

Postgraduate English

www.dur.ac.uk/postgraduate.english

ISSN 1756-9761

Issue 23

September 2011

Editors: Naomi Marklew and Jack Baker

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This paper will investigate the conceptual influence of three mystical thinkers, Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus and to a lesser extent, Emmanuel Swedenborg upon the works of William Blake and specifically explains the common themes they share with regards to an understanding of psychic growth and disturbance. The reason that this is important is that critics supporting the psychoanalytical thesis have tended to impose their ideas on the works of Blake, without considering theories of the mind that predated and informed Blake’s psychological system. As the article will demonstrate there are other Blake scholars who have investigated, for example, Blake’s apparent echoing of vocabulary from the writings of the mystic philosophers and the themes of social conflict and ideas pertaining to Creation, Fall and Redemption found in Boehme. However, there has not been a full investigation of Blake’s appropriation of Paracelsus’ and Boehme’s ideas with application to his investigation of human psychology.

It should be noted that Carl Jung also studied Paracelsus, Boehme and Emmanuel Swedenborg, each of whom informed the works of the psychoanalyst, who was interested in the teachings of the mystical and alchemical traditions throughout his career.^[1] Jung’s ideas were referred to in the debates of archetypal literary criticism, which have continued in some form from the 1930s onwards and have contributed to an understanding of archetypal patterns in literature.^[2] Sigmund Freud’s theories did not bear a mystical influence but his ideas have been related to those of Blake, without investigating the other essentially diverse influences that shaped the poet’s work on the psyche. The critical impositions on Blake’s work have had the effect of distorting the meaning of Blake’s own perspective on

psychic disturbance and have infected the tenets of what I suggest is a system that analyses psychic processes in minute detail. This article seeks to advance an interrogation of the ideas of the aforementioned mystical thinkers and furthers the critical analysis of psychoanalytical theory in relation to Blake.

Introduction

Many texts on the subject of the relationships between Blake and psychoanalysis have been written in Blake studies. It is not possible to highlight all of these but what follows is an overview of the kinds of issues that have been addressed. In an article entitled, 'Blake and Freud: Poetry and Depth Psychology' (1972) by Daniel Majdiak and Brian Wilkie, the question of the source material of Freud's work is discussed and Freudian material specifically found in Blake's writing is selected. The writers state that they have found, "a strikingly full anticipation of psychoanalytic theory in a poet who lived a hundred years before Freud" and "the imaginative embodiment of nineteenth-century depth psychology has not been given its due".^[3] Also, in Brenda Webster's *Blake's Prophetic Psychology*, there is an attempt to understand how Freudian interpretations of Blake's writing reflect Blake's own psychological preoccupations.^[4] This is not an unknown approach in Blake studies, as it can be found with application to Carl Jung's ideas in June Singer's earlier book entitled *The Unholy Bible*, which seeks to explore Jung's symbolism and its relationships to Blake's verbal and visual imagery in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, while also psychoanalysing Blake through the medium of his writing.^[5] I would suggest that the difficulty with this approach is that what it states as being present in Blake's poetry, either for the purposes of making sense of the man or his writing, is not to be found in the later twentieth century psychoanalytical systems. In other words, a perfect equation between the ideas of Freud and Jung and those of Blake is not apparent as Blake's symbolism both changes and grows over time and involves elements that relate to the poet's own private mythology. One example that is cited in scholarly works is what is known as the "Oedipal Family Romance", present in Blake's descriptions of characters who the poet calls Los, Enitharmon and Orc. Orc is the son of Los and

Enitharmon who, in terms of Blake's perspective on human psychology, represent aspects of the psyche. For example, Los has often been equated with the imagination and Orc, his son, is what has been called a "fire character", and one who has been referred to as Freud's Oedipal son. Orc is chained to a rock and Blake refers to this as the, "Chain of Jealousy", which when Orc pulls on it begins to grow and chains him even more tightly to the earth.^[6] With this and other scenarios in mind, Webster has written that, "through the medium of his work, [Blake] forced himself or was drawn into earlier and earlier life-stages in his efforts to resolve his Oedipal dilemma. Father-and-son conflict is the most pervasive of his themes, but equally powerful are his images of developmentally earlier needs and fears" and, "Each [infantile] stage evoked by Blake has its own cluster of body-images that vividly suggest the relations, noted by Freud, between infantile sexuality and certain character-traits and ideas".^[7] The problem with such an interpretation, in relation to Orc, for example, is that the character is first discovered in Blake's writing as a force of revolutionary endeavour, connoted by the symbolism of 'unembodied' fire. However, the idea of Orc as representing an infantile Freudian stage does not come to mind in such a context. Secondly, "the Chain of Jealousy" recurs throughout the mythology and it becomes reapplied in other contexts and poems. For example, in first referring to it in *The Book of Urizen*, Blake states that '[Los and Enitharmon] chain'd [Orc's] young limbs to a rock / With the Chain of Jealousy' and some years later in *The Four Zoas* Blake explains that 'young limbs had stricken root / ...Fibres had from the Chain of Jealousy inwove themselves / ...round the rock & round the Cave'.^[8] Thirdly, the figure of Enitharmon undergoes transformations, so that even in single long poems by Blake she acts as a twin, Los's consort and an inspiration for the poetic Los, and is considered by S. Foster Damon as representative of "spiritual beauty".^[9] Thus, to view her as one figure in a Freudian psycho-drama might be seen as undervaluing her capacities within Blake's mythology. Freud's ideas have also been equated with Blake's by Diana Hume George in her book, *Blake and Freud* in which she splits her pages in such a way that passages from Blake are compared with those of Freud. Again, I would argue that such attempts are

suggestive of only an apparent match and that in looking at them for some time, the lack of connection between them becomes clear. It should also be noted that sometimes authors become confused about Blake's identity as an artist living at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century to the extent that they write about Blake as being *influenced* by Freud. I would argue that it is the reader, who in having lived through a lifetime or a career of psychoanalytical theory, becomes subject to that *influence*.

