

WILLIAM BLAKE'S TWO INCOMPATIBLE STATES: SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

Dr. Abdel Elah Al-Nejar

Associate Prof., Dept. of English

Mu'tah University

P. O. Box 7

Kerak- Jordan

ABSTRACT: *The level of songs of Innocence and Experience is that of the view of human life in innocence or in experience, but this does not preclude the presence of the macrocosm or life of the world itself. If each human life contains space and time, then the microcosm contains the macrocosm. Experience is Generation and the fall, through which man can either reassert a visionary condition (Eden) or move to an acceptance of experience or "nature" as the ultimate reality. To exist in such a condition is to deny Eden and commit the mind to endless circles of natural birth and rebirth. In the natural world man's divine human form dissolves into material substance and is regenerated without visionary consciousness. Man not only becomes what he beholds, but also becomes as he beholds. Innocence in its pure form is, for the childish consciousness, a condition of complete animation in nature best signified by a prolific garden. This garden serves along with the figure of the mother to indicate a protective world. Innocence is portrayed in poems that present these images either from within, or through the eyes of a mother figure who conceives of herself as a protector of the child. Examples of the former are "Spring" and "Laughing Song"; examples of the latter are "Cradle Song" and "A Dream". These poems are set against certain songs of Experience which employ the symbols of nature in their fallen forms and build up the picture of a false garden ("The Garden of Love", "The Sick Rose"). This false garden is contained within the familiar tree of the knowledge of good and evil ("The Human Abstract") and is seen a wasteland ("The Voice of the Ancient Bard"). These are the two states seen simply in their archetypal forms.*

KEYWORDS: William Blake's, Songs of Innocence, Songs of Experience.

WILLIAM BLAKE'S TWO INCOMPATIBLE STATES: SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

In studying Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience (which had merged into one work in 1794) we must not forget that not only is each individual poem important in itself but, that the drawing which accompanies it is also of importance. In other words, the two

contrary states of Innocence and Experience are not only symbolized in the poem alone but rather, there exists a closely-knit coherence between each poem and its particular design. Sometimes the design duplicates what the words say (i.e. the word "travelling" is paralleled by a traveler); more often, the designs complement Blake's words in such a way that, on almost every plate (if one takes into account the border and design as well as the word) his entire paradox is represented.¹ So, it is essential that whoever reads Blake must account for his work (both written and engraved) in its entirety.

Innocence and Experience, the two contrary states of the human soul, are opposites. The state of Innocence is selfless and desires to please "All."² It represents the spontaneous happiness of childhood. Truly, nothing in the world of emotion is lighter than the happiness of a child. This innocence, possessed by each of us in childhood or fantasy, is a kind of proof that we do possess the powerful, creative, and "Divine Imagination". Experience, on the other hand, is blighted innocence. It is an analytic state of mind that finds the limits of the world that the human's fallen perception gives him"³. It is selfish and has a devouring character which seeks to please only itself. The greatness of Blake's work⁴ arises from the juxtaposition of the two modes of vision--Innocence and Experience. They deserve to be respected as "contraries"; therefore, they are both good; both are necessary to progression in one's spiritual life--that is, both states are necessary to human existence⁵. Not only are Innocence and Experience contrary states but, there also exist two contrary types of Innocence as well as two contrary states of Experience. Moreover, these contrary states appear in single poems.

Blake was thirty years old when he began to write the Songs of Innocence, which is amazing because in order to compose such songs, one would have to, himself, be so deeply dyed in such spontaneous innocence. How could Blake retain his innocence since he had already become an adult and was experiencing life as such? He was thirty: he had been married for five years and was working hard to earn a living⁶. Yes, Blake recaptures the child mind. He does not merely write about childish happiness; he becomes the happy child--the happy child of the world. The finest poems of the Songs of Innocence are those in which there is some admission of the hardships which actually face the innocents of the world; but, in these poems the innocent view can be seen as easily transcending adversity⁷. In these songs, the designs which accompany the poems manifest vegetation that is fresh, attractive and abundant. The tree of Innocence is large and healthy, its branches entwined in a natural embrace; but, it anticipates the Fall in the serpentine creeper that often winds about its trunk.

