps with these wild beasts of prey. In this plate (and others) Blake obviously implies that women sleep where they feel safe, usually in the realm of the great Mother archetype (cabalistic queen of Heaven—Beulah). At the end of *The Little Girl Found*, we see Lyca in her transformed state—that is, her "nakedness." The plate's obvious implication is that, with Lyca, a dialectic evolution to a "higher innocence" occurs. In *The Little Girl Found*, Lyca, after experiencing a lover, chooses to return to a place without him. For both Blake and Jung, healthy sexuality is a kind of spirituality—so dramatically portrayed in *The Little Girl Found*. Lyca successfully navigates

---

203 In Blake's nomenclature, as suggested by S. Foster Damon in *A Blake Dictionary*, the girl's name, Lyca, means she-wolf, although there is contention among critics regarding this.

204 Interestingly, Beulah is the queen of heaven in Milton's writing. Also my mother's name.

205 Similarly, T. S. Eliot, in *Four Quartets*, writes "We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time."
this abbreviated individuation. *The Little Girl Lost* and *The Little Girl Found*, when considered as one narrative, show the reader a thumbnail sketch of individuation—albeit a brief one.

**Thel**

The second poem, *The Book of Thel*, tells the story of a young woman who attempts the first stage of individuation but by poem's end is unable to pass into a higher state of innocence—informed innocence—because she cowardly rejects it, preferring to sleep the sleep of death. *The Book of Thel*, an early illuminated work (1789), centers on the nebulous Thel, whom Blake describes in ethereal images:

> Ah! Thel is like a watry bow. and like a parting cloud.  
> Like a reflection in a glass. like shadows in the water  
> Like dreams of infants. like a smile upon an infants face,  
> Like the doves voice, like transient day, like music in the air . . . .

(II. 8-11)

This poetic description of the eponymous young virginal girl reminds one of Keats with his lyrically light, beautiful poetic touch. Redolent with transient beauty, Blake’s image of her is one lacking substance. Beautiful yes—superficially—but no lasting loveliness revealed contextually.

Opening with “Thel’s Motto,” we find Blake’s young woman aphoristically questioning Urizenic "reason":

> Does the Eagle know what is in the pit?  
> Or wilt thou go ask the Mole:  
> Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod?

206 According to the publishing dates, *TLGL* and *TLGF* chronologically follow *The Book of Thel*. 
Or Love in a golden bowl? (1:1-4)\textsuperscript{207}

Fig. 3:29. Blake, \textit{Thel}, Plate 1

Again, we find Blake giving the reader a hint of what is to come by beginning the poem in this way.\textsuperscript{208} The young woman’s nascent existential questioning begins here. The \textit{tabula rasa} of her philosophical view takes this form. Her mere “babe in the woods” stance is almost frightening in its pervasive aura of vulnerability. Blake, having been beaten by his father for admitting he had seen an angel in a tree, is perhaps psychologically reenacting his early trauma. Like Blake, Thel’s paramount question becomes, “Whom does one trust?”

Alone, without a library card and apparently without a trusted friend, Thel, from the beginning, fails to realize that wisdom and love are within rather than in a place outside of herself. Beginning her inquiries into what she needs for self-fulfillment, lamenting her discontent, wondering what to do with her life, and seeking answers from others rather than herself, her perspective is, as psychiatrists say, object-referral rather than self-referral. The

\textsuperscript{207} Perhaps this is the source for Henry James’s novel \textit{The Golden Bowl}, where we find the golden bowl cracked.

\textsuperscript{208} Additionally, Blake illustrates Jerusalem’s entire psychomachic process in the Frontispiece for \textit{Jerusalem}, Figure 3: Plate 2.
seven-plate poem reads like a little drama in four acts with the dialogical structure involving four main interlocutors.

We find the Lilly-of-the-Valley first to advise, suggesting that Thel simply rejoice in being and giving trust to him “that smiles on all” (1:19); second, the Cloud, who feels she should “bear food to all our tender flowers,” and live not for herself, but others; third, the weak Worm who gives no advice, and whom Thel views as infantinely helpless and summarily dismisses him; and fourth, the Clod of Clay, who advises her to take on the nurturing role of motherhood. Thel then journeys into the darkness and, in Plate 6, we find her embracing herself with her head facing downward. So as she journeys into darkness and the “land unknown,” (6:2), generally the second stage of the journey motif, she sees “the couches of the dead,” (6:3), restless hearts, sorrows, and tears. In the concluding plate, Thel hears the voice of sorrow dramatically enumerating deception, doom, and destruction. She is horrified at what she hears from the “voice of sorrow” (6:10):

Why cannot the Ear be closed to its own destruction?

Or the glistening Eye to the poison of a smile? (6:11-12)

Frightened, because of her unpracticed heart, she chooses to remain naïve and escape from the horrors she hears. Thel’s return to the vale (symbolically her first home) suggests the denial of her sexuality and refusal to let its “soul Expand its wing.” She is not lost in the woods like the little girl Lyca. No, she only briefly views and listens from the forest’s edge. Is the feckless young girl resisting the controlling orthodoxies, or is she so shocked by the horrors she discovers in the “land unknown,” the world of Generation and Experience, that she throws her life into neutral gear and flees back to her home—a

209 In Blake’s designs, this usually indicates dejection and despair, as explained by Malgorzata Luczynksa-Holdys in “‘Life exhal’d in milky fondness’—Becoming a Mother in William Blake’s The Book of Thel.”
Baudelairean “warm scented cradle,” a Johnsonian Happy Valley, the vales of Har (the idyllic Beulah-like state), and the bondage of Urizen (thus the "motto")—after having cursorily glanced at the “world”? She thinks this is her only recourse? The symbolic landscape of the final plate shows Thel riding (and reining) a serpent with two young children behind her (Figure 4, Plate 7). The implications of her retreating back to her home suggest that she has little or no internal striving to help her in realizing her potential. And we well know that retreating is not the same as achieving (specifically, a psychological maturation). Thel represents a Jungian eternal female child: a *puella aeternus*, whose psycho-sexual development remains absent. If Blake had added another plate in which he shows her in Har’s idyllic garden, I imagine Thel as little Miss Muffet eating her non-fat Greek yogurt and being frightened away by the metaphorical big spider. For having no experience with predatory figures, she remains unexperienced as she denounces the world of experience. Completely daunted, she chooses psychological stasis rather than dynamism. And where is the fun in that?

The significance of this poem is its representation of one of Blake's earliest portrayals of a female character—perhaps his first poem expressing his nascent, progressive attitude toward women (compassionately and fully knowing that she is the starting point, so she must be developed into a believable young woman.) For it is here that he begins his gradual development of a female’s psyche. With Thel, his plan is up and running. And remarkably, Blake is writing this beautiful cameo-like poem during a time in English history when women had few or no choices regarding their future, with compulsory heterosexuality and marriage being forcefully dictated by the patriarchal governance. By writing of a girl questioning her choices for her life, Blake shows us both the beginnings of his feminist

210 Called dharma in the Yogic tradition.
ideology and his more than a suggestion of an individuation’s process—albeit a failed one. In Blake's depiction of female characters, we see a few attempts to develop into mature consciousness, although in this early poem, in Jungian terms, Thel represents a Jungian anima repressed, as contrasted to Blake's final heroine, Jerusalem, who represents anima expressed. Here, Thel, faced with deciding what she believes will result in self-fulfillment, chooses not to become what the others advise. Kathleen Raine’s argument that “Thel fears that in descending into generation, she will lose her immortal nature” (1.111) substantiates my claim that Thel’s self-centered, delusional stance deprives her of not only life’s inherent heartaches but also its attendant joys.

And I complain’d in the mild air, because I fade away,
And lay me down in the cold bed, and leave my shining lot. (4:24-25)
Thus, Blake illustrates Thel in the poem’s final plate and titles it “Serpent with children.” Consistently, he portrays the Seraphim’s daughter as a young girl not even in a stage of puberty.

Figure 4 shows the young Thel riding the serpent, legs positioned tightly together, figuratively turning her back on the world of experience. Her unwillingness to remain in the world of experience and or generation reveals a lack of courage, a refusal to begin any kind of psychological maturation. Her return to Har is not with a sense of informed innocence, for her intellect is unformed. No, there will be no exploring for Thel, who ultimately chooses not to open her psyche to the possibility of growth. Simply becoming another voyeuristic spectator of life, she chooses metaphorically to watch the others dance.

Malgorzata Luczyńska-Holdys, in her “‘Life exhal’d in milky Fondness’—Becoming a Mother in William Blake’s The Book of Thel,” centers her argument on “Thel’s decision not as a failure or a surrender but as an act of self-assertion, a conscious decision to reject the
perspective (however attractive at times of both sexual relationship and childbearing)” (2).

Her argument does not bear up when we closely look at Blake’s illustrations of Thel. When Luczyńska-Holdys writes of Thel choosing not to become a mother, it is based on her personal preference as a critic, and in trying to defend that, she speciously projects herself onto Thel, ignoring the most dramatic of textual evidence. Luczyńska-Holdys did not consider the visual text\(^{211}\) as Blake advises us:

> I entreat the spectator will attend to the Hand and Feet the Lineaments of the countenances. They are all descriptive of character and not a line is drawn without intention and that most Discriminate and particular as Poetry admits not a Letter that is insignificant so Painting admits not a Grain of Sand or a Blade of Grass insignificant much less an Insignificant Blur or Mark.

The concluding plate shows Thel riding the affable-looking serpent in a pose suggesting she is almost treating him as a toy. Her figure indicates that she is not so much riding him as sitting on his back. And for Blake, who often portrays serpent iconography as sexual (especially in Jerusalem), the serpent here is not being reined by Thel, and she is not riding him French style: astride bareback.\(^{212}\) Yes, she is holding a thin rein of sorts, but Blake illustrates it as passing lightly through the serpent’s open mouth. She is not in control of him. Here uncharacteristically, the visual at the bottom of the plate coincides with the two lines of text above it:

> The Virgin started from her seat, & with a shriek,

> Fled back unhindered till she came into the vales of Har. (IV: 21-22)

---

\(^{211}\) Blake printed and colored sixteen different copies. Copy E contains seven plates.

\(^{212}\) This refers to a French style of riding in which the female presses downward through her crotch area, enhancing the contact with the horse. As a Victorian side note: Mary Ann Evans gave up horseback riding because she found it too pagan.
Considering the words “shriek” and “fled,” we can interpret the young Thel as frightened and running away from what she considers dangerous shrieks, reminding one of some birds’s alarm calls. Her narrow, provincial life has left her with no other recourse because she has no interior life from which to draw. And although she is not a sick rose whose life has been destroyed by the invisible worm, her returning to Har signifies a withering-on-the-vine state with the pathos prevailing. The lesson here, among many, is that Thel will never know the difference between thoughtless comfort and hard-earned happiness.

I agree with Behrendt’s views that Thel is an example of “the dead-end nature of narcissistic behavior” (Luczyńska-Holdys fn 2). For Thel, then, represents a female character who narcissistically rejects any impulse to change—choosing a state of stasis over a state of dynamism, choosing a bucolic halcyon-innocence instead of a world of experience. In a modern context, Thel represents a drug addict: languishing away her days in a state of stasis. Yes, she feels good (or perhaps just anxiety-free), but she is empty of the pleasures that a rich inner life can engender. She is one of those women whose obituary could read, “Thel, a young girl who felt good but accomplished little, although she did enjoy a weekly game of Mahjong at her club.” Jung knew that individuation was not without considerable pain and wrenching heartache. As he writes in *The Secret to the Golden Flower*, “The way is not without danger. Everything good is costly and the development of the personality is one of the most costly of all things” (95). Apparently, for Thel the eternal girl, Jung’s archetypal *puella aeternus*, the cost was too high. Kathleen Raine suggests that “the answer Thel failed to find is that the soul is not transient in the world, but the world transient in the soul” (1:181). What Thel was looking for in the world, she failed to realize was already inside her.
Howard Brogan, in his article “Blake on women: Oothoon to Jerusalem,” asserts that as Blake matured emotionally, politically, and intellectually, his portraits of women became more feminist. Considering that intellectually Blake was more aligned with Gnosticism than conventional Christianity, he did not believe in the Christian view of women as the inferior sex. Brogan writes of Blake’s “Female Will” as “Her assertion of dominance” (131). It was one of domination in a negative sense, but living through the French Revolution and siding with the French, his views became more egalitarian as he came to believe that one should not have power over another.\(^{213}\) Liberty for Blake, later in his life, was represented in the character of Jerusalem, where in Plate 33, he writes, “Liberty thy name is Jerusalem.” It remains a puzzle why feminists today in some quarters still regard Blake as misogynistic.

\(^{213}\) He scathingly decries and denounces slavery in his writing and illustrating, especially in “The Chimney Sweeper,” *America*, and here in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion.*
How is this possible when he ultimately wrote one of the 19th century’s greatest feminist poems: *Jerusalem*? *Jerusalem* is Blake’s last installment, following several others with their various portrayals of female characters, attempting to become the best versions of themselves. Or not—as in Thel’s case. Jung would have found Thel a hard nut to crack.

**Oothoon**

The third poem, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, features Oothoon who, like a few of Blake’s other major female characters, laments—a lot; however, Oothoon’s reason for lamentation is the most horrific: Bromion, in an operatic-like scene, rapes her on her way to be with her lover, Theotormon. Bromion’s raging ego is in full force here, displaying his tyrannical character:

> Bromion rent her with his thunders, on his stormy bed
> Lay the faint maid, and soon her woes appalld his thunders hoarse
> Bromion spoke. (1.16-17)

The rape is her initial psychological (and certainly physical) trauma, and she erroneously assumes responsibility for the rape:

> But she can howl incessant writhing her soft snowy limbs.
> And calling Theotormons Eagles to prey upon her flesh.
> I call with holy voice: kings of the sounding air,
> Rend away this defiled bosom that I may reflect.
> The image of Theotormon on my pure transparent breast. (1.12-16)

---

214 Of course, the other ones being Spencer’s “Sonnet LIX,” Hopkin’s “Andromeda,” and Mary Tighe’s *Psyche; or, the Legend of Love.*

215 Does this remind one of Hopkins’s self-flagellation?
Ironically, Oothoon believes in her newly-discovered sexuality: she speaks with the marigold flower/nymph, who tells Oothoon that she can pluck another flower because another one will sprout, “because of the soul of sweet delight / Can never pass away” (1:9-19). Oothoon’s placing the plucked flower “here to grow between my breasts” is perhaps a longing to assert her awakened sexuality. The rape trauma results in Oothoon’s delusion that she can be restored to a psychic, virginal innocence if only Theotormon will accept her. Here once again we find another female whose point of reference is outside herself, or as Sheldon’s mother on *The Big Bang Theory* says of Penny: “Her value of herself is in an outside loci.” Chained by Theotormon to Bromion, Oothoon realizes that they are all chained by society’s patriarchal paradigms. All are victims. Her soul’s death is apparent, and after her rape and attendant pregnancy, the maiden Oothoon is named not only called a "whore" but also Bromion’s “harlot.” With her identity lost, as if she ever had much of one, she defeatedly succumbs to becoming Bromion's property.