For such reasons, I think it is important to understand the ideas that influenced Blake and that laid the foundations for his own system of thought about psychic disturbance. What I wish to offer is a review of Blake's psychological system that explores the salient, root ideas of this system rather than contaminating it with the language of twentieth century psychology. Blake's interest indeed focuses on such subjects as dreams, anger, jealousy and unrequited love and, for this reason, parallels between Blake and the psychoanalysts have been the subject of critical enquiry. However, Blake's acquaintance with the mystical writers and the effect of their ideas upon his appraisal of mental disturbance requires further appreciation in Blake studies. For example, using the language of psychoanalysis, Mary Lynn Johnson and Brian Wilkie have discussed the dream imagery of Blake's long poem *The Four Zoas*^[10] but it can be argued that *Swedenborg's Dreams* were more influential in Blake's period, especially as Swedenborg was influenced by Jacob Boehme.^[11] It would also make more sense to consider the fact that as Jacob Boehme's works were published in England and were accessible in Blake's period, and feature imagery that appears at those points in Blake's work where he is describing mental dysfunction, it is important to examine such imagery further.

The Mystical Critical Tradition

Firstly, I would like to outline the writings of major Blake scholars on the subject of Blake, Boehme and Paracelsus to clarify the contexts of debate. Northrop Frye establishes the fact that Blake "follows some of the Gnostics and Boehme in believing that the fall of man involved a fall in part of the divine nature" in order

to explain the origin of evil.^[12] Thus, Frye argues that “the conclusion for Blake, and the key to much of his symbolism, is that the fall of man and the creation of the physical world were the same event”.^[13] Frye emphasizes Boehme’s and Blake’s concern with the origin of evil and traces the concept of the “indwelling light” from the Anabaptists in Germany through Boehme and into Quaker worship in England, and William Blake in his “theory of the creative imagination”.^[14] For Frye, this theory was the most influential idea of the “occultists” upon the “humanists” but he also argues that there are relationships between Boehme’s stage-by-stage analysis of the “Fall” and that of Blake.^[15] According to Frye, the wrath of God, his subsequent fragmentation into Satanic and Adamic parts and the need for visionary escape from Blake’s concept of ‘Selfhood’ or blinding egotism is the centre-piece of Boehme’s vision and has its correlates in Blake.^[16] Frye describes Paracelsus as not being very influential upon Blake and valorizes Boehme’s alchemical knowledge over that of Paracelsus, and offers a suggestion that certain of Boehme’s concepts like “lust” and “Sude” or “sin” find their equivalents in Blake’s characters.^[17]

The counter-argument and one that I explore in this article is that Paracelsus’ influence upon Boehme relates, through his intense interest in alchemical writings and symbolism, to a consideration of the potential of the imagination to transform the psyche. In addition, ideas in Paracelsus have just as much in common with Blake’s archetypal characters, and this will be explored later in the article as both Blake’s emphasis on the imagination and archetypes derive from a tradition of alchemical philosophy, which greatly occupied both Paracelsus and Boehme. In this regard, the Blake scholar, David Erdman has also referred to the fact that Boehme’s notion of evil as “necessary to the manifestation of God’s goodness” is incorporated into “Blake’s world-view” and he in fact chooses to stress the importance of Paracelsus in referring to his emphasis “on the interaction of the opposites forming the alchemical unity of generation”.^[18] To support Blake’s reading of Boehme, Erdman also usefully details the fact that, “in 1779 the name ‘Mr William Blake’ appears in a list of subscribers to *Discourses on Various*

Subjects by Jacob Duche...who had long been interested in ‘the mysticism of Jacob Behmen and William Law’ and who was to become ‘interested in the visions of Swedenborg in the early 1780s’.^[19] Erdman also states that in both Paracelsus and Boehme “there is a full and entire heaven in every man...which yet corresponds to each man’s specificity [or] a flow of energy”.^[20] This connection is further developed by Robert N. Essick in his attempt to argue that Blake mirrors Boehme’s concept of universal brotherhood from the *Aurora*. Essick indicates that both Blake and Boehme reflect on the fact that god can be found within everybody, whatever the nature of their religious persuasion. Again, this relates to Blake’s concept of the imagination and the possibility that selfhood that acts as a barrier to unity and harmony between men, can be overcome. The main ideas of the origin of evil, alchemical archetypes, imagination as a positive force, the notion of contraries and selfhood have all been the subject of critical focus in discussing the effect of Paracelsus and Boehme on Blake. As Boehme and Paracelsus are concerned with how the divine manifests itself in the human being, Blake scholarship has argued that there is a need to relate these concepts to Blake’s humanism due to his notion that transcendentalist ideas of god advanced in the eighteenth century had to be expunged. However, ideas relating to the framework of the psyche have been overlooked, and it is my argument that while scholarship has referred to the nature of theological debate within Blake, Boehme and Paracelsus it has stopped short of investigating the psychic archetypal imagery between the mystical thinkers and Blake. While the language of mystical philosophy is sometimes echoed in the later vocabulary of Blake and Freud (Boehme’s contemplation of ‘desire’) and Jung (contraries, four personality types), Blake’s conceptualisation of such notions is altogether different from each of these thinkers. Parallels between Blake and the later phase of Jung’s alchemical psychology and his notion of personality types can be established but they remain as parallels rather than precise equivalents and Blake’s reference to desire relates more to Boehme than Freud and even then is used in a way that is unique to Blake. Later critical works on Boehme by Bryan Aubrey and Kevin Fischer have rigorously explored the language of Boehme and how it manifests itself in the

writings and illustrations of Blake.^[21] These works have been immensely helpful in explaining the difficult concepts that can be found in Boehme, such as the ‘Ungrund’ and the dialectical and violent growth of ‘principles’ that emerge from this state and attempt to find precise parallels in Blake. However, once again, the theological interrelationships are outlined at the expense of focusing on relationships that infer psychic content and this is categorically important as the precise detailing of Blake’s system of mental processes, disturbances and search for psychic health has yet to be undertaken.^[22] I will therefore explore the interconnections between the imagery of the mystic philosophers and those of Blake in relation to their analysis of the psyche, which the critical tradition has failed to explore.

