

William Blake's Analysis of Melancholia

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*I begin to Emerge from a deep pit of Melancholy, Melancholy without any real reason for it, a Disease which God keep you from & all good men.*¹

Abstract: The eighteenth century consisted of a wide range of theories that presented experimental attempts to understand the workings of the human nervous system. In 1800, the first foundations of psychiatry were in the process of being formed, as a result of much groundwork and anatomical research, as well as the theories of artists and scientists who tried to make sense of the functioning of the body. Certain theorists were more objective than others, but what became known as 'The English Malady' or 'Melancholia' was generally understood simply in terms of its symptoms and classified with other illnesses, such as mania and hypochondria. However, William Blake theorised about cognitive dysfunction like no other poet of his time and his ideas challenged the prevailing *Zeitgeist* of opinion.

Despite the fact that Blake appears to use the symbolism of eighteenth-century anatomical studies, such as that relating to animal spirits, to the extent that his creatures of the psyche, the Zoas, are described in such terms, it is clear that they are not simply rooted in physiology. In rejecting the mechanistic notion of splicing nerves and fibres to study the corporeal functions of the human being, Blake made a profoundly important choice.

This article seeks to explore Blake's analysis of the causes of melancholy and possible solutions to the problem that he presented in his later works, such as *The Four Zoas* and *Jerusalem*. It is an attempt to advance the general field of research into the nature of Blake's interest in cognitive processes and to illuminate some of the essential differences between Blake's ideas and those of his contemporaries on the subject of the causes, symptoms and solutions to 'Melancholia'. As monologistic discourse is a feature of the psychic life of Blake's main character, Albion, the poet's notion of how the structure of language is instrumental in determining psychic health is considered.

While melancholy has been the source of other enquiries in Blake studies (see next paragraph), the extent to which Blake re-evaluated medical advances of his period in relation to psychological states in his poetry requires further research. This article seeks to address William Blake's response to the medical theorisation of mental illness, and specifically that

¹ William Blake, 'Letters to Cumberland: 2nd July, 1800', in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David V. Erdman (New York: Random House, 1988), p. 706. All citations of Blake's writing will be from this collection.

of ‘melancholia’ in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. It will highlight the fact that Blake was fundamentally committed to revising classifications of the mind and that he offered a unique analysis of the problem of ‘melancholia’ and of mental illness in his poetry. It will attempt to demonstrate that Blake’s system advanced classifications based on older physiological observations that outlined a range of symptoms but offered few insights into the causes of mental illness. In discussing Blake’s contribution to this field, the dialogic nature of his art will be stressed in order to demonstrate the detailed nature of his enquiry. This will require reference to those characters in Blake’s myth that represent the mind in its totality, such as Albion and his constituent powers, including Vala, Urizen and Los.

Both Anca Munteanu and Nowell Marshall have concentrated on Blake’s *The Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793) in which the figure of Oothoon is violated by Bromion during her relationship with Theotormon.² In his consideration of Theotormon, Marshall refers to Julia Kristeva’s analysis of depression as resulting from sexual frustration and correlates this with his own interpretation of the civil humanist model of sex in Blake’s period, arguing that Oothoon’s loss of virginity results in Theotormon’s melancholy.³ Munteanu focuses more on the figure of Oothoon who is conceived of as typifying the Renaissance conception of spiritual melancholy. Munteanu has also discussed the early works of *The Book of Thel* (1789), *The Gates of Paradise* (1793) and *The Book of Urizen* (1794) in the context of theories of melancholy in both the Renaissance and the eighteenth century.⁴ Frank Parisi has analysed the series of pictures in *The Gates of Paradise*, focusing on

² Anca Munteanu, ‘Visionary and Artistic Transformations in Blake’s *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*’, *Journal of European Studies*, 36:1 (2006), 61-83; Nowell Marshall, ‘Of Melancholy and Mimesis: Social Bond(age)s in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*’, in *And Never Know the Joy: Sex and the Erotic in English Poetry*, ed. by C.C. Barfoot (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 2006), pp. 173-187.

³ Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, trans. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 3

⁴ Anca Munteanu, ‘William Blake and the Transformations of the Renaissance Notion of Melancholy’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nebraska, 1999), pp. 1-160.

melancholy within the emblematic tradition.⁵ Such interpretations have relied on philosophical or aesthetic theories of melancholy rather than medical ones, while other studies, such as Hisao Ishizuka's work on the fascination with nerve fibres in eighteenth-century anatomical investigations, or Marsha Keith Schuchard's work on magnetism and mania, have attempted to link Blake's interest in the body with that of eighteenth-century medical findings.⁶ While these studies have scrutinised medical influences on Blake, this article aims to explore Blake's mature treatment of the psychological causes of melancholy within his later poetry as part of his ongoing debate with Enlightenment medical theorisation.