The poem’s opening line foreshadows his enslavement of her: "ENSLAV’D, the Daughters of Albion weep” (1:1). Further emphasizing the sacrifice of her soul, Blake shows us an eagle attacking her solar plexus, the symbolic center of her being, no doubt an allusion to the eagle attacking Prometheus’s liver. Additionally, she addresses Urizen in Plate 5 and admonishes him for what he represents: his "joys [that] are tears”! (5:4), his insensitivity, and his confusion of what is right (e.g. "and wilt thou take . . . the dog for the schoolmaster to thy children?” [5:8-9]).

And then Blake surprisingly gives us Oothoon’s rage against slavery and being Theotormon’s whore when he describes her feelings about herself and her unorthodox belief system (contrary to Urizen’s monotheistic one):

---

216 This plate shares many similarities to *Jerusalem’s* Plate 37. Refer to footnote 45.
But Oothoon is not so, a virgin fill’d with virgin fancies
Open to joy and to delight where ever beauty appears
If in the morning sun I find it: there my eyes are fix’d. (6:121-3)

Swinburne, in his *William Blake, a Critical Essay*, argues that this passage illustrates how Oothoon represents personal freedom as opposed to the jealous Theotormon’s hypocritical adherence to God’s Law. Metaphorically, Theotormon’s god is one of midnight gloom; Oothoon’s is fudge at midnight. Additionally, Swinburne asserts that Oothoon is rejecting God’s Law in favor of a more personal creed. Relentlessly, she attempts to convince them that their condemnation of her is specious.

However, as much as Oothoon proclaims that she has personal freedom, Blake often describes her silences—no surprise since patriarchy’s suppression of women occurs on two distinct levels: the body and the voice. Silenced women have little vitality—physically, emotionally, and intellectually. The killjoy patriarchy kills their joy and drains their energy of any vitality to imagine, create, and speak their minds. To view the contrast, we readers have only to look at the drawings of Jerusalem when she is most vital, as in the iconic Plate 32. Her expansiveness fills the plate with her robust health and apparent strength. And in additional plates, she fills the skies and the seas. In contrast, we see Oothoon who cannot find even the energy to weep: “Oothoon weeps not; she cannot weep!” (2:11), and “Silent I hover all night, and all day could be silent” (3:14). Internalizing the patriarchal dominance, she is hopeless and helpless without her voice. And when she does break her silence intermittently, her floodgates burst open, and she polemically speaks to an absent Urizen an impassioned discourse on divorce, which also expresses Blake’s opprobrium of slavery. Her compelling lines express the deleterious effects of restricting personal liberty:

Till she who burns with youth. and knows no fixed lot; is bound
In spells of law to one she loathes: and must she drag the chain
Of life, in weary lust! must chilling murderous thoughts, obscure
The clear heaven of her eternal spring? to bear the wintry rage
Of a harsh terror driv’n to madness, bound to hold a rod
Over her shrinking shoulders all the day; & all the night
To turn the wheel of false desire; and longings that wake her womb
To the abhorred birth of cherubs in the human form
That live a pestilence & die a meteor & are no more. (5:21-29)

Ooothoon’s dilemma is her inability to act. She is unpracticed in accomplishing what she intuits to be best for herself. Her futile attempts to revivify herself take on a tone of desperation, as revealed in her impassioned arguing with both men. Is she desperately trying to prove her “worth” to them? “Having a dead ear” takes on a whole new meaning here.
The goal of individuation is to discover one’s soul-self, but Ooothoon’s reference point is not her soul but, tragically, these two men. And the double jeopardy: they have no souls.

Most of Ooothoon’s despair after her traumatic rape comes as a result of her seeking her true self within a patriarchal context. I am not referring to living within a patriarchal society, although that is part of it, but instead seeking one’s authentic self almost in spite of or disregarding or trying to remedy the patriarchal aspects of that society. Ooothoon’s attempts to dissuade both males of their condemnation of her is in vain, and her self-concept and happiness are predicated upon the male characters’ acceptance of her. Inevitably, she thwarts her psychic growth.

Blake places Ooothoon at the poem’s center between these two cruel males who are incomplete human beings—read unindividuated—who represent flawed and failed characters. They illustrate two extremes of a single dastardly character. At one extreme we
find lust-filled Bromion, representing the egregious effects of power and control, and at the other extreme we see the boring-as-ditch-water and highly jealous and conventionally Christian Theotormon. Miserable with both and mistakenly feeling that she must align herself with one of them, she is, in the end, unsatisfied, deeply troubled, and riddled with anxiety.

Blake lets us know what Oothoon does not know about her sexuality: she can pleasure herself. She does not need either of them. Blake even writes on the joys of masturbation:

The virgin

That pines for man; shall awaken her womb to enormous joys

In the secret shadows of her chamber; the youth shut up from

The lustful joy. shall forget to generate, & create an amorous image

In the shadows of his curtains and in the folds of his silent pillow.

Are not these the places of religion? the rewards of continence?

The self enjoyings of self denial: Why dost thou seek religion?

Is it because acts are not lovely, that thou seekest solitude,

Where the horrible darkness is impressed with reflections of desire. (7:3-11)

Especially remarkable here is how Blake conflates sexual activity with religion. For Blake, sexuality and spirituality equal two wings of the same bird. But not so for the poem’s two characters who are not amenable to change certainly, for they are bound into a religion of jealousy (as Blake names it)—one that shames rather than loves. Behrendt proclaims that Oothoon indeed speaks “about the consequences of the repression or perversion of sexual desire” (159).
Rearing up against patriarchy in all its lurid forms requires practice, spiked with a bit of bravery, and Oothoon is unpracticed in slamming the door in their faces. Their self-centered, egotistical notion of dominance, rooted in a lack of maturity, expresses itself in jealousy and or lustful gratification, which often requires much admonishing by those coming from a place of love and beauty. As Marie von Franz writes of Jung’s writing about the anima (here Oothoon) and the animus (Theotormon): “Normally, the anima does not take a man by the hand and lead him right up to Paradise; she puts him first into a hot cauldron where he is nicely roasted for a while” (96). But since Oothoon has yet to become the best version of herself, she lacks the resources to confront all that they reprehensibly represent and let them roast for a while. The visionary Oothoon understands these two men, for she wails,

O Urizen! Creator of men! Mistaken Demon of heaven;

Thy joys are tears! Thy labour vain, to form men to thine image.

How can one joy absorb another? Are not different joys

Holy, eternal, infinite! And each joy is a love. (5:3-6)

More psychologically developed than they (and that is not saying much) and greater than the sum of their parts, by poem’s end she thwarts her own psychological maturation. But what is most alarming about the poem, viewed as a step toward or a failed attempt at psychic development, is Oothoon’s almost incomprehensible desire to please not herself but rather Theotormon. This thinly veiled masochism disturbs us and appears as a new extreme example of a people-pleaser. After all, Theotormon rejects her (after raping her), and she, close to the poem’s end, thinks of his pleasures above hers. She suggests,

But silken nets and traps of adamant will Oothoon spread,

And catch for thee girls of mild silver, or of furious gold;
I’ll lie beside thee on a bank & view their wanton play

In lovely copulation bliss on bliss with Theotormon . . . (6.23-26)

And (with a modicum of sarcasm) how surprising that Blake did not illustrate this delicious bliss-on-bliss scene. However, his exquisite illustration for Tiriel (Figure 6) more than suggests what he is imagining.

Fig. 3:31. Blake, *Tiriel, Har and Heva Bathing, Mnetha Looking On*
I rather think Blake—who can occasionally be an unmitigated sensualist—is unconsciously, dare we say voyeuristically, imagining the scene for himself. So much, at this point, for his parallel maturation.\textsuperscript{217}

The male characters’ cruelty towards Oothoon pervades throughout the poem. She receives a double traumatic blow to her young, undeveloped psyche: Bromion rapes her, so she is physically traumatized, and Theotormon negates her by not listening to her. As Oothoon wails, he “hears me not!” (2:37). However, Blake portrays her as attempting to heal herself from their wounds, and by poem’s end, she begins to realize she can resurrect herself and become a spiritual guide (Figure 5), as in the last several lines she instructs us to “arise you little glancing wings, and sing your infant joy! / Arise and drink your bliss, for every thing that lives is holy!” (8:9-10). If only she could wrest her (faulty) animus back into herself and by poem’s end belong only to herself, but she has not completely reached her full potential that would enable her to realize that recognizing the predatory monsters is one step, stepping out of their patriarchal world is one giant leap—one which Oothoon does not take. However, David Erdman, in his \textit{A Concordance to the Writings of William Blake}, gives Oothoon a huge compliment in his dedication: “To Oothoon”—one of Blake’s feminist forerunners and “soft soul of America.”

Oothoon assiduously tries to transform but ultimately fails. Von Franz writes that “Jung said that to be in a situation where there is no way out or to be in conflict where there is no solution is the classical beginning of the process of individuation” (95). For Oothoon, apparently she never found a way out. In the poem’s last plate (Figure 6), Blake shows Oothoon crouching together with Bromion and Theotormon, close to the sea (symbolically representing the unconscious). Oothoon here is removed from her unconscious and

\textsuperscript{217} This illustration published in 1789; \textit{Visions of the Daughters of Albion} published in 1793.
wistfully looking up at a female figure with outstretched arms above them. She can envision her transcendence (Jungian transformation), but she remains in the world inhabited by the two men. Thus by poem’s end, Oothoon has not rid her young life of them; she is still a part of their patriarchal world of emotional destitution and psychic demolition, for as Blake writes, "The Daughters of Albion hear her woes, & echo back her sighs" (7:13). Oothoon’s small joy is adulterated at best.

Fig. 3:32. Blake, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, Plate 11

**Ahania**

In 1795, Blake wrote *The Book of Ahania*, while living in Lambeth, Surrey. The six-chapter illuminated prophetic book consists of six plates done in intaglio (the colored ink is applied to the copper plate before printing—named by Blake as illuminated printing) rather
than in his invention of relief etching.\textsuperscript{218} With three colored illustrations, the first illustration is all visual, containing no verbal and showing the “cold loin”(ed) Urizen and his female counterpart, “his parted soul”—Ahania, who is quite \textit{embonpoint}. With \textit{The Book of Ahania}, Blake scathingly portrays the horror that patriarchy can inflict on a female if she does not stand up against it.

Plate 1 shows \textit{Urizen}, in a crouched position, bending over Ahania, with his fists clenched on top of her head, showing us not an embrace, but rather an awkward holding down of her head, implying that he is incapable of loving or accepting her. She is trapped by his body—the patriarchal body—becoming her cage. Her visage reveals pain and hopelessness. The poem scathingly reveals her entrapment. Urizen calls her “Sin” and hides her in darkness and secrecy. From a Jungian perspective, perhaps she represents his repressed anima. The entire pathos of this plate illustrates defeat, brute power, and an absence of love. Ahania and Urizen appear in distress and dismay.\textsuperscript{219} The impression of stasis also contributes to the joyless illustration. Their crouching positions more than suggest that they are both weighted down by their lives as they appear like sculptures, reminding one of Henry Moore’s or Gaston Lachaise’s heavily weighted sculptural figures. Urizen suppresses her, and she apparently allows him in this illustration full of unmitigated woe:

\textsuperscript{218} Only one known complete copy, Copy A, 1795, Library of Congress, exists.

\textsuperscript{219} Only Picasso could paint toes with such a suggestion of enormity.
In stark contrast, we find the second illustration, the frontispiece, showing an anorexic Ahania, with little physical definition or detail. Here she represents an undefined female with an expressionless visage feebly attempting to push herself away from the earth and into the sky. Blake suggests a weak flight of liberation—perhaps signifying a bit of willingness to touch into her unconscious but only until it hurts just a little, with her thin arms symbolizing her lack of strength to metaphorically escape/transcend the reality of patriarchy. As I have already written, Blake sometimes visually suggests the presence or absence of entelechy of his female characters within the title page illustration. This is true,
also, for Ahania. Blake illustrates her with no suggestion of beauty or display of any substantial character. Resembling a stick figure more than a robust woman, her lack of individuation is illustratively evident. She is a mere shell of a woman—dry and brittle—with no hint of exuberance.

![Fig. 3:34. Blake, *Ahania*, Title Page](image)

The third plate occupies the bottom third of the final plate and shows us Urizen reclining, upturned face, eyes closed, with blood dripping from his neck. Ahania is absent from this concluding plate.

Regarding the verbal text, I agree with Harold Bloom, who thinks the book is “primarily a lament.” The first four chapters describe Urizen's son's lament, and the fifth chapter describes Ahania's lament for both herself and Urizen. Letting her individuation be thwarted by Urizen, Ahania wanders “on the rocks / With hard necessity” (5:1-2). She does not have a language to defend and or support herself emotionally, physically, and or

---

220 And it is true for Jerusalem, whose entire cosmogenic cycle is illustrated on the title page. Again, see Figure 3.
psychically. Yearning for a sexual identity, Ahania is unable to resolve her psychomachia and
does not come close to realizing her full potential. Again, the title page reveals her sense of
loss. Conversely, from a Jungian perspective, the psychomachia can be read as Urizen's,
where Ahania represents his repressed, unacknowledged, and therefore ultimately un-realized
anima, who pines away in the depths of Urizen's psyche.