Why Boehme Matters

While Emmanuel Swedenborg, as an observer of visionary experience offered a range of symbolism that both explained and, to some extent, accorded with Blake’s own insights, his notion of psychic equilibrium struck Blake as a static, rather than a dynamic contemplation of mental phenomena. In unfavourably comparing Swedenborg with Paracelsus and Boehme, Blake not only reveals that “Swedenborg...has written all the old falsehoods” but also demonstrates a predilection for the profundity of an earlier strain of mystical thought. As Blake argues “any man of mechanical talents may from the writings of Paracelsus or Jacob Behmen, produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with Swedenborg”.^[23] These allusions in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* demonstrate Blake’s preference for Boehme and Paracelsus at a time when Blake had recognized that Swedenborg was repeating theological truisms. It would suggest that Blake had need of richer visionary material to inspire his own philosophy and to expand upon his early insights concerning human consciousness.^[24]

One of William Blake’s first major attempts at making sense of ideas concerning mental processes can be viewed in *The First Book of Urizen*. The Urizenic “insanity” is that of solipsism, wherein the protagonist of rationalism, Urizen, the

everyman representative of the scientific professional of the Enlightenment, is presented as insane in his desire to measure the world around him in terms of his own laws. For Blake, the results of this wish are necessarily detrimental due to the crushing of the imagination. Blake's concern is the death of the imagination and this presents him with a chief cause of mental disturbance that he proceeds to investigate in the figures of Urizen, Albion and the Spectre in later works. Albion is Blake's Universal everyman figure, while the Spectre is the negative 'Rational Power' and within Albion the psychic elements known as the Zoas reside.

In Blake's *Urizen*, the body is fragmented in such a way that it becomes formless, and alien, which is significant as Blake's later mythologies expand upon this curious image. For example, Albion becomes Urizenic in his disposition in *Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion*, wherein this fragmentation is visualised in Blake's engraved plates. The psychological process that underlies this is explored in much greater detail than in *Urizen* and involves an extension of ideas that are borrowed from the writings of Jacob Boehme, the mystic Christian thinker, in four main ways. Firstly, Boehme is interested in the state of what he calls the "Ungrund" or nothingness (which is a void at the beginning of creation) and is mirrored in the story of Urizen as growing in the form of an alien mutation in what may be considered as the first days of man's psychic life. Secondly, Blake describes Urizen as a solipsistic giant suffering at the heart of a void, which can also be related to the ideas of Jacob Boehme, as the mystic focused upon the void of creation that produces a state of anxiety. Thirdly, Blake uses the image of wheels in his poetry and art, which is significant because in one of Boehme's works called *Aurora* there is a long description of wheels that turn in various directions like a multi-directional cog. For Blake, wheels are representative of mental processes. In section 20 of *Aurora*, Boehme refers to the four wheels in Ezekiel and continues to describe his version of this image in sections 86 – 112. In Blake, the "Eyes of God" are discovered in the wheels of the whirlwind, but Boehme points out that this vision of Ezekiel produces wheels that simply go in one direction, and falls short of the fact that the wheels, as the spirits of God,

actually go in several directions all at once. Finally, there is a stage-by-stage explanation of the cosmos in Boehme's theogony, which presents the idea that anxiety feeds off itself. These ideas require further elucidation as they are crucial to an understanding of Boehme's influence on Blake's psychological system and I would like to begin with Boehme's conception of the void or the "Ungrund" in relation to Blake.

Boehme contemplated the expansion of the divine consciousness as not taking place without the presence of conflicting forces. The notion of fire emerging from the darkness of the "Ungrund" and giving rise to light featured consideration of the counter-forces of "Desire" and "Will". As Boehme states, natural beings are "nothing without contrariety" and, as with the psyche, the "divine will" must seek and desire itself.^[25] Blake echoed this in his poem, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* with his line, 'Without contraries there is no progression', which is a fundamental aspect of his philosophy. Boehme further argues that, "In nature, there is one thing always set opposite to another, the one to be the enemy of the other"^[26] and this is the reason there is a conflict between "Desire" and "Will" in the heart of the "Ungrund".^[27] In the flames of the frontispiece of Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Boehme's "dark fire-world" and "light fire-world" feature due to the fact that this *coincidentia oppositorum* attracted Blake, just as it received the attention of later psychoanalytical thinkers, such as Carl Jung.^[28] "Wrath", the forces of "Will" and "Desire", with the resulting conflicts to which these give rise are to be found throughout Blake's myth.

The Psychic System

There are clear interrelationships between Boehme's mystical symbolism, which investigates such layers of psychic reality as "angst" and "wrath", Blake's "rage & hunger" of Albion's sons and the anger of Los's Spectre in the first book of *Jerusalem*. The Spectre is an ever-present and menacing danger to the psychic health of man and capable of overwhelming the entire psyche. In *Jerusalem*, Blake presents a disturbing portrayal of the fragmentation of Albion, the "Universal Man". Albion, the psychic reality of every man, suffers himself to

commit several errors, which have a direct bearing on his levels of despair.^[29] Blake emphasizes the “sleep” into which Albion falls that becomes exacerbated with the accumulation of spiritual errors, and makes the psychic condition of Albion worse, as he splits into different parts. Similarly, Boehme’s “angst” is at the heart of the “Ungrund” and, as a result of internal conflicts, it splits into competing elements that produce other ‘properties’ leading from the darkness of consciousness to a visionary zenith.^[30] For Boehme, growth results from several types of opposition and conflicts and signifies developments within the microcosm. Although Blake does not describe his debt to Boehme in extensive detail, the structure and symbolism of his vision in *Jerusalem* echoes and sometimes evokes specific parallels and comparisons. In order to highlight them, it is necessary to explore the psychic evolution that one encounters in the respective systems of Blake and Boehme. The overall structure is one of disintegration, annihilation and regeneration and the first of these is explored in the first book of *Jerusalem*.