Blake's most obvious sign of man's perverted state appears in the borders--in the vegetation with which he surrounds text and design. In Innocence it was fresh, attractive, and abundant; in Experience it recalls the earlier ripeness but it is in fact withering or dying. The tree of Innocence is healthy, its branches entwined in a natural embrace; but it anticipates the Fall in the serpentine creeper that often winds about its trunk. The tree of Experience is dry and dying, its withering branches form round arches or flat, inhibiting

horizontals over the pages as its spiky twigs invade the text. Experience is related to Innocence. The vegetated flames of Innocence are destructive and symbolize the wrath that falls upon a corrupt society.

In Experience, Old Nobodaddy, his priests, and his Kings have replaced Christ, the poet, and the child-the gods of Innocence. The Urizen of Experience is not primarily the fallen Lucifer, the mythic figure of Blake's prophecy, but a social creature, a supporter of repressive institutions. The design to the poem that reverses the "The Divine Image" of Innocence ("The Human Abstract" of Experience) presents a bearded and ensnared old man making nets that stand for established religion. Urizen stands for the cruelty of an establishment that has failed to keep the peace and give the people bread and that has forced the young to work and weep in grime and suffering. The chimney sweeper's parents have gone to church to pray, leaving him to weep and work. His cry is matched by the sight of a soldier that, surrealistically, flows as blood down a palace wall, and by a broken old man, who appears in the design but not the text of "London", heading for his grave, an image of his god, Urizen, whose victim he is.

But institutional cruelty, through hideously direct in its results, is subtle in its means. Urizen has transformed natural pity and love, the daughters of the voice of God in Innocence, to institutional pity and charity in Experience. Urizenic pity arises from social poverty, Urizenic mercy from a lack of equal happiness. The songs of Experience does rival Innocence. Experience is, like Innocence, a serious and integrated idea. It is expressed by the pervasive metaphor of the fall and of the expulsion from Eden that is recalled vividly on the title page and with subtle indirection elsewhere. Songs of Innocence are introduced and sung by the piper, Songs of Experience by the bard, superficially there seems to be little to distinguish one from the other since the piper clearly exhibits imaginative vision and the Bard "Present, Past, and Future sees". Yet for each, the past, present, and future are different: for the piper the past can only be the primal unity, for the present is innocence and the immediate future is experience; for the Bard the past is innocence, the present experience, the future a higher innocence. It is natural, then, that the piper's point of view is prevalingly happy; he is conscious of the child's essential divinity and assured of his present protection. But into that joyous context the elements of experience constantly insinuate themselves so that the note of sorrow is never completely absent from the piper's pipe. In Experience, on the other hand, the Bard's voice is solemn and more deeply resonant, for the high-pitched joy of innocence is now only a memory. Within this gloom, though, lies the ember which can leap into flame at any moment to light the way to the highest innocence. Yet despite this difference in direction of their vision, both singers are imaginative, are what Blacke called the poetic or prophetic character. And though one singer uses mild and gentle numbers and the other more terrific tones, both see the imaginative (and symbolic) significance of all the activity in the songs. The explicit, Blacke said, "rouzes the faculties to act"⁸.

Hear the voice of the Bard!

Who present, past, and future sees,
Whose ears have heard
The Holy word,
That walk'd that walked among the ancient tree.

Innocence is belief and experience is doubt. The tragedy of experience is that we become incapable of love. The tragedy of childhood is that we inflict our lovelessness upon it. Blake's thinking is always organic; it is always directed to the hidden fountains of our humanity. Having never lost the creative freshness of childhood, he challenged experience with it.

Experience is the "contrary" of innocence, not its negation. Contraries are phases of the doubleness of all existence in the mind of man; they reflect the unalterable condition of the human struggle. As hell can be married to heaven, the body seen by the soul, so experience lifts innocence into a higher synthesis based on vision. But vision is impossible without truth to one's deepest feelings. A lie "the negation of passion". Life is thought and creation; it is to be only in its fullness, for the "want of thought" is death. To enter fully into life we must go through the flame of disbelief, kill the fiction that man's desire is lawless and evil. In Innocence, mercy has a human heart, pity a human face. In Experience, cruelty has a human head, and jealousy a human face.

Experience is blighted Innocence. It is not a period of horrible but healthy probation, a purgatory we must inevitably traverse enroute to the heavenly kingdom. It is a congregation of social, political, psychological, and unnatural horrors, a pestilential state whose vapors sicken the soul. The one ray of light that penetrates its darkness is that of the coming judgment that will destroy it⁹.