The Book of Ahania is also about The Tree of Mystery, connecting Christianity with
pagan Druidism. The radical Blake, who wants to replace The Tree of Mystery with The
Tree of Life, attacks orthodox Christianity. He believes we come not from original sin but a
place of wholeness, as expressed in All Religions Are One. And not incidentally, I heartily
agree with Harold Bloom, who in the Commentary of the Erdman edition, writes that The
Book of Ahania is filled with much poetic beauty (907):

Swell'd with ripeness & fat with fatness
Bursting on winds my odors,
My ripe figs and rich pomegranates. (5:24-6)

Lucy Corrigan describes Ahania as the “anodyne female consort to the despotic
Urizen” (in her Abstract to “Subjectivity, Mutuality and Masochism: Ahania in The Book of
Abania and The Four Zoas”). And Blake sets up the binary of Ahania’s bliss with babies as
opposed to the horrible treatment of her by the men. She knows well both sides.

The eponymous Ahania is not fleshed out within the poem—a visual onomatopoeia,
looking like what she is: vapid. Yet Blake, as he did with his poem Jerusalem, titles it with the
female protagonist’s name, even though she is not the major character in terms of the
number of lines. He wants his readers to view her as central to the poem.
Conclusion

These females represent not only the various stages of Jungian individuation; they also represent specific failure(s) or inabilities to psychologically mature. From Thel's cowardice to Jerusalem’s unification of countries (of the psyche, too)—and here we are not talking about Ivanka Trump sitting in at a G-20 Summit meeting—we find a psychological trajectory of development. Lyca’s narrative reveals a few details about her journey to selfhood. More of a quick thumbnail sketch of being psychically lost and then found, it reads like a brief albeit charming prologue-like tale/poem for the others that follow. Thel goes running back home to her family’s perennial flower beds and potager; Ahania barks up the wrong (Theotormion) tree, after he withholds his once amorous inclinations; and Oothoon simply lacks the courage to make her triumphant over her devilish demons.

Blake’s dual text narratives of these four females’ various stages of a Jungian individuation reveal female characters who are capable of self-knowledge, but for reasons already mentioned, they fail to understand their respective psychomachias and reach their full potential. Mostly because of their internalized patriarchy, they either cannot or are not willing to work towards their psychic health. All four of them ultimately fail at transforming themselves into heroines. Sadly for each one, a Jungian conflict/resolution dialectic fails to take place.

Why are these women longing for these mean-spirited men? Are they confusing love with hurt? Even after being raped, abandoned/banished, and verbally abused, they still want either validation from or the love of their tormentors, upon whom they have projected their father figures. The women’s traumas are more than psychological hardships; they are psychological destroyers, but in the next chapter Blake writes how Jerusalem successfully
recovers from her traumas and from her patriarchal environment through her sublime labor. Neither any person or any institution has the power to ultimately prevent her from becoming a formidable and loving heroine. No one.

With these four brief poems in the trajectory, Blake gives us a prelude to his longest poem, Jerusalem. Scrutinizing the visual and verbal characterization narratives of these females leads the circumspect reader to the apocalyptic end-game female: the apotheotic, unparalleled standard-bearer, Jerusalem.221

Individuation requires great strength of character, energy (which Blake refers to as sublime labor), and a strong desire to make one's life fulfilling, translating into an eventual exhibiting of compassion, playfulness, and wisdom.222 Yogic philosophy defines "dharma" as the potential to become one's best version of oneself. Living one's best life is not new-age psycho-jargon but instead, a many centuries old philosophy of living that was at the heart of both Blake's and Jung's philosophies.223 In the following chapter I will present Jerusalem’s apotheosis of realizing her full potential by viewing it with a feminist Jungian template. Through her harrowing progress, she reaches a higher state of consciousness—an informed innocence.

---

221 In a conversation with Stephen Behrendt, I said I thought Jerusalem is an unequalled heroine; he said that Glorvina in Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan’s The Wild Irish Girl rivals her. Possibly.

222 According to yogic teachings.

223 Jung even advanced his beliefs in the power/ability to achieve an advanced consciousness by writing about a specific branch of yoga: Kundalini. In his The Psychology of Kundalini Yoga (1932) (Jung originally delivered this text as a seminar and Princeton University Press published it as part of its Bollingen series), he details the stages to a higher state of consciousness via the symbolic serpent's energy of upward movement through the body's chakras during the practice of yoga. Jung writes that the practice is not necessary to achieve an advanced state of consciousness; it simply speeds up the process. Interestingly, Blake, in Jerusalem's visual narrative, alludes to the Kundalini serpent of energy as contrasted to the arch-seducer and trouble-making Christian serpent.
As a rhetorical lynchpin for the concluding chapter, “Blake and Jerusalem,” Hélène Cixous, the French intellectual, lauded for her *écriture féminine*, encapsulates Blake’s creation of *Jerusalem*, ironically without apparently having read the poem herself:

There have been poets who would go to any length to slip something by at odds with tradition—men capable of loving love and hence capable of loving others and of wanting them, of imagining the woman who would hold out against oppression and constitute herself as a superb, equal, hence 'impossible' subject, untenable in a real social framework. Such a woman the poet could desire only by breaking the codes that negate her. Her appearance would necessarily bring on, if not revolution—for the bastion was supposed to be immutable—at least harrowing explosions. (1946)

224 She did not like being named a feminist.
CHAPTER 4

JERUSALEM

“Awake! Awake Jerusalem! O lovely Emanation of Albion
Awake and overspread all Nations as in Ancient Time
For lo the Night of Death is past and the Eternal Day
Appears upon our Hills: Awake Jerusalem, and come away.”
—Blake, *Jerusalem*, 97:1-4

To be born woman is to know—
Although they do not talk of it at school—
That we must labor to be beautiful.

—Yeats, "Adam's Curse," 80:18-20

Fig. 4:35. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 2
Introduction

How many adults can claim that as children they had visions of angels in trees? The young Blake not only saw them but was later in his life to write an epic poem about another of his visions: a female heroine who achieved a complete psychological individuation and through a feminist ideology brought about not only a personal psychic unity but also a global unity. Jerusalem’s two accomplishments make us aware of Blake’s prescience of both Jungian analytical psychology and modern feminism. As a forerunner to both, Blake’s poem makes possible for its reader to open herself/himself to the possibility of transformation. The core of Jung's analytical psychology—individuation—can happen within the process of reading. That activity becomes like a dialogue between analyst (Blake, through Jerusalem) and the analysand (the reader).

Jerusalem is more than just another fairy tale with beautiful illustrations; it is a blueprint, a *vade mecum*, an architectural rendering in words (lots and lots of words) to guide, and ever-so gently-advise the reader. Especially within the visual text, Jerusalem becomes a model for feminism, where all power has an equal footing. So, here, dear reader, is a little exegesis on the how and why of Blake's apotheotic heroine Jerusalem, whom Blake offers to his “Now” readers. Let us first begin with a look at prominent critics of Jerusalem—those who fail to understand Jerusalem’s heroism and those who appreciatively understand it—before we look at the visual plates where her individuation finds its narrative.

Critics who fail to understand Jerusalem

Why did they miserably fail? Several possible reasons include: first a critic has a fear of the feminine; after all, Jerusalem eventually becomes perhaps daunting to those not fully
individuated. Second: a critic simply did not read or was incapable of reading the verbal text because of a lack of patience. Algernon Charles Swinburne wrote, “Many of the unwary have stumbled over it and broken their wits. Seriously, one cannot imagine that people will ever read through this vast poem with pleasure enough to warrant them in having patience with it” (276). Third, a myopic patriarchal point of view reading cannot comprehend Jerusalem’s role (other than being Blake’s evolving anima) within the poem. And this last reason is almost too pedestrian at this point to seriously consider its merit. After all, it has already been brilliantly done by William Witcutt in his 1946 study, *Blake, A Psychological Study*.

Let us begin with the legendary Harold Bloom, whose criticism focuses on Albion’s fall from divinity and eventual resurrection that, according to Bloom, gives the poem its narrative structure. And when Stuart Curran tries to comprehend the poem, his analysis shows “signs of endlessly multiplying the ‘single archetypal pattern’ it works to reveal” (604). Additionally, Morton Paley’s argument is to read the poem as a “series of synchronisms” (604). Hermeneutically, all three critics’ points of view are inherently valid; however, they generally fail to recognize the poem as about, in large part, its leading female protagonist, Jerusalem.

When we consider Paul Youngquist (“Reading the Apocalypse: The Narrativity of Blake’s *Jerusalem*”) he admits that "To read *Jerusalem* is to experience confusion" (601). However, this is precisely what intrigues him, and since the epic poem lacks a traditional narrative order (and he is, in a limited fashion, referring to the verbal narrative), his epistemophilia motivates him to understand its discursive possibilities. His poststructuralist’s premise is that the process of reading the poem activates the narrative, and it "exists only in and through a temporal process that unfolds within a particular field of discourse" (607). No

---

225 Symbolically, she represents the *anima* archetypal figure a man needs to reconcile with if he is to transform.
prior structure of narrative is necessary to legitimize it, for as he writes, "The activity of reading is the text" (607); however, he warns against a classic reader-response criticism since the poem's existence is neither "out there" or "in here" (607). In sum, "To describe Jerusalem as a field of reading is therefore to give its discursive activity priority over world and self" (607). But to describe Jerusalem’s developing character, much less experience her character—Youngquist runs from the challenge, albeit he is half right and also half wrong. Additionally, Youngquist tells the story of Northrop Frye, who thought the best way to discover the poem's narrativity would be to frame each of the hundred plates singly and then hang them, so the poem could be read in a linear fashion. By doing this, the visual narrative reveals Jerusalem’s process of individuation. Youngquist, like the majority of critics, chooses not to write about Jerusalem's character. Rather, he and others write about either Albion or Los within a Christian context. The most significant idea gleaned from Youngquist's criticism is the idea that "Jerusalem builds the contingency of temporal experience into the activity of reading. It unfolds as our lives do, in a present shaped by a particular past and directed toward uncertain futures" (610). And finally, Blake's eternal present is tricky to maintain in both the act of reading and the act of living (experiencing), but his opening imperative directs us—his readers:

Awake: awake O sleeper of the land of shadows, wake! expand!

I am in you and you in me, mutual in love divine.

When Blake published Jerusalem, the critical reception was non-existent as he predicted; therefore, Youngquist claims, "Blake gave it to other futures" (617) In sum, Blake
in his address "To the Public" writes, "I also hope the Reader will be with me . . . ."

Evidently, its time is now.²²⁶

Now, let us turn to Joseph Wickstead, a critic who also falls short of understanding Jerusalem. For decades, Wicksteed was part of the Blakean white male scholar's club. In his two-part book William Blake's Jerusalem, originally published by The Trianon Press for The William Blake Trust in London, with a forward by the venerable Sir Geoffrey Keynes, he studies Jerusalem through a typical 1950s patriarchal lens. In Part One, he offers his perspective on the plot and characters of Jerusalem, and on Blake's Albion myth. In Part Two he separately analyzes the four chapters' individual plates of the Stirling copy. Wicksteed's annotations tend to be limited in a critical or amplificatory interpretation. In typical Urizenic fashion, his reason often trumps his insight.

For example with Plate 11, he titles his annotation "The Swan of Fallen Innocence and 'Ragan wholly cruel!" and tries to argue that the woman theriomorphing into a swan

²²⁶ I am reminded of Gerard Manley Hopkins' sonnet "Andromeda," for its opening line's immediacy also grabs the sensitive reader with his lines: "Now time's Andromeda on this rock rude / With not her either beauty's equal or / Her injury's, looks off by both horns of shore." Sounds like another iteration of Jerusalem.
leaves "little doubt . . . that in this highly symbolized design the Swan-woman represents Blake's bitter indictment of London night life" (204), and he further writes, "But the floating bubbles emanating from this Swan beak are sinister, and represent I do not doubt the curse of the betrayed girl let forth into the foetid waters—'the youthful Harlot's curse'" (204). (For his final indictment of this beautiful creature, while analyzing the next plate and referring back to Plate 11, he writes of the "anger and gloom" (205) within the illustration. Wicksteed's moral and aesthetic distortions are appalling and lack any knowledge of a Jungian and/or feminist methodology, instead relying on a historical perspective that is ultimately woefully inadequate in explicating the psychological nuances of Blake's text.

To give him some credit for an informed sensitivity to Blake's mythopoeia, his writing on Blake's system of quaternity reveals an understanding of Blake's intellectual organization. Additionally, Wicksteed fully realizes the significance of Plate 99 as he writes of it as "The Consummation of Jerusalem" (312) and emphasizes that Blake modeled Jerusalem after his wife, Catherine, who was for him what perhaps Beatrice was for Dante. However, Wicksteed minimizes, simplifies, and even ignores the textual evidence of Jerusalem's triumph via her successful individuation. Instead, he writes eloquently of her "consummation" thus: "She has tasted Experience in all its bitterness without being herself embittered. She has not always understood her own suffering or those of others, but she has never doubted that kind and gentle thoughts were always in place through good report and evil; in happiness and distress: in moments of human error or moments of deepest human insight" (249). In contrast, Wicksteed's interpretation of Jerusalem as passive and lacking

227 Whose Kool-Aid is he drinking?
228 Also, see Plato's Dialogues for an understanding of the soul's four functions. Although Jung is more of an alchemist than a Platonist, he also subscribes to a universal quaternary structure.
consciousness of her own psychic evolution is far from the mark. Wicksteed’s more than a half century old critical work articulates a patriarchal point of view where Los is the song’s hero, not Jerusalem. Also, Wicksteed’s failure to comment on the sublimity of the nude figures (especially Jerusalem) shows a general lack of aesthetic appreciation and/or understanding of the importance for Blake to portray figures nude in the visual narrative. Contrastingly, his biographical writing on Blake is beautiful in its insight into the intellectual and artistic growth of Blake. And certainly Wicksteed’s reliance on historical precedents for Blake’s visual as well as verbal texts is important and certainly significant for Blakean historical and literary influences.