Albion, much like Boehme’s “Ungrund”, is first encountered living “outside of existence” on his couch.^[31] The first troublesome sign is that his “pathos” is masked by reason in the form of a Spectre and his emanation, or consort named Jerusalem is lying stone-like beneath his couch. Blake indicates that the Spectre holds sway due to the fact that “Half friendship” falls short of producing love, which is required to rid man of his spectral rationalism, a begetter of enmity between men.^[32] W.J.T. Mitchell, in discussing Blake’s visual art, argues that the objective imagery of the illuminations describes the psychic interior of man, so that when Urizen interacts with his environment, he is actually interacting with a part of himself.^[33] With this view of projection in mind, it is demonstrable in Blake’s *Jerusalem* that both the landscape of the worlds inhabited by Albion, Los, and their sons and daughters is a representation of their own shifting psychic realities. This is one reason that *Jerusalem* has posed a challenge for scholars and critics. In a world of shifting psychic realities, relationships between these perspectives are open to question, as no particular representation can be seen in

isolation, but as part of a matrix of ever-changing possibilities.^[34] However, in order to understand this world of psychic disintegration, it is necessary to attempt to plot these shifts in perspective. The differing perspectives that compete in *Jerusalem*, such as Los's Spectre in contention with Los, or Albion's daughters in opposition to the Daughters of Beulah, or the sons in opposition to Los's offspring present a world of striving wills and diverse aspects of the psyche that are at war.^[35] As Christopher Rowland states, '[*The Four Zoas*] is essentially an exploration of human psychology in which each creature becomes a multi-faceted aspect of the human personality. It is about the warfare between the different parts of the human character'.^[36]

Psychic injuries resulting from the conflicts within Albion accord with the fracturing influence of "Desire" and "Will" in Boehme's work, as represented in the *Aurora*, for example. However, this depiction is such that the fractures are multitudinous in structure, and crucially interrelated, evoking the idea that each cog of psychic reality pushes against another, and acquires its own energy from the other. The "system" of psychic reality in Boehme is also multi-directional, just as it is in Blake's vision, as the passage describing the great wheel in the *Aurora* contains several wheels within it, that do not, as Boehme emphasizes, simply go forward and backwards, as the chariot wheels in Ezekiel, but travel in all directions.^[37] This concept of 'wheel without wheel' is represented in detail in *Jerusalem*, as the passages that describe Albion's despair, express in Blake's imagery of "the Starry Wheels", "Wheels" and "Voids" a mechanistic Newtonian universe.^[38] The imagery is Newtonian, but "the dark Satanic Mills" and wheels are collections of imagery that formulate a psychic reality produced through their interrelationships.

These influences of Boehme on Blake predate the findings of psychoanalysis and I would argue that in some measure they contribute to an alternative psychic system. The idea that consciousness itself is a battleground for competing forces, where nodal points are scattered throughout the psyche finds its expression within Boehme and Blake's wheel and vortex imagery. In Boehme's *Aurora*, he refers to

the nave that is the Christ, generating the spokes of a wheel, or the Holy Ghost, which contains seven other wheels, contained in a globe-like structure:

The [fountain *spirits*] generate in the seven wheels in each wheel a nave, and yet there are not seven naves, but *one* only, which fitteth in all the seven wheels: This is the heart or *innermost* body of the wheels, wherein the wheels run about, and that signifieth the *Son* of God.^[39]

Philip Wheelwright has stated that the “wheel...symbolizes perfect and self-sufficient motion”, and in Boehme’s conception of the wheel imagery to describe the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, each wheel within the one wheel produces the other, but is unified.^[40] In Blake, the “Eyes of God” are discovered in the wheels of the whirlwind, but Boehme points out that this vision of Ezekiel produces wheels that simply go in one direction, and falls short of the fact that the wheels, as the spirits of God actually go in several directions all at once.

Boehme’s spirits or “Wheels” are hidden within each other and produce one another, providing a parallel with the fact that the spirits of Blake climb out of chests, heads, and backs. They are also broken, deformed, compressed, or enlarged, and as complexes that form the psychic life of an individual, they are amorphous in a way that accords with Carl Jung’s descriptions. For Jung, the “complex” is associated with the personal unconscious and the archetype with the collective unconscious. He states “as long as the archetype is an invisible nodal point still resting in the unconscious, it belongs not to the psyche but only to the psychoid realm”.^[41] The psychoid realm lies beyond the psyche and there are invisible elements of the psyche, just as there are invisible characters in Blake. However, the elements of Boehme’s wheel, as that which constitutes the Godhead, the spirits of God and Christ, are visible at all times. Boehme summarizes this in the image “Thus God is one God, with seven qualifying or fountain spirits one in another, where always one generateth the others, and yet it is but one God, just as these seven wheels are but one wheel”.^[42] Visibility of the self, as depicted in the wheels that are never hidden, is important in Boehme, and

crucial to its development, but in the first properties that he describes, the self is hidden from itself, and this is an abnormal condition that needs to be resolved. The Jungian psyche, in its diseased form, occurs when the complexes break out and dominate the personal conscious, but he insists that “confrontation with the complexes of the collective unconscious can renew the psyche”.^[43] In a revealing comment by S. Foster Damon the behaviour of Blake’s emanations, which are the female consorts of the Zoas, was considered to mirror the behaviour of those people with split personalities. This is similar to Jung’s system where each complex is explained as having a personality of its own that congregates within a “nodal point”.