Now, let us look at some of Blake's Songs: some Songs of Innocence are in respective contrast to others from his Songs of Experience. "The first of those from the Songs of Innocence is a poem entitled The Lamb", which is in contrast to "The Tyger" in the Songs of Innocence. "Lamb" and "Tyger" are two opposing mentalities and social characters. The former symbolizes humanity while the latter is the representation of bestial existence. The lamb represents selflessness whereas the tyger symbolizes individualism and selfhood¹⁰. Both are prophetic characters but one sacrifices his self-experience and selfhood for others while the other indulges his own limited and selfish interest by turning against others. The power of the lamb springs from his relationship with others, with the "All". The tyger is the product of a jungle-like society where the weak is the prey of the strong and the one who possesses bestial passion becomes the strongest by restraining others. The lamb represents a social and human unity, the selfless state of the human soul. The poem itself secularizes divinity and universalizes humanity. The divine and human are one:

"He becomes a little child."

In simple language the speaker in "The Lamb", who is universalized to be anyone, identifies himself with the lamb he is addressing. The poem's figures are recognizably conventional: the lamb's wool is "clothing", his bleat that of a "voice". The "vales" of the poem "rejoice". The metaphors of stanza one do not intrude upon the reader's perception of the nature of the lamb, yet he is made aware of that which is human, as well. The conventional clothing figure takes on more meaning; "clothing of delight" becomes equivalent to what Blake calls the human form divine. The word "bright" is symbolic. "Bright" closes the gap between the lamb and the tiger. The tiger is "burning bright". His fire is the Fire of purgation, while the brightness of the lamb is that of purity. The two are related and become one, but the immediate effect of "bright" in "The Lamb" is less dramatic, a gesture with the simplicity of innocence.

The figure of rejoicing vales is in contrast with "The Tyger". The tiger lurks in the "forests of the night". His wrath ultimately purges the world of experience of its material form. But the lamb's surroundings are not "natural"; they are "human". The vales are alive, and the lamb's "voice" speaks to them. The tiger as well as the lamb are assimilated to the human form, and this requires the process of experience. The voice who provides the direct answers of "The Lamb", as compared to the rhetorical questions of "The Tyger", may be a child in the natural sense of that word, but we feel that he can be something more than that as well, that the poem is also an adult poem (a poem of Experience and of Innocence).

"The Tyger" is a poem of rather simple form, clearly proportioned, all of its statements contributing to a single, sustained, dramatic gesture. Read aloud, it is powerful enough to move listeners without their having much understanding of the poem beyond its expression of a dramatic situation. But there is a big gulf between simplicity and insipidity. The total force of the poem comes not only from its immediate rhetorical power but also from its symbolical structure.

The image of the tiger, at first sensuous, is to continued inspection symbolic. Things which burn brightly, even tigers, can be thought of as either purifying something or being purified. In the dark of night, in a forest, a tiger's eyes would seem to burn. The fire image suggests immediate violence and purgatorial revelation. The forests of the poem represent those mythological areas inhabited by blatant beasts, lost knights, and various spiritual wanderers and travelers. These forests belong to the night. There is a violent contrast between light and darkness, between the tiger and its surroundings, and the forest and the night are to be thought of in a derogatory way. The tiger, on the other hand, is presented ambiguously. In spite of its natural viciousness, it also suggests clarity and energy.

The forest is a symbol of the natural cycle of growth and decay in the fallen, natural world. It therefore represents not only spatial but also temporal enclosure. The stars are a part of the concave surface of the mundane shell where man is trapped, and their movements represent the delusory, mechanical aspects of time.

"The Tyger" is an account of the origins of the limited and terrifying world we inhabit. Blake's choice of words in the poem defines the self-centered and destructive individualism which has an independent and separate mind and body from others. The tyger represents a fallen man. He is a fallen character because of his individualistic selfishness which has divided him from others. The answer to the question posed in the poem is negative¹¹:

"Did he who made the Lamb make thee?" (the tyger)

No, he who made the lamb did not make the tyger. Who, then, made the tyger? We did with our fallen and limited perception that separates the universe from eternity and fills a world with threatening objects¹².

The second poem of Blak's Songs of Innocence that I will contrast with one of the same title from his Songs of Experience is entitled "The Chimney Sweeper". In the Songs of Innocence it is one of the finest poems in which the innocent view transcends adversity. In Eighteenth Century England, social inequality and low wages forced children of the poor to begin work at a very early age. They were cheap labour, easily replaceable and thus, readily exploited. Blake's chimney sweeper is a typical example of a child labourer.