Given that Henry Crabb Robinson criticizes Blake’s verbal obscurity in *Europe, a Prophecy* as a “mysterious and incomprehensible rhapsody” (14) and describes it as “wholly inexplicable” (14), it is probably a good thing that he completely ignores *Jerusalem*, since he had that much trouble with *Europe*. Moreover, most of the male critics I read do not write specifically about Jerusalem’s character. When I asked Dr. Gannon his opinion on why most male critics ignore her, he replied, “I think they are all afraid of her.” To conclude with an absurdity, one male critic commented that, within Plate 2, the title plate, the “Tops of the sleeper’s wings suggest the pincers of an earwig” (Paley 133). How he ignores Jerusalem’s images and focuses in on the most insignificantly trivial of minutia.

Nor do female critics, generally, although they write about Blake in general terms, look fully at Jerusalem. For example, Helen P. Bruder, writing about Romantic feminist writers, in her anthology of feminist essays *Women Reading William Blake*, covers a wide range of interests from historical to sexual. The scholars are international, multi-generational, and

---

229 Jerusalem is more akin to the Andromeda character that Hopkins writes of in his recasting of the Perseus myth, titled simply "Andromeda."
specialists in different areas, and what strikes me as most interesting is their total passion, which is so seldom in the tone of academic writing. Susan Wolfson's "The Strange Difference of Female 'Experience'" begins with her homage to Blake as a "railer against repression and the champion of sexuality without shame" and further declares him as the "Poet Laureate of contraries." Writing about "female sexuality as a Blakean metafigure for the complexities and sometimes outright contradictions of reading 'experience'" (261), she not incidentally also rails against Harold Bloom, whom she thinks misinterprets some of Blake's works because of his "threat to male sexual privilege" (267). Brenda Webster is still another writer howling against the established good-white-boy's-club of critics, and in her "Blake, Sex and Women Revisited," she lambasts no less the likes of David Erdman, Bernard Blackstone, Jean Hagstrom, Norman Jeffries, and yes, even the "venerable" Morton Paley. Helen Bruder and in general the writers she includes in her anthology understand Blake, but only one writes about Jerusalem. And sadly, Bruder’s index does not mention Jerusalem.

Another of Bruder’s inclusions, this time from a historical perspective, Catherine McClenahan’s "'Endless Their Labour': Women in Blake's Illuminated Works and in the British Workforce" provides a close look at the degradations of the female workforce in Blake's time and then attempts to interpret the types of female labor performed in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Europe, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, and Jerusalem, eventually showing some parallels between British history and the poems. Blake knew all too well that a development of consciousness was an impossibility if women did not have access to education and thus to reading. They most certainly did not have the privilege of access to his relatively expensive illuminated works, which had such a small audience.

But the real firebrand in this compendium is Irene Taylor, who in her "Blake: Sex and Selfhood," writes, "his prophetic vision was skewed by two ancient and related habits of
thought concerning the sexes, and that he sensed this and struggled against it, with mixed success" (237). The first is the "derivative or secondary status of women" (237) (e.g. Eve), hence, separation and fragmentation and inability to "see" for themselves. The second is that to know (to perceive) is to unveil. Taylor understands the Keatsian white-hot truth of Blake’s vision and unflinchingly interprets Plate 32 as veiled Vala, trying to veil Jerusalem. The centrality to Blake's myth of the veil or absence of it is fully realized in this plate. And Taylor does not shy away from it. She sees—that, in order to truly see, the veil must come off.

I have been wondering why male critics fail to discuss Plate 32, "Naked Beauty Displayed." I don't think they understand Jerusalem's character—her embodiment of self-assurance, sensibility, and what Suzanne Sklar refers to as “angelmorphic” sexuality. But what is especially interesting is that female writers in general also have little to say about Jerusalem's character, much less about her development of consciousness. She is Blake's celebratory female, and however much his earlier works now and then had a misogynistic tone, in Jerusalem his attitude, focus, and concern are with Jerusalem’s liberty on all fronts. This heroine is the crown of his oeuvre; therefore, for feminist writers not to write about her is as simple as this: they did not read and/or comprehend the poem.

While I wholeheartedly agree with Anne Mellor’s assertion in her 1993 *Romanticism & Gender* that Jerusalem "serves as the female's ultimate self-realization," I vehemently disagree with her claim that Blake "shared his culture's denigration of the feminine gender" (22).

Blake, through his chronological sequence of poems with females as the central characters, is writing a feminist manifesto, culminating in the character of Jerusalem, but Mellor sadly

---

230 Taylor emphatically proclaims this as a "contrast between mental blindness and liberty" or the "contrast between spiritual liberty and stunted selfhood" (239).
231 This compendium is a real eye-opener for me because, although I've read other feminist writings regarding Blake's female characters, none are quite as strident as these.
misses the mark when she writes that the portrayal of the female is secondary to the male.

His culminating poem is, yes, about Los's heroic journey, but the center of Blake's apotheosis is Jerusalem. After all, he names the poem *The Song of Jerusalem*, as evidenced with the title plate, and he visually shows us the eponymous heroine's total psychic—and one might one say, "transgender"—maturation.

**Critics who understand Jerusalem**

Susanne Sklar, a former Cumner Fellow at Oxford, writes about Jerusalem in her 2011 book-length study *Blake's Jerusalem as Visionary Theatre, Entering the Divine Body*. After struggling with the hermeneutics of the poem for years, she suddenly realized the poem has an operating manual, which she discovered when she read within the text that the poem is suited to “the mouth of a true orator” (J3). Thus, her highly original approach to the poem is literally to view it as theatre—visionary theatre, specifically unconstrained by time and space, operating on both the microcosmic stage (within individuals, psychologically and spiritually, both human and divine) and the macrocosmic stage (within society, ecology, politics). The poem becomes a living thing, hence not academic (Ulro) but rather imaginative (Eternity/Eden). She sees this visionary theatre's action happening simultaneously—both sequentially and synchronically—and all aspects of the poem as fluid: "time, place, perception, and character" (3). Like improvisational jazz music or viewing a cubistic painting, there is both a linear theme happening simultaneously with other views/sounds. As a disclaimer of sorts, Ms. Sklar does admit, "I am not arguing that Jerusalem is visionary theatre or trying to demonstrate a literary theory about it; I am using this interpretive tool to elucidate the text" (3). She realizes that by reading aloud and studying the characters’ lines, the poem suddenly makes sense to her. It comes alive with a surging energy that surely Blake intended,
for early in his writing he declared, "Exuberance is Beauty." Her book consists of two parts: 1) perspectives, dramatis personae, settings and 2) commentary, through which she reveals how by viewing the poem (Blake titles it a “song”) as theatre, entering the Divine Body becomes ontological, not metaphorical.

Within her monograph she interprets the plates with Jerusalem as the central figure; sharply excoriates past critics, specifically Dortort who sees Jerusalem as static, Paley who sees her as passive, and Brenda Webster, who is in denial of all female sexuality and erotic joy in the poem; expounds Jerusalem’s development into goddess/whore through the poem’s four chapters. She summarily proclaims, "Blake wrote Jerusalem for no less a purpose than to transform individuals and societies, to create a world in which forgiveness can be a spiritual and social structuring principle" (vii).

We find in the writing of Kathleen Raine an academic devotion to the brilliance of Blake. As written about in Chapter Two (in consideration of Blake’s sources), her Blake and Tradition indicates her appreciation, admiration, and perhaps love of The Song of Jerusalem. Significantly, Raine uses Jerusalem’s title page for her frontispiece. She devotes an entire chapter to the study of Jerusalem’s character (as she does Thel’s, Oothoon’s and Vala’s).233

Other critics, obviously, who have insightful understandings of Jerusalem’s character have been mentioned already throughout Chapters One, Two, and Three. So let us now turn to the climax of this entire study—the psychological maturation of the crown in Blake’s creations: Jerusalem.

232 Behrendt asserts a similar claim in his Reading Blake.
233 Not a critic per se but rather a biographer, Peter Akkroyd, who wrote an immensely readable biography of Blake, has this to say about the poem: “Jerusalem is an epic of extraordinary power and beauty, which suggests no less than a sea-change in our understanding of human history and human personality; it is clear that the message is unique because, after two hundred years, it has still to be properly understood. It establishes the truth of all that Blake had written and painted before” (322).
Jerusalem’s individuation

To realize the sublime labor of her successful individuation, as viewed through a feminist stance to Jungian analytical psychology, we first need an understanding of how Jung defines the two levels of a person's unconscious—personal and collective. In the *Collected Works*, Volume 9, Part I, *Four Archetypes* (originally a lecture, published in 1938), he writes that the personal originates from acquired experiences, subsequently repressed, whereas the deeper collective differs because it contains inborn patterns—or archetypes—and therefore is universal, whose contents we find in myths and fairytales. On a personal level, the archetypes "cannot be integrated simply by rational means but require a dialectical procedure, a real coming to terms with them, often conducted by the patient in dialogue form, so that without knowing it, he puts into effect the alchemical definition of the meditatio: 'an inner colloquy with one's good angel'" (5).

Proceeding from these brief definitions, Jung, in very basic terms, begins with the mother archetype.234 Considering its psychological aspects, he first gives an historical account, along with an explanation of an archetype as more of a form than a specific content, the primordial image of which is then "filled out with the material of conscious experience" (13). Then delving into several of the most characteristic types, including both "good" and "evil" ones235 and after a brief consideration of the mother-complex, he distinguishes between how both sexes manifest it, and how it is not necessarily related to injury and/or illness. Its positive effects are numerous. He stresses the importance of maintaining an awareness of primordial images, archetypes, as well as the importance of

---

234 In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung more comprehensively describes and documents the Mother archetype.
235 Jung is adamant about emotions as a source of consciousness rather than of logical thinking. Logos, then, is viewed as not only hampering a healthy development of consciousness but also making it nearly impossible to achieve an apotheosis when Logos is considered as the primary source for engendering individuation; therefore Jung’s theory is not based on a Urizenic model of reason.
becoming "conscious"—and believes that "emotion is the chief source of consciousness" (30). What then follows is a brief explanation of the psychology of rebirth (with interesting commentary on the practice of yoga to promote and/or achieve a specific psychic effect to induce transformation (cf. "The Psychology of Eastern Medicine"), subjective transformation (diminution of personality), enlargement of personality, identification with a group, and the "phenomenology of the spirit in fairytales" (85). 236

Jung's writing here is especially important for a deeper understanding of Jerusalem for a couple of reasons: first, the mother-complex of the daughter (Jerusalem) with her mother (Beulah); and second, the rebirth and transformation of Jerusalem's individuation process leading to her expanding consciousness. With a knowledge and understanding of her individuation as our focus, it becomes possible to argue how Jerusalem's apotheosis becomes archetypal within the poem, and by its end, her ego consciousness individuates via an encounter with/incorporation of the archetypes—namely, the mythically dimensioned mother archetype, as well as her confrontation and subsequent triumph over her shadow's power, her wrestling with and wresting back into herself her animus. After all this epic effort, she eventually achieves a successful individuation.

Pursuant to my discussion of Jerusalem's process of individuation, I offer a recap of some of Blake's writing in his "A Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures, Poetical and Historical Inventions," because they are the undergirding of this visual narrative of Jerusalem. Writing in his "Catalogue" for the exhibit he staged privately, after he was rejected by the

---

236 The significance of the "wise old man," as written about by Jung, is essential in understanding a possible interpretation for Plate 99.
237 Considering that Jung writes "When a summit of life is reached . . . then, as Nietzsche says, 'One becomes Two,'" this might be an alternative interpretation of the penultimate Plate 99, where we find Jerusalem and the male figure. Possibly, this signifies the reconciliation of her animus (her bridge to the unconscious), or uniting with her Divine Lover, or what Jung describes as "recognition of a greater personality" (56).
Academy, Blake writes, "The body reflects the soul," and "The face and limbs that deviates or alters least, from infancy to old age, is the face and limbs of greatest Beauty and perfection" (544). Here, also, we find his thoughts on sublimity, beauty, strength, and ugliness. Since Blake's illustrations intimately reveal character, he also advises his reader to be observant, which is essential in providing us with visual clues as to Jerusalem's evolving transformation:

I entreat the spectator will attend to the Hand and Feet the Lineaments of the countenances. They are all descriptive of character and not a line is drawn without intention and that most Discriminate and particular as Poetry admits not a Letter that is insignificant so Painting admits not a Grain of Sand or a Blade of Grass insignificant much less an Insignificant Blur or Mark.

(Complete Poetry and Prose 560)

To more fully appreciate Jerusalem’s process of psychic maturity, let me offer a few aids to our understanding of it, including both interpretive and biographical/historical ones. For the top-of-the heap interpretive aid to understanding Jerusalem’s transforming character, Morton Paley’s annotated edition of Jerusalem is the ne plus ultra of editions. In his Blake Seminar in the spring of 1999, Behrendt commented, “Reading Jerusalem is fiendishly difficult”; however, with Morton Paley's critical apparatus in place (editing, annotations, references), the reading is less fiendishly so. Paley has been writing about Blake for many

238 As he writes, he is "not so easily obstructed." His 1790 exhibition took place after he began working on Milton and Jerusalem. In sum, the Academy’s members referring to his works as a "Madman's Scrawls" (which Blake alludes to in his advertisement) is appalling.
239 Blake knows alchemy, but he sure does not know subject-verb agreement.
years, but here his writing is immediately relevant to the poem and its visual art; therefore, this critical edition is significant for a few reasons.