Blake makes use of this fusion of imagery in several key ways. Firstly, there is the concept in Boehme arising from his complex imagery of the system of wheels within wheels that the spirits of God are everywhere. Blake’s use of the wheel imagery is what arises in his consideration of the psyche but in the fallen nature the wheel acts as a symbol of mechanized despair, wherein Albion’s sons wreak havoc. The wheels are not used as the spirits of god that revitalize the godhead but those that devour the energies of the Universal Man, and the ubiquity apparent in Boehme is felt with God’s presence within the wheels, as he “[fixes] their Systems, permanent”.^[44] God is with Los in his weakness, that is, his division, cloaking the “body [of] Falshood” in order to allow it to be “annihilated”.^[45] The capacity to annihilate is provided by the godhead, the self healing itself, as indicated by Jung in his conception of the dual aspect of the complex. The godhead or the self has become aware of itself and is attempting to heal the psychic disarray caused by the “evil” aspect of the complex. Jolande Jacobi, in summarising Jung’s argument, states that “the disturbances” essential to the development of mental disease “are of an intrapsychic nature and originate in a realm which is beyond the objective control of the conscious mind and which manifests itself only when the threshold of attention is lowered”.^[46] Due to the lowering of the conscious threshold, psychic disarray, as associated with

dissociation or the lapses of multiple personality disorder, is experienced, but in Blake's portrayal of a healing self, the dual aspect of the complex is revealed.

Blake and Swedenborg

While critics such as Brenda Webster construe Blake's references to sexual matters in strictly Freudian terms, I would argue that Blake's allusions to sexual imagery have a more definite source in the sexually oriented writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg. It has been noted by Peter Otto that Emmanuel Swedenborg's sexual philosophy influenced Blake's visual and verbal art, as in the cultivation of what Blake referred to as the "Sexual Machine: an Aged Virgin Form"^[47], a description and drawing in *The Four Zoas* that depicts the psycho-physiological concerns of the poet.^[48] Further to this, Blake's own mother attended Moravian services that involved ceremonies known as "love-feasts", a form of ecstatic meditation that attracted Swedenborg when he witnessed Moravian practices.^[49] Marsha Keith Schuchard explains that:

In the eighteenth century [the Moravians] studied the alchemical writings of Jacob Boehme...whose 'Sophia Mysticism' opened the door to new thinking about sexuality and divinity. Through these works, the intensely passionate [Moravian leader] Zinzendorf learned that Christianized versions of Kabbala provided a spiritualizing of sexuality that was emotionally and intellectually liberating.^[50]

With the evolution of Blake's canon the complexity of such sexual imagery, as inherited from the works of Swedenborg, under the influence of Boehme spiritualisation of sexuality gradually becomes more pronounced. In *The Book of Ahania*, Urizen's loins are cleaved in two, exposing his lust, jealousy and releasing Ahania, his archetypal "sin", who becomes the subject of his jealousy. Due to his possessiveness, Ahania is reduced to "a faint shadow" and is cast into "chaos" and becomes a "death-shadow / Unseen, unbodied, unknown".^[51] Ahania is not simply a part of Urizen, his emanation or consort and an aspect of his sexual identity but is his "parted soul", reduced to a dark shadow by the poison of

jealousy.^[52] The image of Urizen's genitalia sliced in two, the destructiveness of jealousy and the references to a horned serpent of lustful thought signify the weaknesses of the sex-driven ego. The poisoned rock, which Urizen shoots at Fuzon, lands in Arabia, as Mount Sinai, the site of the Ten Commandments. Here, Blake establishes the fact that Morality results from sexual knowledge, or sins of the soul and is born of violent internal conflict, growing as it does "in the Human Brain". The bow from which the rock is shot is in fact the "nerve of that lust form'd monster", the dragon.^[53] In this scene, Urizen's Ahanian self flees from his genitals and his lustful thought provides the poison that destroys the wrathful energy of Fuzon. Even Urizen's lust-filled and jealous thoughts are depicted as eggs that burst into an "unnatural production" of a spawn of creatures, the implication being that sexually charged, spectral ideas can multiply and enter into conflict with their progenitor. Such ideas find expression in Swedenborg's philosophy which discusses psycho-sexual matters and sexual potency in detail. Psycho-sexuality, as expressed in the eighteenth century and borrowed from practices in India and the East is concerned with the awakening of the divine within the human body, which can be explored within a Paracelsan context.

Blake's Paracelsan Self

Boehme, Blake and Paracelsus find accord in a consideration of God within, expressed through man's desire to dismiss spiritual corruption. For Paracelsus, health depended on five active principles – the ens astral, ens veneni, ens natural, ens spiritual and the ens dei. Paracelsus' interest in aspects of the Ens, breaks existence down into its component influences: the stars, other people, oneself, the spirit, and the will of God.^[54] Existence consists of these aspects and they constitute the influences upon the human economy, and explain the diseases which afflict the mind and body. Blake's system incorporates the stars (these might be interpreted as souls in the works of Paracelsus and Blake), other people (Blake's enemy, Scofield, his wife Catherine etc.), oneself (imagination) and the spirit and will of God (Christ). Blake refers to the negation of the term once in *Jerusalem* "the all tremendous unfathomable Non Ens / Of Death", which is

significant, as it suggests a term borrowed from mystical or even Buddhist literature, relating as it does to conceptualizations of Nirvana and desire.^[55] In his poetry, Blake clings to the concept of the Ens, or the identity which is existent, arguing that desire is eternal and as man always desires he too is infinite, as is apparent in *There is No Natural Religion* in which Blake argues that “The desire of Man being Infinite the possession is Infinite & himself Infinite”. The subject of desire is explored in Blake’s depiction of a love-sick couple called Tharmas, who is one of the Zoas and his consort, Enion. In the figures of Tharmas and Enion, Blake’s later treatment of the implications of desire consider the possibility that desire can lead to a state of Non-Ens or a death-in-life state.