"When my mother died I was very young,
And my Father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry " 'weep! 'weep! Weep!
So your chimeys I sweep, and in soot I sleep".

Tom, the chimney sweeper, dreams of an angel who has a "bright key" and sets all chimney sweepers free and who tells Tom that if he'd be a good boy, he'd have God for his Father. But, in the Songs of Experience God and his priest and king are held responsible as the cause of social inequality and misery:

"A Little black thing among the snow,
Crying, 'weep! 'weep! In notes of woe!
Where are thy father and mother? Say?
They are both gone up to the church to pray...
And are gone to praise God and his priest and King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery".

The innocent vision of this poem converts the harsh world into a world of shepherds and sheep. Tom Dacre has white hair as do lambs, and it "curls like a lamb's back". When this world cannot support the pastoral vision, Innocence transfers it into another life where chimney sweepers will sport like lambs:

"... down a green hill leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river and shine in the sun..."

and where they will have a loving Father who will be their shepherd¹³:

"... have God for Father and never want joy".

This other life is based on irrelevant moral statements but it is still an imaginative vision that is proof of our powers. "The Chimney Sweeper" possesses the ability to envision pastoral relationships, despite the harsh world he lives in, which is proof of his divinity.

In "The Chimney Sweeper" of the Songs of Experience, Blake attacks the Father. He is attacking the social system and the cultural authority which teach abstract moral laws but in practice are immoral and inhuman in their relationships with others. The true innocence sees that Father, God, Priest and King are set up as guardians and saviours are, in fact, the causes of evil and human misery. In this poem, the true innocence unveils the deceit and accuses "God and his Priest and King" of being responsible for this condition. The difference between these two poems is the contrast between what the ruling interests preach and what they practice.

The third poem of Blake's Song of Innocence that I would like to contrast with a poem of the same title in his Songs of Experience is "Nurse's Song". In the poem of the former work, Blake satirizes false innocence:

"When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still".

The satire is social. Blake's target is the social class whose literature is limited to recollection of their own childhood memories. Their "heart is at rest" while the same memories are repeated. The satire is directed against the limited and exclusive nature of experience rather than against the children. Blake satirizes the exclusive innocence of the few who claim their intellectual superiority and innocence by the recreation of their memories. By this satire, he in fact opposes the social condition itself; the gulf between the poor and the rich child.

The experience of the poor child and nurse in the Songs of Experience is different from that in the Songs of Innocence. In the poem of the latter, true innocence is constricted by the natural memories based on the senses and in the Songs of Experience true innocence is chained by poverty and by the appalling blight of the Church.

The difference between "Nurse's Song" in Songs of Innocence and of Experience is the difference in social conditions. In Innocence the nurse's "heart is at rest" when she hears the voices of the children on the green, but in Experience the nurse's "face turns green and pale" when she hears the voices of children. The appearance of unpleasant memories of her own childhood makes the nurse bitter and resentful towards other children. Neither of these two kinds of "innocence" so far discussed is true innocence. One is founded on

the basis of limited natural memories and individualism, the other is lost because of the absence of a genuine background. In other words, neither has achieved true freedom of imagination.

To further illustrate his point, Blake shows us that the contrary states of Innocence and Experience do exist in a single poem. In "A Dream" the contraries are manifested by the empty sigh of the father and by the selflessness and love of the glow-worm. That is, these two characters represent two contrary states of innocence: one is dynamic and active while the other is static and passive (the latter is represented by the Songs of Experience in their entirety). Thus, the Songs of Innocence and Experience each present two contrasts--concerning the poem "A Dream", true innocence (represented by the glow-worm) is in revolt against the contrary innocence (represented by the sigh of the father). Blake recognized these contrasts within the hypocrisy of society and within his own imagination.

Blake's poem "A Dream" has a counterpart in Experience, "The Angel". In the former, nature is portrayed as a kind of protective, universal, maternal love. The speaker of the poem has dreamed that "an Emmet lost its way" and wandered, haphazardly, near where the speaker lay. "Troubled, wildered, and folorn", the despondent Emmet expresses her woe to the speaker. Deeply touched by the Emmet's sorrow, the speaker "drops a tear". But, this pity soon dissipates when the speaker notices a "glow-worm near". It is this warm, friendly little fellow, the glow-worm, who will "set to light the ground" so as to guide the Emmet safely home. The glow-worm represents nature, which is the comforter of all who suffer and are lost in some way or another, like the Emmet.