First, this edition of *Jerusalem* is of particular import because it is a facsimile of Copy E, the only colored one by Blake (the other four were monochrome). Second, Paley's lucid commentary on all the plates had never before been written. Only this Blake Trust Edition contains facsimile copies of the illuminated engravings and is interlaid with Paley's meticulous critical apparatus: annotations, references, bibliography, works cited listing, and corrigenda. His end of plates' notes are replete with enumerations of Blake's references to the *Bible*, Scandinavian mythology, Buddhism, other ancient religions, as well as to Blake's acknowledged sources: Boehme, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dante. Although crafted with meticulous scholarship, the annotations sometimes fall into the ludicrous, especially when he cites other critics such as Keynes, who notes that, on the frontispiece plate, "the tops of the sleeper's wings suggest the pincers of an earwig" (132). On this plate, we see the resplendent Jerusalem being revealed in her various stages of individuation, and the mention of her wing tips resembling an earwig's pincers is a stretch at least and absurd at most. Like other male critics (as well as most female), Keynes is often shy of commenting on the significance of the nudity. In Plate 32, "Naked Beauty Displayed," rather than discussing the composition of the plate, Paley skirts around this issue by writing that Jerusalem's face has an *intrepid* look and by writing the obvious assessment of the two cathedrals' iconography. This is such a pivotal plate in the poem, and Paley does not let himself realize its significance; however, we can overlook this shortcoming because his copious annotations of the verbal text are often on the mark. Apparently, he cannot perceive or trust his perceptions on the visual, perhaps

240 "Blake's *Night Thoughts*: An Exploration of the Fallen World"; *The Continuing City: Blake's Jerusalem*; and *William Blake*, to mention only a few.
because occasionally the visual narrative of some plates baffles him. To "experience" the sublimity of *Jerusalem* requires no annotations. Third, given the binary structure that is the poem, I can view both the complete visual and verbal texts. Fourth, Paley's annotations on each plate and in his copious references are almost peerless. And fifth, Paley's comments on Blake's process of drawing, engraving, coloring, and printing provide an understanding of Blake's techniques.²⁴¹

For a look at the biographical/historical aids, let us first consider the poet Percy Shelley and then Blake himself. Shelley shared various philosophical points with Blake. "A Defence of Poetry" can help to enlighten us about Jerusalem's character. Interestingly, Shelley, whose thirty-year life (1792-1822) was within Blake's (1757-1827), makes no mention of Blake in his "Defence," instead citing Shakespeare, Dante, Milton, and a cadre of Greek greats. However, great principles of art and aesthetics certainly have a universal application, and Shelley's incontrovertible belief in the moral function of poetry is at the heart of his treatise. Poets, who express the beautiful and true, are the prophets and the legislators since they "participate in the eternal, the infinite, and the one" (1073). His discussion of poetry's ability to teach us the beautiful (the neo-Platonic archetypal/universal) as well as his discussion of the opposite, darker side of beauty, namely obscenity, describes Blake's aim in *Jerusalem* perfectly.²⁴² Jerusalem represents all that is beautiful, whereas *Vala* represents all that is whorish and obscene. Moreover, the great paradox (from a culturally defined point of view) is that Jerusalem is "naked beauty displayed," whereas *Vala* is often

---

²⁴¹ Robert Essick in *Printmaking* writes, "*Jerusalem* is as epic in its range of graphic technique as it is in its poetry" (25).

²⁴² Shelley: "Obscenity, which is ever blasphemy against the divine beauty in life, becomes, from the very veil which it assumes, more active if less disgusting; it is a monster for which the corruption of society for ever brings forth new food, which it devours in secret" (1078).
Thus, as Jerusalem’s psyche matures and becomes more expansive in understanding and insight, so do her relationships, attitudes, and knowledge of and with the other characters. One of the most dramatic illustrations of this can be found in Plate 26, where Jerusalem unequivocally gestures to Hand to stay away from her.

Shelley probably would have agreed that individuation is a form of the good and the beautiful, for he writes:

> And the great writers of our own age, have celebrated the dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. (1081)

Blake’s entire philosophy centers on the concept of love (Jerusalem) rather than lust (Albion) and on finesse rather than power (or from a point of view of quantum physics rather than a Newtonian model). Thus, he vehemently criticizes the Druidic civilization for its human sacrifices and forceful governance.

Shelley, who perhaps unconsciously had Blake in mind, writes, "Few poets of the highest class have chosen to exhibit the beauty of their conceptions in its naked truth and splendour" (1076). Clearly, Blake is the exception, for he gives new meaning to the concept of “naked truth and splendor” because aesthetically Jerusalem celebrates the human body. I might also add that Shelley’s assertion that "The great secret of morals is love" applies on

---

243 Shelley uses the word “veil” in a contextual Blakean way: "Obscenity, which is ever blasphemy against the divine beauty in life, becomes, from the very veil which it assumes, more active if less disgusting: it is a monster for which the corruption of society for ever brings forth new food, which it devours in secret" (1078).
244 Like Jung’s psychagogue, Philemon.
245 Plate 26 is the only plate with no accompanying verbal text. None is needed. This plate is one of four where Jerusalem is clothed.
246 Jung, too, writes that sex without love is misguided.
several levels within *Jerusalem*, for she represents love in its various forms: personal, social, and sexual.²⁴⁷

The second biographical aid to help us in reading the difficult poem is Blake’s warm-up to *Jerusalem* in his poem *Milton*, for it plays a critical role in Blake's ability to write *Jerusalem*. Who else but Blake would write a two-book poem with fifty-one etched plates about the historical Milton’s individuation? Writing the shorter epic between 1804-1810, Blake published it in 1811 before *Jerusalem*, his final and longest epic. As with Blake's longer works, many in his cast of characters are also carried over into *Milton*. After invoking the muses, the daughters of Beulah, at the beginning of "Book the First," he proceeds to write Milton’s journey toward self-annihilation—the psychic state Blake felt necessary for a Poetical Character, who is both a poet and a prophet before she/he can write poetry. As the poem progresses, Blake’s internal struggle of psychomachia runs parallel to Milton's. Obviously, Blake felt that, for the historical character of Milton, moral virtue, in a conventionally religious theodicy, was of as little use as it was for himself (909); in sum, believing in a Blakean Jesus is one thing; believing in a morality-dictating, organized religion is quite another. However, as early as Plate 1, Blake establishes a literary polemic wherein he exalts the Sublime of the Bible over the Greek classics as a model for emulation. We know this to be true because much of Blake's art (the visual text) is very much of a Neo-Classical idiom. After classifying the three classes of men—the Reprobate (Milton and the true believers), the Redeemed (Blake), and the Elect (Satan and the self-centered moralists) (910), the poem

²⁴⁷ One of the many beautiful lines in Shelley's exquisite treatise: "A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds." Much of Blake's last several years in London were spent contentedly working in relative solitude with his wife, Catherine.
recounts both Blake and Milton's heroes' journeys until Milton finally polymorphs into Blake, completing the individuation for both.248

Considering Blake's structured narrative of the trajectory of individuation through his chronologically written female characters, as already addressed in the preceding chapter, Blake’s entire imaginative life of writing and illustrating led up to his creation of Jerusalem. So notably, before beginning his work on it, his writing of Milton’s psychic cartography, parallel to his own, was Blake’s way of reaffirming to himself that the creator of poetry must eventually let go of her/his ego or at least current state of ego consciousness (self-annihilation), if, in fact, she/he is genuinely to become a prophet/poet and achieve salvation. Milton then becomes the last phase of Blake’s internal struggle before he is ready to create Jerusalem.249 Moreover, of significant interest to my Jungian study is the description in "Book the Second" of Milton's anima, Ololon—simultaneously the river of life in Eden and a young girl. Additionally, Harold Bloom's highly detailed commentary at the end of Morton Paley's edition of Jerusalem provides the provenance of Milton’s many characters. The biblical and historical lineages delineated are impressive.

As a segue from discussing Blake’s own individuation process through Milton to his depiction of a female individuation in Jerusalem, a look at a series of different ways of describing female individuation is in order. To begin, let us consider a general definition of the concept. Now, let us look closely at Jerusalem’s individuation by starting with a general

248 Harold Bloom, in his commentary on Jerusalem, writes of a strong link between Blake and Ezekiel: “Ezekiel was the first prophet to put aside the tradition of collective guilt and to insist upon an individual prophetic stance for salvation” (qtd. in Paley, Jerusalem 929). Additionally, Bloom probably had Blake in mind when he wrote his famous Anxiety of Influence: his theory that strong poets have to "kill the father“—i.e., their main great poetic influences—to create their own work. Blake's treatment of Milton here certainly fits that Freudian impulse.

249 The composition and coloring of the etched plates for Milton's visual text are not as artistically sophisticated as those for Jerusalem. The depth and amount of detail, the dramatic and saturated coloring, and the number of illustrations on a plate—most pale next to the plates in Jerusalem. It becomes increasingly evident that Blake created his last epic with nothing less than full bore.
definition of the concept. Anthony Stevens, in his *Ariadne’s Clue, A Guide to the Symbols of Humankind*, offers the following:

The term used by Jung to designate the process of personality development which leads to the fullest possible actualization of the Self, (the central nucleus of the personality, which contains all the archetypal potential with which an individual is innately endowed). (235)

Individuation consists of reconciling one’s archetypes within the unconscious. Since individuation is both a process and a goal, let us look closely at Jerusalem's archetypal self, which will determine if her individuation is successful. Sugg defines the self as "that perfect wholeness which the individual can become when he has reconciled himself with his shadow and animus and become his own potentiality for being" (85). By looking at her quest pattern within the poem, we need to look at her personality's archetypes.

However, first, a brief recap of what Joseph Campbell calls the Journey of the Hero, which is the patriarchal Jungian model. (The stages: leaving the Mother figure; traveling with a mentor to a sacred site; confrontation with the Monster (Jungian shadow); successful initiation into insight or maturity; and return to one's society healed, transformed, matured, and prepared to heal one's family and society. (Interestingly, his sequence of chapters is like a psychomachic progression of the archetypes.) The feminist stance's reiteration is different in significant stages.250

Generally, a naïve female beginning her psychic quest relinquishes the mother archetype, spends time in the underworld, surrenders her ego (what Jung terms “self-annihilation”), confronts the power of the masculine (patriarchy) and integrates it for her

---

250 As Campbell writes in *Goddesses, Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*, “And to repeat, there are no models in our mythology for an individual woman’s quest. (Apparently he is unfamiliar with the Native American myth of the Yellow Woman.
own use, confronts her shadow and eventually reconciles with it, and finally withdraws her projection of the animus onto an outside character and wrests it back into herself, which feminist Jungians term a “recollection” of the animus. Correspondingly, the female’s end stage in the process written about by Erich Neumann sums up her triumphal mastery over all the dark aspects of her psyche’s archetypes:

Fear disappears only when the ego has come to that stage of the conquest of fear in which the human being’s sense of security lies in existing not only as an ego but, in a mysterious and numinous way, also as a Self that guides the personality through all ego-phases and turns all of the ego’s fear-constellation into stages of transformation in which existence reveals itself as an unending metamorphosis of aspects of the creative. (Fear of the Feminine 281)

Behrendt describes it as follows:

Whenever a person rejects error and embraces Truth a ‘last Judgment’ passes on that individual. And each of us is required to be continually making such apocalyptic choices. We must always, in that sense, be going against the grain. It’s the price of maintaining our liberty and staying in the Body of Jesus, the Human Imagination Divine. (personal correspondence, 11 June, 2018)

Jungian analyst Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés, in writing about the wild woman archetype, provides a great template for an archetypal heroine like Jerusalem—one who is free of all repressive constraints, unfettered psychically from a destructive shadow archetype, and has triumphantly wrested back into her psyche her animus. Jerusalem separates herself from the other characters with their sentiments d'incomplétude (yet she eventual accepts them or rather reconciles with them—namely Vala), descends into and triumphs over her demons
(the dragons of Albion and Hand, who represent egregious patriarchy, and the darker side of her personality—shadow figures), and ostensibly joins with a lover by poem's end.

Jung, in a limited fashion, understands the psychology of women and the female structure of individuation with an emphasis on the animus's positive influence. However, feminist Jungians like Estés and others,251 write much more knowledgeably and comprehensively about a female’s process of initiation. Although female colleagues of Jung—Emma Jung, Ester Harding, and Toni Wolff—were concurrently researching and writing about the psychology of women, his collection of writings in *Four Archetypes*, *Aspects of the Feminine* and later his subsequent work *Aion* remain among the important studies in female psychology, and his contributions to the deep analytical theories remain a monumental advancement toward an understanding of and a methodology (blueprint) for women to gain an expansive consciousness in order to transform themselves, which is the stance feminists assume with Jung’s predominantly masculinist approach to individuation. To be psychically healthy requires a dialectical procedure, great suffering, and moral fortitude at every stage of the individuation process, but the result is a liberated, powerful, dynamic life—filled with vitality, imagination, creativity, and love. Blake's Jerusalem embodies not a chimerical behavior but rather a positive vitalism, eventually resulting in her redemption/freedom within the psychomachia that is Blake's text(s). Indeed, as Blake declares, "Jerusalem is Named Liberty."

Because the verbal narrative (representing the time-bound conscious world) generally takes the form of a linear progression—a traditional, masculinist style following a logical development of a beginning, a middle, and an ending.

251 Among many others: Demaris Wehr, Suzanne Sklar, Erich Neumann in his *The Great Mother* and *The Fear of the Feminine*, and Sylvia Brinton Perera in her *Descent to the Goddess, A Way of Initiation for Women*.)
I argue that Blake found it easier to depict the individuation process in images than in texts. My methodology then considers the visual first and foremost, and as a jumping off point, Robert Graves’s insights are especially exciting and on point. In his *White Goddess*, he portrays his archetypal beauty/muse as triadic in nature, as Blake also reveals Jerusalem in these three plates (40-49):

![Fig. 4:37. Blake, Jerusalem Plate 46](image1)
![Fig. 4:38. Blake, Jerusalem Plate 28](image2)
![Fig. 4:39. Blake, Jerusalem Plate 11](image3)

We see her as a virginal young girl (Figure 4:37), a sexual young woman (Figure 4:38), and a happy crone, wearing lots of pearls (Figure 4:39, bottom half). Additionally, looking at the title page (Figure 4:41) is similar to looking at Picasso's cubistic painting of his last lover, Jacqueline. For within the title page, we see all at once Jerusalem's psychogenic growth in multiple images—what Behrendt refers to as multi-stability.