Kathleen Raine has considered the term Non-Ens in relation to the natural world, and the concept of non-entity as summarized in the plight of Enion, the consort or emanation of the Zoa, Tharmas. She states that the “name [of Enion] suggests the Platonic non-ens”, as her fate is to hover on the periphery of her own spiritual demise. Primarily, this diminution and threat of non-entity, or final eradication of identity, arises from a thwarted desire for Tharmas in *The Four Zoas*.^[56] The implication is that excessive desire and the concept of non-entity are closely affiliated, and Enion’s fate is a consistently realized depiction of this fact. The later depiction of Enion, and Blake’s later suspicions regarding the sexual sphere of existence, suggest that contaminated desire can lead to Non-Ens, as desires, fed by reason, proliferate to a point where the human identity disappears. The same problem is addressed in Albion’s desires for Vala, which leads him to a point outside himself whereby his own battle to overcome the selfhood is forgotten. The implication is that in not remaining conscious of the self, and becoming lost in a rationalizing desire, the illusions of the self prove to be overwhelming. If the Ens are not in balance they can lead to illness or disease.

The “Scaiolae”

Imagination is vital in protecting the mind against disease and, in Paracelsus’ works it is a faculty that allows man to explore the world within his microcosm. Jung explains Paracelsus’ allusions to the content of the human imagination:

Ruland, who had a wide knowledge of the contemporary Paracelsist literature, defines [the Scaiolae] as 'spiritual powers of the mind' (spirituales mentis vires), qualities and faculties which are fourfold, to correspond with the four elements ... The Scaiolae [or Scaiolve], he says, originate in the mind of man, 'from whom they depart and to whom they are turned back'.^[57]

Paracelsus asserts that "There is no mortality in the Scaiolve. He who lives according to their manner, he is immortal; this I prove by means of the Enochdiani and their followers".^[58] It is possible to surmise that Paracelsus also provided Blake with his architecture of the self in the notion of the Scaiolae, four mental powers that find some accord with Blake's Zoas in being described as fantasy, imagination, reason and "agnata fide".^[59] These suggest ideas that Blake might have incorporated into his archetypal figures of Luvah, Los, Urizen and Tharmas. In *Hidden Mutualities*, Michael Mitchell has clarified some of the Paracelsan terminology stating that "Melusina, the vision appearing in the mind" will remain in "another transmutation" if "the inner man", who controls the Scaiolae, approves which finds its parallels in Blake's depiction of Albion's dominance over Jerusalem.^[60] Jung mentions that the Scaiolae are charged with helping to reform the Anthropos and this is expressed to some extent in Blake's depiction of "Urthonas Spectre", who tried to keep "the Divine Vision in time of trouble".^[61] According to Mitchell's analysis, Paracelsus's Adech, "the inner man" decides the fate of the Zoas, but in Blake's *Jerusalem*, Albion loses control of his powers when the Spectre intervenes between man and his imagination "the Four Zoas clouded rage East & West & North & South / They change their situations, in the Universal Man. / Albion groans, he sees the Elements divide before his face".^[62]

The "Lumen Naturae"

Similarity between the Blakean and Paracelsan system occurs where Paracelsus argues that inside man, the divine light is existent. Paracelsus was advanced in his understanding of mental illness. He studied the psycho-somatic effects, realizing that the mind was affected by the body, and found natural solutions for

psychological and physical illness. The diseases of the mind, as of the body, had their antidote in nature, if they could be discovered. Just as the notion of the divine light is hidden in the darkness described in the works of Boehme and Blake, Paracelsus believed that active ingredients were hidden in nature, including human beings. He argued that a “*lumen naturae*”, the spirit in nature, was alive and had to be accessed in order for the physician to do his healing work. A process of alchemical transformation had to take place in order to allow pure forms to be converted from the impurities of nature. Although Paracelsus was a physician and was attempting to fuse alchemy, philosophy and an understanding of natural medicine together, and was preoccupied with what the “eyes see” and “hands touch”, the idea alluded to the fact that God was in his creation. In Paracelsus’ works, man is viewed as a microcosm and is required to use his imagination to relate the universe to himself.

Boehme read Paracelsus’ works and in *Signatura Rerum*, he borrowed his concept of signatures in his explanation of how the “Word of God” can be found in the languages of the world and be translated into the spirit of man. Paracelsus used the idea to show how plants and herbs can be matched with different parts of the human body and mind. He was interested in diseases of the mind as well as the body, as indicated in his treatise on such illnesses as St Vitus’ Dance, epilepsy, mania, “melancholia” and insanity.^[63] He achieved success in curing the dancing mania and, as such, could boast an ability to heal nervous disorders with his knowledge of nature and the spirit that dwelt in flora and fauna. The work of the physician focuses upon the healing qualities of nature, and Paracelsus discusses the *lumen naturae* as spreading throughout nature and human beings. At this juncture, the work of Boehme, Paracelsus and Blake combine, as each, according to Northrop Frye, possessed a conceptualization of the “indwelling light”, as found in the Anabaptist movement. The significance of this concept is far-reaching, as it implies that man’s nature is an extension of that of the Godhead’s, signifying that any disease of man can imply an illness of the Godhead. This idea was implied in the philosophical contemplation of “the Fall”

in Boehme, in which the growth from the “Ungrund” or nothingness is only possible as a result of the conflict in the godhead and in his realization in nature. The growth is a dialectical one that expands only with the conflict between desire and will. The “lumen naturae” cannot come into being until the fire of anger, or wrath is part of nature. Anger, or wrath, as part of this schema, implies that anxiety, as felt in man, is a result of the growth of the godhead that needs to know itself through the exacerbation of such tensions. Blake’s account of this idea is implicit in the design of Adam and Satan as limits imposed on nature to prevent the further fall of man. The Blakean schema recognizes that human beings suffer a form of limitation as a result of the disease within nature. The limitations are those of Adam and Satan “He named the Opake Satan: he named the Solid Adam”,^[64] which feature in Blake’s illustration of the “Mundane Egg” (‘the visible sky’). In his poem *Milton* Blake depicts the poet Milton landing within the “Four Universes [that] round the Mundane Egg remain Chaotic”.^[65] In doing this, Milton suffers the limitation of being experienced by those who exist outside eternity. Limitation implies a contrast with expansion and the revelation of other aspects of nature more conducive to liberation from mental disease that is an intrinsic part of the “universes” of the Zoas.