In "The Angel", the speaker has also had a dream, which in this poem presents the opposite of that presented in "A Dream".

I Dreamt a Dream! What it can mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen:
Gaurded by an Angle mild;
Witless woe, was ne'er beguil'd!

The dream of the angel contains some of the terrors of experience: loss of innocence, sorrow and loss of youth.

Both poems prophesy possible states. If the speaker can read the signs of her dream she can avoid the loss that occurs in experience. She cannot, though, avoid experience. In "the Angel" the speaker is in a state of "witless woe" and "beguilement". Here, the word "beguile" means a kind of deception. In the second stanza, she describes how she actually preserves her selfhood through deceptive action: both night and day she weeps and conceals her heart's delight from the angel. So, the angel flies away from the speaker, who proceeds to arm her fears with "ten thousand shields and spears". That is, when the angel departs, she hardens herself against the world--she fears giving herself to others. Then,

when the angel returns, the speaker's defenses are stronger than ever. But, as she so harshly discovers in the last two lines of the poem, the intricate defenses, once built, have actually become her prison. How can she not express some kind of regret? The dreamer must interpret the dream in its rightful sense and live accordingly.

Blake's "London" reminds me of Dr. Samuel Johnson's "London", the imitation of Juvenal's third satire of the Roman Empire in Rome. Juvenal, in his third satire, attacks Rome, the place where social inferiorities grow rich by following contemptible jobs, and he gives in his satire a list of the hazards in Roman society. Dr. Johnson wrote his poem "London" in 1738 when he was twenty-eight, during which time he was strongly opposed to Walpol's government. Johnson was quite receptive to Juvenal's angry condemnation of vice and corruption in Roman Public life. The hard societal and governmental situation inspired the young Johnson to begin writing the great poem "London", attacking the aristocracy, the rich, the merchants the slaves of gold, oppression, covetousness and avarice.

SLOWRISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DEPRESSED

But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold.

"London", lines 185-86 and in spite of this, Johnson still says, "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life".

Blake's "London" parallels that of Johnson in that it describes the degeneration (blackness) of the city. In addition to this, he criticizes the hypocrisy of the Church. The politics of London is tyranny. Blake employs London's streets and lanes, "its filth and mire" and "its pathetic inhabitants" as symbols of desolation¹⁴.

The speaker of the poem is exploring London. What he sees is a vision of a debased society. Its streets are "charter'd" as its river, the Thames, which is an image of London's desolation. The word "charter'd" suggests artificial enclosure, both physical and theoretical. According to Blake, things are enclosed by being cast out.

In the poem, Blake has the citizens of London come alive and speak, cry or groan in its behalf. Since "London" is a speaking form, the poem is primarily one of *sound* because of its vivid sensuous images. The noises that the people make are also made by those who we envision to live in Hell. In other words, "London" is like Hell, but its people are not eternally damned as are those who have already descended into Hell. London's people are in fact redeemed because, for Blake, redemption is always possible. This is why Blake's prophet (the speaker of the poem) is so scornful of London because in order to speak of redemption, he feels first obliged to reveal the existing, fallen society¹⁵.

The cry of the chimney sweeper focuses attention upon the soot in which he must work on a day-to-day basis. This soot is symbolic in that it represents the "blackness" (degeneration) of London's society. It settles upon London's churches, which is quite symbolic because it draws attention to the "blackness": (hypocrisy) of the Church. Yes,

even the Church has become degenerate. The hypocrisy here is that the Church is appalled at what is taking place in London and yet, its theatrical reaction to this is clearly hypocritical. Even though the Church wants oppression to cease, by being passive, it encourages its spread¹⁶.

Blake's "London" is climaxed in the fourth stanza when the harlot's curse is heard above the sounds of the city. Her curse is a symbol of how infected her society is. It is a stroke against the hypocrisy of her time. The harlot's curse is, therefore, a figure for the venereal disease that "blasts the new born infant's tear" and "blights with plagues the marriage hearse". London holds ancient charters which grant certain liberties, but these are not extended to most of the inhabitants. The Magna Carta of 1215 is famous as a guarantee of liberty, hence the "chartered rights of Englishmen". To charter was also coming to mean "to limit" or "to hire". In drafting the poem Blake first tried the adjective "dirty".