Blake's insistence on artistically portraying physical beauty is nowhere more fully realized than in *Jerusalem*, where his illustrations are within a Neo-Classical idiom of

---

252 I cannot help but think of Arthur Miller, who when seeing Marilyn Monroe, before they were married, said Marilyn was the only female who wore her body to the party (*Timebends*).
253 Blake portrayed beautiful nudity as erotic rather than pornographic. His intention was not to provoke titillation. When one looks at the Victorian Era's nudes, excepting the Pre-Raphaelites and especially within the *Fin-de-Siècle*, they are quite different, offering a different kind of arousal—a pornographic one. For a detailed
perfect proportions and beauty. We see her theriomorphism, intrepidness, eroticism,
disappointment, defiance, despair, and transcendence in her poses, facial expressions, and
nudity or dress. Her position on the plate relative to the verbal text (aligned with it or not,
dominating the plate, and either adorning or relegated to the margins) further expands her
story within the verbal text. When we view the engraved plates, Jerusalem's *song of*
individuation fully displays itself and becomes more easily salient. And, if we are brave
enough to adventurously "cleanse our doors of perception," we can understand her
psychological maturation in a manner of perception that happens almost intuitively and
certainly imaginatively—that which Blake most prized. For if we look and see with our
hearts rather than our minds, we can realize we are following Blake's golden thread.

In summarizing the *Jerusalem* poem, I offer that after decades in spite of Blake's
arduous labor, a trial for sedition, poverty, illness, betrayal of friends, loss of important and
numerous commissions, and finally his failure to become a recognized British artist in his
lifetime, his last prophetic work, *Jerusalem*, remains numinous. Its mythopoeia includes,
among many other paired binaries, the conflict between Urizen (reason) and Leutha (desire)
and between organized religion and personal spirituality.\(^{254}\) However, preeminently for my
study, it is the story of the heroine's psychic journey.\(^{255}\) The "meaning" of *Jerusalem* has

---

\(^{254}\) Blake proclaimed in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, “Without opposition, there can be no growth.” And the opposing binaries are plentiful in Jerusalem: Visual text/verbal text, Jerusalem/Albion, soul/ego, anima/animus, matriarchy/patriarchy, imagination/Urizenic reason, love/terror, joy/pain, and life/death, Blake's world of introversion/Western civilization's preference for extraversion. These binaries create a dynamic of opposition within the poem—an opposition necessary for the intrapsychic dialogue.

\(^{255}\) Blake shares Henry James's beautiful incentive in placing his heroine at the center of his world. James's intention in *The Portrait of a Lady* was to erect a cathedral around Isabel Archer. Blake, however, actually turns Jerusalem into the cathedral, where her body ultimately becomes a place representing salvation, love, and divinity. (And not incidentally, Paley argues that Blake associated the Gothic arch with inspiration [*Jerusalem* 130]). Mina Doskow maintains that the human form divine is "the only true universal" (156), which additionally conflates Jerusalem's physicality and spirit with the archetypal. See also in Peter Ackroyd's biography of Blake
baffled many an earnest reader, probably in large part because it is a drama played out on many stages simultaneously. The poem is less baffling when it is "experienced" in one's imagination or, as Suzanne Sklar suggests—read aloud. Alternatively, as Behrendt in Reading William Blake suggests: let yourself "experience" it rather than intellectualize it. This said, it is still a fiendishly difficult mythopoeia to understand, but is rendered less difficult by attending to Sklar, Behrendt, and Paley's annotations and notes.²⁵⁶ Organizationally, the epic poem is divided into four chapters, consisting of one hundred engraved plates, which Blake engraved, colored, and printed between 1804-1820. Blake titled his chapters Chapter One, "To the Public"; Chapter Two, "To the Jews"; Chapter Three, "To the Deists"; and Chapter Four, "To the Christians." Within the verbal text, characters are henopoetic and, as the characters' bellicose Spectres split from the Divine Body, they cause havoc and metamorphose into countries. Jerusalem's story, as aptly described by Suzanne Sklar, consists of Chapter One with Jerusalem wailing compassionately about her banishment from Albion; living in furnaces, veiled, trampled, and defeated in Chapter Two; going mad in Chapter Three; and in Chapter Four "waxing uncannily prophetic and facing the great dragon, her own shadow" (Blake's 'Jerusalem' as Visionary Theatre 84).

The visual text—Blake's romanticism offered to us in a "neoclassical idiom"—does not consistently align with the verbal one.²⁵⁷ In Blake's timeless, mystical universe and certainly the collective unconscious, why would it? My first reading of Jerusalem was of the visual text, for I wanted to go beyond my intellectualizing and see/feel what Blake meant, and the sketch of Vala with a Gothic cathedral in place of her genitals, which reminds me of the pagan Celtic Sheila Na Gigs, illustrated earlier. Ackroyd claims the sketch represents a penis; I claim a Gothic cathedral.²⁵⁶ Paley favors the pre-eminent Blakean cadre of scholars, all male: Essick, Wicksteed, and Erdman.²⁵⁷ Mellor, Blake's Human Form Divine xvi.
I “read” it with a heady focus on the heroine's journey. The drawings, colorings, and composition of the plates were for me, and remain so today, a continual experience of exquisite beauty. The nudity, the celestial settings, and the portrayal of dramatic emotions still seize my attention. Here is a heroine theriomorphing herself into a swan, making love on a giant lily, floating on the ocean, meditating on top of a giant sunflower in full sunshine, and swimming effortlessly through an azure atmosphere, illuminated with golden stars. She stomps then drifts through the approximate twenty-five engraved plates, with her nude figure emphasized from the poem's beginning title page. I recognize her angelmorphic sensuality, her cowering, her despair, her confidence, her transcendence, and possibly her final apocalyptic closure.

Blake’s Romanticism offered to us in a “neoclassical idiom” (Mellor xvi) shapes the visual text. Moreover, the visual deconstructs the verbal; therefore, each text functions within its own level of experience. Often the verbal text (the time-bound realm) reflects a Newtonian worldviews where force and effort are in the collective unconscious. But the visual text (the timeless realm), especially in relation to Jerusalem, functions more on the level of quantum physics, where “fitness and timing are the tools for transformation” (Chopra and Simon 60-1). In summarily understanding Jerusalem’s quest, the visual text separate from the verbal will be analyzed. Here then with the plates, I have rearranged them

258 The plate is redolent with the Jungian symbolism of the cosmogenic cycle: birth, death, birth, death, and regeneration.
259 Well, maybe not the "apocalyptic closure," since I am still uncertain about the true nature of the crowned male figure in the penultimate plate 99. Note: he bears considerable resemblance to a figure in The Songs of Innocence and Experience, as well as Plate 46 in Jerusalem.
260 See Mellor's Blake’s Human Form Divine where she writes, “Both in its designs and in its narrative structure, Jerusalem is Blake’s ultimate apotheosis of the human form divine as the necessary shape of all temporal, spatial, and imaginative reality” (287). And further she writes, “The structure, plot, imagery, and designs of Blake’s last poetic epic, Jerusalem, explore the nature and significance of the human form divine” (286).
into a more Jungian progression of psychic development; therefore, necessarily eliminating any verbal chapter distinctions.

Before discussing the plates and their relevance to Jerusalem’s individuation, let us first look at Los’s view of her, which is so vastly different from Blake’s. Here, as she does in only four plates, Jerusalem wears a dress, reminiscent of 1950’s house dresses: plain, utilitarian, modest, and sporting pom-poms. Pom-poms! This is Los’s vision of her (his anima), which he is projecting (into a cartoon-like bubble). What a bad pun that is! Again, we see the four-winged lepidopterous image. Often, when Blake features Jerusalem on a plate, he includes the moon, the sun, and the stars—the “timeless” elements. Notice the tender little angel bookend figures at Los’s head and feet.
Within the title page, we see, at once, multiple images simultaneously of Jerusalem’s psychogenic growth. Blake’s insistence on artistically portraying physical beauty is nowhere more fully realized than in *Jerusalem*, and this plate in particular radiates luminous beauty. Blakes gives us a circular design revealing her various stages (psychic cycle) of individuation. Her cosmogenic cycle, from bottom right and moving counter-clockwise, shows us her despair and lamentation, a chrysalis symbolizing her readiness to be reborn, her taking flight into her soul work, her awakening/enlightenment, and finally, her transcendence as symbolized by the lepidopterous butterfly figure, which is seen often in the poem. Blake
renders the plate in exquisitely beautiful ways: the luminous colors (of veins, arteries, sky, sunshine), graceful dynamic movement, and symbolism.\textsuperscript{262}

Blake illustrates Jerusalem yoked to the blood moon—perhaps symbolizing her being constrained by earthly/physical states and the burdens associated with being female in a patriarchal society/culture. Certainly, Blake was familiar with women’s cultural burdens and therefore lack of freedom. Again, the verbal text says nothing about the visual. Bearing the “iron bands” of either internalized or externalized patriarchy or both, Jerusalem’s character psychologically and physically stagnates here. A visually apparent stasis pervades this plate as we empathize with her almost formidable challenge of bearing her epic challenges.

\textsuperscript{261} Paley writes that “Jerusalem is a symbol of the indwelling power that Blake sometimes calls by the shorthand term ‘Liberty’” (131).

\textsuperscript{262} This plate as with many of Blake’s reminds us of a similar style in some of Chagall’s art where all the figures seem to float on the canvas, e.g., his poster for Mozart’s Die Zaubernacht.
Jerusalem suffers physical and emotional trauma as Albion beats her and his other two daughters or possibly Jerusalem’s daughters. His pose reveals his murderous brutality. As Suzanne Sklar writes, “Casting out Jerusalem, he conflates her with Lear’s youngest daughter, Cordelia” (87). He rages:

Jerusalem! Dissembler Jerusalem!

I look into the bosom!

I discover the secret places: Cordelia! I behold

Thee whom I thought pure as the heavens

In innocence and fear. (19-23)

Paley’s annotation for this plate suggests that once again miserable people take out their unhappiness on others, for as he writes, “Stricken with sexual guilt, Albion sees even
his indisputable innocent daughters as contaminated” (163). And key to Albion’s misery lies in the first several lines of this plate:

O Vala! O Jerusalem! Do you delight in my groans
You O lovely forms, you have prepared my death-cup:
The disease of Shame covers me from head to feet: I have no hope
Every boil upon my body is a separate & deadly Sin,
Doubt first assaild me, then Shame took possession of me . . . . (21:1-6)

One of the females’ poses suggests a similarity with the bottom image of Jerusalem on the Title Page, revealing a transcendence. Physically abused children, to escape immediate relief from their reality of unbearable pain, often detail imagining a pleasant scene to psychologically distract them. This plate dramatically exposes the horrors of what evil power innocents can incur. Jerusalem’s undeveloped psyche endures a trauma she has no language to yet define. Jung wrote that trauma disrupts the psychological balance—the Zoas become unbalanced, as illustrated in Plate 92.

_Time in the underworld_

In the plate’s bottom third, a raptorial bird of prey dives into Jerusalem’s liver, symbol of her imagination. Again, the verbal and the visual texts do not line up. (According
to Paley, “The poem is the victorious symbol of Christ’s entry into Jerusalem.” In the top third of the plate, we see “the oak is the tree on which the crucifixion takes place.” The winged dish in the top portion represents “One of the most ancient symbols of divinity, found on Sumerian cylinder seals” [188].) Jerusalem’s bier floats over the sea of time and space. Again, with her are the sun, moon, and stars. The world is hers—she just does not yet realize it.

At the bottom of Plate 31, Jerusalem and Vala appear somewhat tangled in the unconscious realm. Vala represents all the inferior qualities of a personality: vanity, greed, ego, and jealousy, functioning as she does as Jerusalem’s shadow. Jerusalem cries,

I hear thy shuttles sing in the sky, and round my limbs

I feel the iron threads of love and jealousy and despair. (31:48-9)
Fig. 4:46. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 47
Vala is stomping down Jerusalem. Morton Paley writes, Jerusalem “stretches out her arms beseechingly to Albion” (William Blake, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* 205). Both of these plates illustrate Vala’s dominance over Jerusalem. The shadow figure is dominating the personality and therefore taking away her freedom of mind—her liberty.

*Psychic breakdown*

![Fig. 4:47. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 92](image)

As we notice her relation to the text, we can see how significantly it oppresses her, from both the bottom and the top. Again, her name is etched on the plate’s right-hand side,
and her name is written on each plate, beginning a new chapter. Jerusalem appears desolate, and her psychic breakdown results from her trauma that disrupts the natural harmonic balance of her originally healthy personality’s four Zoas. With Jerusalem surrounded by the Zoas’s four heads, Blake illustrates her total psychic breakdown. Also, this plate signifies Jerusalem leaving her Mother figure, whose absence implies her failure to save the heroine.

![Fig. 4:48. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 74](image)

With the verbal text (time-bound reality) pressing her downward, her downtrodden expression reflects in her glazed eyes, abnormally outstretched hands and fingers, and unrelaxed toes. Grasping for anything that might help her, she appears lost—psychologically lost.

---

263 Blake illustrates a similar representation of the four Zoas’ heads in Plate 54.
Jerusalem begins her transformational passage. This plate appears as the next plate in the poem after the title page. Blake, in his usual style, sometimes gives us his view up close and personal early in his poems. Her metamorphosis into the human/swan figure is one of a theriomorphic nature. The swan—sacred to Aphrodite, goddess of love, symbolically represents transformation and rebirth. Similar to Jerusalem giving birth to herself is the mythical swan giving birth to the Cosmic Egg. Additionally, we see the visual reference to Native American matrilineal cultures of the matriarch as half-animal or bird and half-woman. I am reminded of Leslie Marmon Silko, in her *Gardens in the Dunes*, when she writes of the Native American's first mothers who were half-human and half-bird. Here, Jerusalem appears as half-swan, half-woman. Her psychic journey begins with the young female/swan

---

264 “In India, the swan is the divine bird that laid the Cosmic Egg on the primordial waters from which Brahma hatched” (Stevens, *Ariadne’s Clue* 364).
and ends with the pearl-laden wizened, happy crone, transcendently transcending.

Significantly, the verbal text (the conscious time-bound realm) lies in between the two visual texts (the unconscious timeless realm) of her beginning and ending—her theriomorphism.

See her feet—one uplifted by the buoyant body of water? And look at her arms outstretched as she completely gives herself to this particular place with joy and confidence. She smiles. And look at all those pearls—not jewels from the earth, but pearls from the sea. How significant in terms of the unconscious realm.