Conclusion

Blake’s Zoas are to be interpreted as analytical agents that in their interactions provide the constituents of consciousness and reveal the inner workings of the mind. Blake’s treatment of the psyche reflects the fact that he is trying to find new ways of dynamically re-working consciousness. That is, as the Zoas interact with each other, they are monitoring as well as being monitored. The psyche is acting as its own monitor whereby psychic organization depends on its own material for an understanding of itself. It can be argued that Blake circumvents the problem of modern psychoanalysis when therapists, in using their minds to understand the mind, are lost in circularity. It is helpful to use Blake’s depiction of the psyche in order to question any theorization of the mind that attempts to treat the psyche as a static system, which is a feature of psychoanalytical approaches. Thus, alchemy

as producing a reliable methodology for Jungian analysis should be questioned and it can be argued that Paracelsus' and Boehme's understanding of the underpinning psychology of the alchemical tradition led to a rigorous analytical dissection of the psyche. Secondly, it should be noted that Blake's investigation of the mind, in using the sources of alchemical and mystical writing, allowed him to find another way of investigating mental processes that avoids the aforementioned problems of psychoanalysis.

Endnotes

^[1] In several of Jung's Collected Works (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953) he refers to Jacob Boehme's images. Sonu Shamdasani, The Red Book (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009), 195 refers to the fact that Jung read books by Swedenborg from Basel library during 1898, which included The Heavenly Arcana (1850), Heaven and Hell (1775), Earths in the Solar System (1841), Intercourse between the Soul and Body (1830) and Conjugal Love (1845). In The Spirit in Man, Art and Literature Jung wrote a chapter entitled 'Paracelsus' (1929) and an essay entitled 'Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon' (1942).

^[2] Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies of Imagination (London: Oxford University Press, 1934) discussed the application of Jungian ideas to literature in a major literary critical work for the first time. The main tradition of archetypal literary criticism that followed can be found in the following works: L.A. Duncan-Johnstone, A Psychological Study of William Blake (London: Psychology Guild, 1945), W.P. Witcutt, Blake: A Psychological Study (London: Hollis & Carter, 1946), Northrop Frye, Blake's Treatment of the Archetype (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), "The Archetypes of Literature" Kenyon Review 13 (1951), 92-110 and Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), George Wingfield Digby, Symbol and Image in William Blake (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), Christine Gallant, Blake and the Assimilation of Chaos (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), Kathleen Raine, The Human Face of God: William Blake and the Book of Job (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1982), Jerry Caris Godard, Mental Forms

Creating: William Blake Anticipates Freud, Jung and Rank (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1985), Edward F. Edinger, Encounter with the Self: A Jungian Commentary on William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1986) and June Singer, Blake, Jung and the Collective Unconscious (York Beach: Nicolas Hays Inc., 2000), which is an updated version of her previous work The Unholy Bible: A Psychological Interpretation of William Blake (New York: Putnam, 1970).

[3] Daniel Majdiak and Brian Wilkie, 'Blake and Freud: Poetry and Depth Psychology' Journal of Aesthetic Education 6, no. 3 (July, 1972), p. 87 (87- 98).

[4] Brenda Webster, Blake's Prophetic Psychology (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1984).

[5] June Singer, Blake, Jung and the Collective Unconscious: The Conflict between Reason and Imagination (York Beach: Nicolas Hays, 2000).

[6] William Blake, "The Four Zoas" 5: 62.22-24 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 342.

[7] Brenda Webster, Blake's Prophetic Psychology (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1984) 8.

[8] William Blake, "The Book of Urizen" 20. 24-26 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 80 and "The Four Zoas" 5: 62.22-24 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 342.

[9] S. Foster Damon, A Blake Dictionary (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1973) 124.

[10] Brian Wilkie and Mary Lynn Johnson, Blake's Four Zoas: The Design of a Dream (Cambridge: Mass, 1978).

- [11] Emmanuel Swedenborg, Swedenborg's Dreams, 1744 (translated by J. J. G. Wilkinson, 1860).
- [12] Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947) 47.
- [13] Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947) 47.
- [14] Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947) 159.
- [15] Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947) 167.
- [16] William Blake, "Jerusalem" 15.31, The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 159.
- [17] Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947) 446.
- [18] David V. Erdman, Prophet Against Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954) 11.
- [19] David V. Erdman, Prophet Against Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954) 305.
- [20] David V. Erdman, Prophet Against Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954) 144.
- [21] Bryan Aubrey, Watchmen of Eternity: Blake's Debt to Jacob Boehme (Lanham: University Press of America, 1986) and Kevin Fischer, Converse in the Spirit: William Blake, Jacob Boehme and the Creative Spirit (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004)
- [22] See Paul Youngquist, Madness and Blake's Myth (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Youngquist explains the interactions of Blake's Zoas and

his Universal Man in terms that suggest a connection with the illness of schizophrenia. While Youngquist emphasizes Blake's exploration of illness as a catalyst for assuring mental health, I would argue that he fits Blake's symbolism into psychoanalytical categories and offers parallels with a twentieth century interpretation of illness that cannot be supported in terms of eighteenth century knowledge of schizophrenia.

^[23] William Blake, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" 22 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York, Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 43.

^[24] G.E. Bentley, Blake Records (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) has listed books that Blake probably bought that included William Law's 1764 edition of the works of Jacob Behmen, and works by Paracelsus and Cornelius Agrippa.

^[25] Jacob Boehme, Theosopia, 1.8 (London: John Sparrow, 1665).

^[26] Jacob Boehme, Of Predestination, 2.69 (London: John Sparrow, 1665).

^[27] Boehme's 'Ungrund' is the source of all discordant principles, such as heaven and hell.