Although manacles are objectively real, Blake's compound adjective emphasize states of mind that give rise to the manacles-primarily the authorities of church and state, perhaps also the twisted minds of the compliant victims. In first drafting the poem Blake had tried "German forged", suggesting the tyranny of the German or Hanoverian King George III and also the German mercenaries employed by the crown.

The verbal curse becomes a metaphor for the plague of gonorrhoea, which can cause blindness at birth. The birth of infants into the present moral system is a birth into death, and marriage is a hearse of death that the couple should be taken in from the wedding.

In summation, I would, once again, like to reiterate that William Blake did a superb job in his illustration (both written and artistic) of the two contrary states of the human soul. Innocence should be considered the primary state, the norm by which Experience is evaluated; for Innocence represents what life ought to be like and which indeed can be like. Blake's Innocence is a condition of total animation in nature, which he most appropriately represented with a prolific garden. Its poems are set against certain songs of Experience which themselves employ the symbols of nature in their fallen forms and which build up the picture of a false garden which contains the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

As I have previously said, Blake speaks on behalf of the world. Thus, the Songs of Innocence and Experience contain two conflicting loves and interests in which the prophetic character, Blake himself, sides with the innocent and meek against the selfish ruling interests.

END NOTE:

-
- ¹ Jean H. Hagstrum, *William Blake: Poet and Printer*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 77.
 - ² G. R. Sabri-Tabrizi, *The Heaven and Hell of William Blake*. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1973), p. 25.
 - ³ Victor N. Paananen. *William Blake*. (Boston: A Division of G. K. Hall & Co., 1977), p. 74

 - ⁵ *Ibid.*
 - ⁶ Max Plowman, *An Introduction to the Study of William Blake*. (London: Frank Cass. & Co. Ltd., 1967), p. 40.
 - ⁷ Paananenm, p. 75.
 - ⁸ Gleckner, *The Piper and the Bard*, Wayne State University Press, 1959, p. 312.
 - ⁹ Jean H. Hagstrum, *William Blake: Poet and Painter*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1964, pp. 78-87.
 - ¹⁰ Sabri-Tabrizi, p. 35.
 - ¹¹ Sabri-Tabrizi, p, 37.
 - ¹² Paananen, p. 79.
 - ¹³ Paananem, p. 76.
 - ¹⁴ Adams, Paul. *William Blake: A Study of the Shorter Poems*, pp. 280-81.
 - ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 281.
 - ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- Adams, Paul. *William Blake: A Study of the Shorter Poems*. Bloomington: Indiana UP. 1993.
- Almond, Philip C. *Heaven and Hell in Enlightenment England*. Cambridge: Cambridge, 1994.
- Blake, William. *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*. Ed. David V. Erdman. New York: Doubleday, 1988.
- Byron, George Gordon, Lord. *Blake Studies* 8.2 (1979): 146-65. London: John Murray, 1973-1980.
- Cooper, Andrew M. *Doubt and Identity in Romantic Poetry*. New Haven: Yale, UP. 1988.
- Eaves, Morris. *The Counter-Arts Conspiracy: Art and Industry in the Age of Blake*. Ithaca UP, 1991.
- Ferber, Michael. *The Social Vision of William Blake*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985.
- Glenker, Robert F. *The Piper and Bard*, Wayne State University Press, 1959.
- Hagstrum, Jean H. *William Blake: Poet and Printer*. Chicago, 1964.
- Johnson, Mary Lynn, and John E. Grant, ed. *Blake's Poetry and Designs*. Norton, London, 1979.
- Lockridge, Laurence. S. *The Ethics of Romanticism*. Cambridge: UP, 1989.
- Paananen, Victor N. *William Blake*. Boston, 1977.
- Plawman, Max. *An Introduction to the Study of William Blake*.

Priestman, Martin. *Romantic Atheism: Poetry and Freethought 1780-1830*. Cambridge: UP, 1999.

Raine, Kathleen. *Blake and Tradition, Volume I*. Princeton: UP, 1968.

Sabri-Tabrizi, G. R. *The Heaven and Hell of William Blake*. London: 2009.

Swedenborg, Emanuel, *Heaven and Hell*. 1758. Tran. George F. Dole. West Chester: Swedenborg Foundation, 1998.

William, Nicholas M. *Ideology and Utopia in the Poetry of William Blake*. Cambridge, UP, 2010.

Yolton, John W. *Thinking Matter: Materialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Minneapolis: Minnesota, P, 2011.