Fig. 4:50. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 71

An extraordinary visual of a loving interspecies relationship/communication. As a deranged iteration of Jerusalem as half-swan and half-woman, here the swan—her better self, barely touches Jerusalem’s toes, nudging her to rise. The impulse for Jerusalem to return to her dormant divinity is being manifested by this female swan (notice the breasts.) The verbal text of the material/conscious world symbolically and oppressively pushes Jerusalem

---

265 One of the earlier male critics in the Blake cadre of scholars, Foster Damon, writes of this plate, “She is a semi-satirical symbol of the brainless woman, who concerns herself entirely with Time and Space” (xx). Another misinterpretation way off the mark. Damon fails to grasp Blake’s entire mythopoeia and instead critiques a plate as if it were isolated from the narrative.
downward (earthward). Uncharacteristically, the simultaneity of meanings for the verbal and visual texts happens in this plate. Here, she forgets her dormant divinity:

What is Above is within, for every-thing in Eternity is translucent!

The circumference is Within: Without, is formed the Selfish Center

And the Circumference still expands going forward to Eternity (6-8)

... & Jerusalem lies in ruins . . . . (54)

Meditatio

Fig. 4:51. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 53

The beginning plate of Chapter 3 shows Jerusalem on the sunflower, cradling her pensive face. Blake often used a significant amount of gold pigment to suggest enlightenment, and in this plate his use is considerable. Once again, nothing correlates between the visual and the verbal. And again, present are the sun, the moon, and the stars. On a time-bound level, the archetypes "cannot be integrated simply by rational means but require a dialectical procedure, a real coming to terms with them, often conducted by the
patient in dialogue form, so that without knowing it, he puts into effect the alchemical definition of the meditatio: 'an inner colloquy with one's good angel'" (Jung).

**Annihilation of ego**

Fig. 4:52. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 23

Signifying Jerusalem’s self-annihilation, Blake shows her winged and collapsed at the top, with her visage suggesting the replacement of her ego by her love and pity or, as Jung describes it, “Love without vengeance.” Blake’s describes Jerusalem as “Inward complacency of Soul: a Self-annihilation!” (23:14-15).
Confrontation with the Shadow Archetype

Jerusalem confronts the negative aspects of her shadow, the negative aspects of her animus, her Cambellian monster, or what Estés calls her predator. Blake inverts his standard position for plates here to a landscape-style horizontal to emphasize the visual spectacle. One of the most dramatic plates in terms of both coloring and subject with its dominant colors of black and the colors of fire (red, orange, and yellow), the plate is unique in that it contains the least text of any plate. In fact, it has no narrative text, only “Hand” and “Jerusalem” engraved at the bottom, “Jerusalem is named Liberty among the sons of Albion” engraved to her right, and engraved on the plate’s left-hand side, “Such visions have appeared to me as I my ordered race have run.” Jerusalem confronts the bellicose Hand, one of Albion’s sons, who hates imagination.

Sklar writes that “Hand is usually identified with Robert Hunt, whose devastating Examiner reviews in 1808 and 1809 damaged Blake’s reputation” (50). Jerusalem’s posture reveals her center of gravity firmly grounded, and with a resolute expression she is not recoiling from him, as Paley suggests. Her stance illustrates a fearlessness in confronting her monster, her shadow, or the darker side of her psyche. The significance of her moment with Hand: She occupies one-third of the plate to Hand’s two-thirds, where he exhibits much
dramatic machismo. She reveals no fear. Moreover, this is one of four plates in the poem’s one hundred where Jerusalem is clothed, which usually signifies her earth-bound reality.

Vala tries to cover Jerusalem with the blue veil, in a similar fashion to the figures trying to cover Venus in Sandro Botticelli’s *The Birth of Venus*. Here, Jerusalem does not accept the veil. She has nothing to hide. Both central figures are nude; their posture, visage, and blonde hair almost identical; and both paintings show a secondary figure attempting to veil the central female. The similarities are too stark and numerous not to have been intentional. Blake most probably was familiar with Botticelli’s work because, as a boy of fifteen, he apprenticed under Basire, who introduced him to a trove of Classical images, too. Also, the Renaissance statue *Venus of Medici* uses a similar pose, and Blake considered it to be a “grand work of ancient art.” Note the iconography of the Westminster Abbey (what Blake calls “the living form of the gothic”) and the Byzantine image on the left (symbolizing state religion). Jerusalem’s body is in between (on the edge of the water). Blake did not believe in
organized religion—the reason he developed his own mythopoeia. This plate is also referred to as “Art & Science cannot exist but by Naked Beauty displayd.”

If we accept Blake’s urging to “study every line and lineament, for there lies character,” we can begin to understand the import of this plate as he reveals evidence of her early commitment to preparing her physicality for the psychic journey by becoming extraordinarily healthy—nerves, ligaments, heart, muscles, and fibers, opened up to development and obviously revealing an elevated level of health—beauty. Her vital forces of energy are awakened into the yogic law of pure potentiality as described in the Upanishads.

**Reconciliation with the shadow archetype—Vala**

Two figures at the top (Jerusalem and Vala) and Jerusalem at the bottom soar independently and copacetically in the timeless realm. The Byzantine church at the top has the words “York” and “London” and at the bottom “Jerusalem”—again associated with the

---

Footnote: 266 I referred to this in Chapter 1: Silko’s *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*. See footnote 55.
gotic church. Paley writes, “At the antipodes of the green earth stand tiny reproductions of St. Paul’s and of a Gothic cathedral, here as elsewhere (most dramatically in Plate 32) the embodiments of state religion and spiritual Christianity” (222). Again, Jerusalem is not time-bound as she swims in the Immortal Sea or the star-filled sky.

**Confrontation with the father archetype**

![Fig. 4:56. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 25](image)

Jerusalem pulls the guts out of Albion, symbolically dismantling the patriarchy. Blake usually illustrates the symbols for the sun, moon, and stars on Jerusalem, but here they appear on Albion. Symbolically, after her confrontation with Albion, she takes on the elements for herself.
Reconciliation with the father archetype

Jerusalem finally relinquishes Albion, representing the patriarchy and one of her sources of great pain. Blake shows her lying on Albion’s bier:

Time was Finished: The Breath Divine Breathed over Albion
Beneath the Furnaces and starry wheels and in the Immortal Tomb
And England who is Brittania awoke from Death on Albion’s bosom
She awoke pale & cold she fainted seven times on the Body of Albion. (94:18-21)
Blake writes, “England who is Britannia entered Albion’s bosom rejoicing” (2), which more than suggests that Jerusalem forgives Albion. Shortly after this scene, Jerusalem gives one of her longest speeches in which she joins all of the world’s countries in peace and harmony—perhaps analogous to her individuation as she calls together all her psyche’s disparate parts. The macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm. Or vice versa. She returns transformed and prepared to heal her family and society.
Just look at the sheer beauty of the plate—all yellow, white, and flesh colored. In this beginning plate of Chapter Two, Blake uses the symbolism of the lotus flower. As Stevens in his *Ariadne’s Clue* writes:

The lotus is the epitome of spiritual aspiration, development of the soul, and the individuation of the psyche, since it is rooted in the life-giving mud, grows upward through the opaque, nurturant water, and flowers in the warm light of the sun. Since it bears buds, flowers, and seeds all at the same time, the lotus also epitomizes time—past, present, and future. . . . Lotus, the flower mandala with petals arranged in perfect symmetry is celebrated in the East . . . (249)

Once again, we see Jerusalem on the water, or as Witcutt names it, The Immortal Sea.

---

267 Some speculation exists that Blake might have been influenced by James Barry’s *Jupiter and Juno on Mount Ida*. Additionally, the significance of the yellow color denotes more of a “dawn” than a gold color that denotes “enlightenment.”
The iconography of the serpent here, once again, is not the traditional Christian iconographic serpent, but rather more of a Kundalini serpent, embracing Jerusalem. That big boy has indeed opened up her chakras. Just look at the gold leaf laden with fat rays of the sun, signifying a lot of enlightenment. Blake probably used more gold powder or gold leaf here than on any illustration in Jerusalem.

Jung, in his “The Psychology of Kundalini Yoga,” associates a different animal for each of the body’s chakras and believed that the practice of yoga could speed up the process of individuation because of the unblocking of energy that leads to the opening up of imagination, creativity, and eventual enlightenment (67). Again, notice the presence of the sun, moon, and stars. Blake shows a number of females with serpents—e.g., Jerusalem, and
Eve certainly—and the females are always confident, unafraid, and almost at one with the large serpents.\textsuperscript{268}

Fig. 4:61. Blake, \textit{Jerusalem}, Plate 75

Paley writes of this plate, “The beast’s eyes are flecked with gold” (256), signifying additional enlightenment. Jerusalem wears a crown for the first and only time in the poem. (The male figure in Plate 99 wears one.) The serpent appears snarly, but Jerusalem is comforting him\textsuperscript{269}—one more wonderful depiction of an interspecies communication.

\textsuperscript{268} See Blake’s illustration “Eve Tempted by the Serpent,” which is not included in \textit{Jerusalem}.

\textsuperscript{269} I want to make wallpaper out of this. I like it that much. And as Behrendt suggested: the top illustration could serve as the border.
Jerusalem's apotheosis

Within the aesthetic binary of Blake's poem, Jerusalem's journey into the causal deep and eventually redemptive return from her first cosmogonic cycle (and finally by poem's end), we understand the visual impact of her heroic transformation as illustrated in the apotheosis of this penultimate Plate 99. Do we interpret the plate as her apocalyptic psychic, sexual, and spiritual awakenings? Blake does end his poem with the concluding line, “And then Awaking into his Bosom in the Life of Immortality” (4). Clearly, the male crowned figure can certainly be interpreted as a divine figure. Notice that he has no feet. And yes, certainly, Jerusalem does not embrace him, but rather, in a physically passive physical stance, gives herself to him.

Maybe the wild female spirit meets a rational (stabilizing) masculine wisdom and that certainly represents a Jungian (read alchemical) conjunctio oppositorium. Christian? Not
necessarily. If the growth of the psyche is describable regarding its stages, then not
incidentally it is visible in Blake's twenty-four plates featuring Jerusalem (of the poem's one
hundred). From a Jungian stance, Campbell writes, "The mystical marriage with the queen
goddess of the world represents the male hero's total mastery of life; for the woman is life,
the hero its knower and master" (The Hero with a Thousand Faces 101). For this Jung uses the
term coniunction oppositorum—“The union of all opposites as symbolized by the conjunction
of the archetypal feminine and masculine in the ‘chimerical marriage,’ the hieros gamos”
(Stevens 238). However, in Jerusalem's penultimate Plate 99, as in Plato's Symposium, the
mysticism of sexual love is expressed as "each is both"; the essential point is that Blake
inverts emphatically these sexual roles within the ancient motif's culminating experience—
the key to my reading. Blake’s reversal could potentially please even the gruffest of feminist
critics.

On the psychic level, her individuation is complete. She has wrested her animus back
into herself as she no longer projects her animus onto another character. She reaches the
achievement of her goal. Is this male figure Jung’s Wise Old Man archetype, or Christ, or
Blake (who has at last found and claimed his anima)?

Is it a conventional ending or an opportunity for literary multivalence? Is the Divine
Bridegroom coming to save the heroine and have great sex with her at last? Or is Blake
echoing his own patriarchal unconscious beliefs? Why not portray Jerusalem sailing off into
the sky on her own Nietzschean keel boat named Cosmic Dancer? Is this not one more fairy
tale ending of a prince saving the princess? In the swirling morass of fire, confusion, and
darkness is perhaps the Wise Old Man; with his silver locks and crown in a blatantly sexual
embrace, lifting Jerusalem upwards into the light. Here, for the first time in the poem, Blake
does not belie his sexuality and his culture's prevailing ideology. Indeed, it is a Jungian
ending, and therefore a patriarchal archetypal ending: *conjunctio oppositorum* (or alternatively the male wrestling back into himself his *anima*). After all Jerusalem's epic travails, he rescues and saves her in the poem's apocalyptic, penultimate plate. Perhaps Blake is similar to Coleridge, who did not know how to write an ending to his "Christabel." Yet, Blake proclaimed it was the only work finished—completed.

Jerusalem’s coloring is the same as the surrounding morass of darkness, while contrastingly the male’s coloring is of moonlight, a crown surrounds his head, and a bright blue sky shows above him. Jerusalem’s entire form suggests a triumphant surrender, so I interpret it as a reclaiming of her divinity in a psychic/sexual way.

**Conclusion**

Eventually, Blake's worldview becomes feminist. Other feminist writers wrote feminist tracts before him certainly, but he enhances their views, in large part through his visual text. We can see his heroine in each stage of her psychological development. There we can see what she makes of herself and what she becomes through her own efforts. Yes, the verbal text reveals her personality, her trials and triumphs, and her transcendence. Within the verbal text, we can hear her character develop through her many lines of dialogue. But it is ultimately her physicality that seizes us. Here we see her beauty.

But now, as Blake's future readers leave the poem, we make our way through the rest of our lives, knowing he has given us his finest. Call it advice, if you like, or a blueprint, or a manual for life—a *vade mecum*—and what we take away is knowing what is possible, knowing what will probably happen and again and again as our cosmogenic cycles return with sometimes alarming drama, and knowing how to make sense of it through confrontation and reconciliation, and then assimilation and transcendence. We close the poem and open our
lives, hoping that love—our love—can save the day, knowing that Blake’s genius had the visionary’s power to last two centuries and give us a glorious female who successfully achieves her individuation, which is the ending for her, but the beginning for us.

To be consciously oppositional and go against the grain of England’s prevailing conditions and tenets, Blake offers us his beautiful, exotic female creation, who suffered greatly both physically and emotionally. But she, too, could not just rise above her pain, but instead triumph over it, because of it, and even in spite of it. She knew the destructive forms jealousy could take, how miserable, unindividuated individuals would consciously try to hurt her physically and psychically simply because they knew they could get away with it. But these emotional and physical traumas could not defeat her for long.

Blake writes of his muse or anima, and he must have been filled with hope because his intentions were to sell copies; after all, he needed the money to exist even at his and Catherine’s subsistence level. How can we ever imagine his contemporaries understanding all his portrayed nudity? If George Eliot gave up horseback riding because she felt it was too pagan, what on Buddha’s green earth would his friend Mary Wollstonecraft have thought when she viewed all that luscious nudity of Jerusalem—especially in Plate 32. At poem’s end Jerusalem represents a Jungian authenticity of complete individuation, a feminist authenticity of shared power, and she represents joy, Blake’s most often used word in his corpus. And why not strive for joy?