^[28] This theory lies at the foundation of Jungian Analytical Psychology and is applied in his studies of alchemy, Psychology and Alchemy (Princeton: Princeton University Press Bollingen Series, 1953), The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious (Princeton: Princeton University Press Bollingen Series, 1959) and Alchemical Studies (Princeton: Princeton University Press Bollingen, 1967).

^[29] These errors include Albion's isolation ('a Womb, such was Albions Couch' "Jerusalem" 1.2 David V. Erdman 144), jealousy ('in jealous fears, hiding his Emanation' "Jerusalem" 4.33 David V. Erdman 147), and wrath ('devour the Sleeping Humanity of Albion in rage & hunger' "Jerusalem" 5.30 David V. Erdman 147).

[30] In Boehme's theogony, wrath must be produced in order to make the Selfhood manifest and to escape from it.

[31] William Blake, "Jerusalem" 1.1 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 144.

[32] William Blake, "Jerusalem", 1.8 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 144.

[33] W.J.T. Mitchell, Blake's Composite Art: a Study of the Illuminated Poetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978) 59.

[34] Tilottama Rajan, "(Dis) figuring the System: Vision, History, and Trauma in Blake's Lambeth Books" William Blake: Images and Texts eds. Robert Essick et al (San. Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1997): 107-36. Rajan discusses the metaphorical shifts in Blake's language as implying psychotic shifts.

[35] The Daughters of Beulah feature throughout Blake's prophecies and are sometimes described as muses, belonging as they do to the dream-like realm of Beulah, which can be found in close relation to Eden. It is important to note that the need to protect these offspring of Beulah is a major strand in the narrative.

[36] Christopher Rowland, "Blake and the Bible: Biblical Exegesis in the Work of William Blake" The International Journal of Systematic Theology 7 (2005): 142 – 154.

[37] Rose, E. J. "The Symbolism of the Opened Center and Poetic Theory in Blake's Jerusalem." Studies in English Literature 5, no. 4 (Autumn 1965): 587-606. The nodal point of Jung and Boehme is a central structuring point of the psyche and in Blake there is a centre-point as Rose points out in his essay on Jerusalem.

[38] William Blake, "Jerusalem" 15.18 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 159.

[39] Jacob Boehme, Aurora (London: John Sparrow, 1656) 94.

- [40] Philip Wheelwright, The Burning Fountain: A Study in the Language of Symbolism (Ontario: Indiana University Press, 1968) 129.
- [41] Carl Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious (London: Routledge, 1990) 35
- [42] Jacob Boehme, Aurora (London: John Sparrow, 1656) 306.
- [43] Carl Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious (London: Routledge, 1990) 30.
- [44] William Blake, "Jerusalem", 12.12 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 155.
- [45] William Blake, "Jerusalem", 12.13 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 155.
- [46] Jolande Jacobi, Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C.G. Jung (New York: Bollingen Foundation Inc., 1973) 7.
- [47] William Blake, "Jerusalem", 39. 25 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 187.
- [48] Peter Otto, "Drawing Lines: Bodies, Sexualities and Performances in *The Four Zoas*" Queer Blake eds. Helen P. Bruder & Tristanne Connolly (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010): 50 - 62.
- [49] Marsha Keith Schuchard, Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and the Erotic Imagination (London: Pimlico, 2007).
- [50] Marsha Keith Schuchard, Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and the Erotic Imagination (London: Pimlico, 2007) 18.

- [51] William Blake, “The Book of Ahania” 2. 41- 42 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 85.
- [52] William Blake, “The Book of Ahania” 2.32 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 84.
- [53] William Blake, “The Book of Ahania” 3.27 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 86.
- [54] Harold L. Klawans, The Medicine of History: From Paracelsus to Freud (New York: Raven Press, 1982) 79. According to Klawans, the ens astral was the influence of the stars, ens veneni the influence of other persons, ens natural the influence of oneself, ens spiritual the influence of the spirit and ens dei the will of God.
- [55] William Blake, “Jerusalem”, 98.33- 34 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 258.
- [56] Kathleen Raine, “Thomas Taylor, Plato, and the English Romantic Movement” The Sewanee Review 76 (Spring 1968): 230 - 257.
- [57] Carl Jung, Collected Works 13 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul) 167.
- [58] Paracelsus, A Book Concerning Long Life ed. Arthur Edward Waite (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2010) refers to “the Scaiolae”, which he also refers to as the “four Scaiolse” in Chapter IV, Book V.
- [59] These find some relationship to reason, imagination and intuition, although Paracelsus’ description was acknowledged by Jung to be vague in Collected Works 13 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953) 167.

[60] Michael Mitchell, Hidden Mutualities: Faustian Themes from Gnostic Origins to the Postcolonial (New York: Editions Rodopi BV, 2006) 92.

[61] William Blake, “Jerusalem” 44.15; 193 and 95.20 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 255.

[62] William Blake, “Jerusalem” 32. 25 – 27 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 178.

[63] Paracelsus, “Diseases that Deprive Man of Health and Reason” The Four Treatises ed Henry E. Sigerist (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996) 142.

[64] William Blake, “Milton”, 29.39 The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 128.

[65] William Blake, “Milton”, 19.15; The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1988) 112.

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First Response

This essay is admirably ambitious. It takes a topic that has a fairly substantial body of criticism—Blake's debt to Boehme, Paracelsus, and Swedenborg—and

seeks to offer a revisioning of Blake's view of the psyche. I like this argument, but the problem is that the essay does not quite follow through on its intentions. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that as its reader I can't follow the author in understanding how his or her reading of the common themes and influence differs from the other critics who have written on this subject. I am not sure who those critics are who have imposed psychoanalytical ideas on Blake's view of psychic disturbance and growth, which certainly is an important concern in his writings. But as well it is not clear to me in the subsequent argument how this reading differs from other scholars who have traced the roots of Blake's mystical thinking.