We live in a time of horror, so Blake’s writing Jerusalem for his “Now readers” could not be more timely. With the Me Too Movement having opened up doors for both women and men to seek help by exposing their tormenters and predators, they have a safe place

where they can voice their experiences and expose people who have harmed or are harming them. Ours is a time of sexual trafficking where men are seeking out sex with young adolescent girls, who have no recourse to say “No!” The money made in this “trade” is greater than the annual revenues of Google, Amazon, and Apple combined. *The Essence of Evil* exposes how (generally) men, whose lust is beyond comprehension, come to prefer younger and younger women with the passing of time. The atrocities these girls endure is unimaginable. And so, if we are to become stewards of the education of women, let us remember William Blake, who is but one more voice in our chaotic time offering a way to understand one way out of this hell of our current mess. For if we become our best selves, then we can teach others how to “awaken” and find their psychically healthy voices to rail against the pernicious evils that surround us and them.

There have been other poets whose love of women is revealed in their poetry. But unlike the others, Blake extends his poem into epic proportions, becoming for him his swan song, and perhaps through explaining how Jerusalem saves herself, he saves himself. Her ending is his beginning. His profound understanding of women culminates in Jerusalem because, through all the more-than-Miltonic cataloging of places (psychic, geographical, physical), there is Jerusalem, in at least one fourth of the plates, suffering much of the time. As one character in his swansong, Jerusalem saves, redeems, and resurrects herself in a pre-Christian fashion.\(^{271}\) If we look closely, really closely, we can “see” how beautiful her character becomes, as she returns to her body, as she feels her body, as she listens to her body, as she uses her body not only as a vehicle (or agent) for her own salvation and certainly transcendence from the mundane, the vulgar and the pain, but also as a vehicle to

\(^{271}\) For a staggering intellectual study of pre-Christian matriarchal cultures, see Erich Neumann’s *The Great Mother, an Analysis of the Archetype.*
help others. As she comes in touch with her innate divinity, she learns to use her strength to comfort others. And Blake more than echoes Yeats’ sentiment in “The Curse of Adam,” that

To be born woman is to know—

Although they do not talk of it at school—

That we must labor to be beautiful. (*The Collected Works* 80:18-20)

And so as we strive to make sense of our lives, I remember Virginia Woolf’s words: “Why is life so tragic, so like a little strip of pavement over an abyss: I look down; I feel giddy; I wonder how I am ever to walk to the end” (27). Across the centuries, their words help lead the way, which hopefully leads back to the source—love.

Jung, in his *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, writes that the Western world values material achievement more than psychic development. His treatise is of special value today, especially his contention that "Psychic reality is the most important achievement of modern psychology, though it is scarcely recognized as such" (191). Including an extended definition and defense of the existence of the unconscious psyche, and concluding with his concerns about modern humankind's moral squeamishness about doing “soul work,” he especially feels that, after the devastating effects of the World Wars, humankind in general needs psychic repair but admonishingly writes that we do not have the moral fortitude to consider our psyches as vehicles to possible happiness. However, he stops short of saying we are psychologically doomed, but with our lust for material things, possession and dominance of others, and blind religious and philosophical leanings, his argument to turn inward (via analytical psychological introspection) is an elixir for what ails us. Anything short of that results in half-lives, unresolved complexes, and dog-chasing-her-tail behavior that looks for love in all the wrong places.
Blake’s *Jerusalem* can certainly also be understood as a visionary creation\(^{272}\) for Blake does completely work out the psychomachia of Jerusalem's individuation. By Jerusalem’s claiming of her animus’s values at poem’s end, Blake, too, realizes and integrates his anima’s values instead of projecting them onto his wife, Katherine. Clearly, Blake’s visionary mythology is his means to point out persuasively our obscuration of spirit and head us toward a “higher” path, because, after all, the Kantian/Urizenic model does not work anymore. We cannot rationalize our way to salvation. His formidable mythology becomes easier to understand as we turn inwards to do the necessary homework leading to salvation. If Jung were alive today, he would be more adamant than ever about how "we" need a "soul," a "spirit," a true sense of our psychically healthy selves.\(^{273}\) Senseless wars, deadly chemicals defiling Mother Earth and killing her avian population, bloodthirsty human predators hunting to extinction or near extinction many animals, greedy businesses and thoughtless humans destroying the oceans, humans killing Native American women and populations they consider “other”—sexually and ethnically—and sexually frustrated men (mostly) legislating the control of women’s bodies and their reproductive rights. With our world-wide poverty and its attendant starvation; dominating power and influence by the wealthy; plagues and diseases wiping out tens of thousands; pervasive expressions of violence—culturally, politically, militarily, religiously, personally—the world needs Jung now more than ever. And in *Jerusalem*, Blake, in what I have argued as a forerunner to feminism and Jungian transformation, reveals how the female heroine achieves a healthy soul (psyche) through her successful process of individuation. She does her soul work, goes down to that Yeatsian place where the mothers are, becomes her own mother, removes her veil, faces her

---

\(^{272}\) See also Jung’s "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry."

\(^{273}\) Fortunately, Erick Neumann, Jung’s brilliant protégé, wrote *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic* addressing this timeless concern.
oppressors, wrests back her projected animus, and feels the power that love engenders. She does not need anyone and has subsequently learned through her harrowing journey that her freedom enables her to choose, regardless of its being either foolhardy or wise. Indeed, Jerusalem—both the character and the poem—is a game-changer in British Romanticism.

Psychically she heals and transforms herself, and her perception of the world reminds us loudly of Blake’s aphorism "The eye altered, alters all." Blake reveals how her process of Jungian individuation, including her physical transformation, comes, slowly, in gyre-like fashion, because she is a developing heroine. Yes, at times she feels like quitting and letting the world suppress her into almost non-being, but she prevails. Her embodied divine love in the poem is an agency for self-sacrifice, mercy, compassion, and imagination (creativity), and physical transformation. She becomes a successfully individuated female, a prototypical "heroine," and additionally, a Jungian Mother archetype, the universe's uterus, if you like, as well as a Yeatsian pilgrim soul. She models a literary and artistic female for Jungian individuation, as she represents what Blake names her . . . Liberty. Thus, she is one and the same—a Jungian and Blakean vision of what is possible.

Now, is the time—our time for we are Blake’s “future readers.” Yeats understood him as a lover understands the beloved:

There have been men who loved the future like a mistress, and the future mixed her breath into their breath and shook her hair about them, and hid them from the understanding of their times. William Blake was one of these men. ("William Blake and the Imagination" 49)

---

274 To see the dramatic differences in her physicality, see Plate 32 (Fig. 1:11, p 139) where Jerusalem’s triumphant image is in startling contrast with her defeated image of Plate 92 (Figure 2:26, p 113).

275 William Yeats, “When You Are Old.”
Blake loved Jerusalem boundlessly. Yes, unequivocally she is his anima, but I think more significantly she is a model for Blake’s “future readers”—individuated feminists. However most of all, she is a heroine, who navigates her chosen course. Blake knew a thing or two about life and the psychomachia, so in Jerusalem he teaches us how to recognize the traps people set for us, how to deeply believe in the beauty of our sexuality (including when to share or withhold), how to recognize and trust our cosmogenic cycles, and how to speak our minds and stand up to predators and oppressors.

But most of all Blake teaches us to believe in a philosophy of love and how to transcend the world when psychic pain becomes unbearable. This transcendence, then, becomes Jerusalem’s form of praying—or rather a form in which to implore herself for help. She turns to her inner resources—most of all her innate divinity, or as Stevens in "Sunday Morning" admirably phrases it, "Divinity must live within herself." Blake left nothing uncharted in his poem. He knew Jerusalem was his only "finished" work and proclaimed it so. He teaches us how to navigate our course and finally transformed, sail safely into a home port: our personal liberty.

Blake writes the story of a young woman and takes his reader through her life. His other poetic women were abused in psyche-torturing and physical traumatizing ways, but Jerusalem’s story reveals horrors even beyond theirs. With her innate strength, unlimited tenacity and perseverance, and a prevailing spirit of love ("forgiveness without vengeance"), which partly translates into an attitude of not wanting to get even with her tormenters, she decides to let her philosophy of love guide her.

In the penultimate plate, Blake in a Jungian coniunctio oppositorium joins Jerusalem with a Divine Lover ——the crowned figure, ethereal in his depiction—an ancient representation
fully (full-plate, actually) clothed with the “garb of humanity.” Jerusalem reclaims her divinity. Symbolically and metaphorically she pulls the divinity back into herself. And from a Jungian view, instead of continuing to project an animus onto a character outside herself, she is wrestling her animus back into herself. Having reconciled with her shadow (s), reclaimed her animus, and transformed herself, she arrives at her apotheosis—an apocalyptic one.

Yet we wonder what old guy walking around with a long white robe, beard, crown, and appears apparently footless could appeal enough to the beautiful Jerusalem that she would take him on? Must be symbolic. Must be Jungian (from a feminist perspective, of course). Must be something Blake imaginatively knows. For Blake—the forerunner to both feminism and Jung’s analytical psychology—the answer is beautifully embodied in his Jerusalem.

276 Thanks to Steve Behrendt for this insight.
LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1:1. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 92 ................................................................. 21
Fig. 1:2. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 26 ................................................................. 22
Fig. 1:3. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 25 ................................................................. 25
Fig. 1:4. Picasso, Portrait de Dora Maar ....................................................... 27
Fig. 1:5. Blake, Jerusalem, Title Page ............................................................ 27
Fig. 1:6. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 57 ................................................................. 28
Fig. 1:7. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 53 ................................................................. 32
Fig. 1:8. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 63 ................................................................. 34
Fig. 1:9. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 46 ................................................................. 35
Fig. 1:10. Blake, Milton, Satan Exulting Over Eve ...................................... 36
Fig. 1:11. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 32, Naked Beauty Displayed ................. 39
Fig. 1:12. Raphael, The Triumph of Galatea .................................................. 40
Fig. 1:13. Blake, Comus Disguised as a Rustic, Addresses the Lady in the Wood .... 44
Fig. 1:14. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 32 ............................................................... 44
Fig. 1:15. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 57 ............................................................... 46
Fig. 1:16. Blake’s Notebook ............................................................................. 48
Fig. 1:17. Sheila-na-gig .................................................................................... 48
Fig. 1:18. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 28 ............................................................... 61
Fig. 1:19. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 99 ............................................................... 65
Fig. 1:20. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 26 ............................................................... 67
Fig. 2:21. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 99 ............................................................... 75
Fig. 2:22. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 25 ............................................................... 80
Fig. 2:23. Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 71 ............................................................... 81
Fig. 2:24. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 11 ................................................................. 81

Fig. 2:25. Boz Chast, *The Hero's Journey* .......................................................... 86

Fig. 2:26. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 92 ................................................................. 113

Fig. 3:27. Blake, *The Little Girl Found*, Plate 36 ............................................. 147

Fig. 3:28. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 32 ................................................................. 147

Fig. 3:29. Blake, *Thel*, Plate i ........................................................................ 152

Fig. 3:30. Blake, *Thel*, Plate 6 ......................................................................... 158

Fig. 3:31. Blake, *Tiriel, Har and Heva Bathing, Mnetha Looking On* ......... 165

Fig. 3:32. Blake, *Thel*, Plate 11 ....................................................................... 167

Fig. 3:33. Blake, *Ahania*, Plate 1 ..................................................................... 169

Fig. 3:34. Blake, *Ahania*, Title Page ............................................................... 170

Fig. 4:35. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 2 ................................................................. 175

Fig. 4:36. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 11 ............................................................... 179

Fig. 4:37. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 46 ............................................................... 199

Fig. 4:38. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 28 ............................................................... 199

Fig. 4:39. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 11 ............................................................... 199

Fig. 4:40. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 14 ............................................................... 201

Fig. 4:41. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 2 (Title Page) .......................................... 202

Fig. 4:42. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 8 ................................................................. 203

Fig. 4:43. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 21 ............................................................... 204

Fig. 4:44. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 37 ............................................................... 205

Fig. 4:45. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 31 ............................................................... 206

Fig. 4:46. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 47 ............................................................... 207
Fig. 4:47. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 92 ................................................................. 208
Fig. 4:48. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 74 ................................................................. 209
Fig. 4:49. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 11 ................................................................. 210
Fig. 4:50. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 71 ................................................................. 211
Fig. 4:51. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 53 ................................................................. 212
Fig. 4:52. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 23 ................................................................. 213
Fig. 4:53. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 26 ................................................................. 214
Fig. 4:54. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 32 ................................................................. 215
Fig. 4:55. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 57 ................................................................. 216
Fig. 4:56. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 25 ................................................................. 217
Fig. 4:57. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 94 ................................................................. 218
Fig. 4:58. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 96 ................................................................. 219
Fig. 4:59. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 28 ................................................................. 220
Fig. 4:60. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 63 ................................................................. 221
Fig. 4:61. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 75 ................................................................. 222
Fig. 4:62. Blake, *Jerusalem*, Plate 99 ................................................................. 223

The images representing Blake’s *Jerusalem* plates come from Copy E held by the Yale Center for British Art.
WORKS CITED


---. Personal correspondence, 11 June, 2018.


---. *Pathways to Bliss*. New World Library, 2004


Connolly, Tristanne. *William Blake and the Body*.


Łuczyńska-Hołdys, Malgorzata. “‘Life exhal’s in milky fondness’—Becoming a Mother in William Blake’s *The Book of Thel.*” *Blake, An Illustrated Quarterly* 46.4, Spring 2013, pp. 1-22.


Okeefe, Vincent. “Debunking the Romantic Ideology: A Re-View of Blake’s *Jerusalem.*” 


Palmer, Hugh. “Fourfold Vision Practice: Data, Theory, Intuition and the Art of Therapy.”


Webster, Brenda S. *Blake’s Prophetic Psychology*. The University of Georgia Press, 1983.


---. *Original Stories from Real Life: with Conversations Calculated to Regulate the Affections and Form the Mind to Truth and Goodness* [1788]. Illustrations by William Blake. Henry Froude, 1906.