Prevailing Ideas

In *Observations on Maniacal Disorders* (1792) William Pargeter describes the 'outward show' of an individual afflicted with mental illness: 'Let us then figure to ourselves the situation of a fellow creature destitute of the guidance of that governing principle, reason [...] and see in how melancholy a posture he appears'.⁷ Pargeter's description is indicative of the prevailing opinion of the late eighteenth century that the illness of 'melancholy' equates with a loss of reason. By 1792 classification of the illness had been divided into the two categories of 'mania and melancholia', encouraging Pargeter to cite William Cullen, who studied and advanced understanding of the nervous system in this period. Pargeter states that:

⁵ Frank M. Parisi, 'Emblems of Melancholy: *For Children: The Gates of Paradise*' in *Interpreting Blake: Essays*, ed. by Michael Phillips (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 70-110.

⁶ Hisao Ishizuka, 'Enlightening the Fibre-Woven Body: William Blake and Eighteenth-Century Fibre Medicine', *Literature and Medicine*, 25:1 (2006), 72-92; Marsha Keith Schuchard, 'Blake's Healing Trio: Magnetism, Medicine, and Mania', *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly* 23 (1989), 20-32. It is also worth noting the contribution of Richard C. Sha, 'Blake, Liberation and Medicine', in *Liberating Medicine 1720-1835*, ed. by Tristanne Connolly and Steve Clark (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), pp. 83-96.

⁷ William Pargeter, *Observations on Maniacal Disorders* (Reading: Smart and Cowlade, 1792), p. 2.

The Nosologists of the present era are far from being consistent in their arrangement of the several genera of this disease. Professor Cullen in his Nosology of mania, has with the greatest propriety altered the arrangement of the two genera Mania et Melancholia, which Linnaeus and others have adopted, and comprehends his idea of the complaint in two words – Insania Universalis [...] the doctrine of Mania includes in some degree that of melancholia, consequently they cannot be generically different.⁸

In a recent publication, Gerold Sedlmayr has highlighted the fact that commentators on mental illness argued that mania and melancholy had distinct characteristics and symptoms but that mania was a development of the illness known as ‘melancholia’.⁹ The allusion to Linnaeus also implies that the interest in nosologies in diverse subject areas was widespread at this time and that both plant-life and the human mind were considered to be classifiable. This fact is demonstrable in the works of writers of the period, such as Erasmus Darwin and William Blake, whose experience of engraving Darwin’s *The Botanic Garden* (1791) provides a possible source for the diverse botanical imagery in Blake’s poetry.¹⁰ Darwin’s view was that the complexity of the human vascular system accounted for the problem of melancholic madness and distinguished such suffering from that of the lower animals. This was a move away from the prevailing eighteenth-century equation of mental illness and animalistic behaviour, although Darwin’s view in 1790 was not typical during a period when rationalism and mental health were viewed as synonymous. Blake’s argument runs counter to such synonymity and sources the roots of melancholy in rationalistic discourse, providing a visionary depiction of Darwin’s view that, ‘where the quantity of general painful sensation is too great in the system inordinate voluntary exertions are produced either of our ideas, as in

⁸ Ibid, pp. 4-5.

⁹ Gerold Sedlmayr, *The Discourse of Madness in Britain, 1790-1815* (Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2011), pp. 40-42.

¹⁰ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 15:4; Erdman, p. 159. Blake refers to the ‘polypus’, a species of pond plant-life that was considered to be self-replicating. He develops the image to such an extent in *Jerusalem, Emanation of the Giant Albion* that it becomes an image of political corruption.

melancholy and madness, or of our muscles, as in convulsion'.¹¹ Pargeter's view that illnesses such as 'melancholia' occur due to the loss of reason is attacked in Blake's poem, *Jerusalem* (1804-1820) in which the figure of the Universal Man, Albion, is a victim of his own reasoning processes. Foucault's view that, 'Language is the first and last structure of madness'¹² provides a philosophical perspective for understanding Blake's description of the cure that his upholder of prophecy, Los, attempts:

(I call them by their English names: English, the rough basement.
Los built the stubborn structure of the Language, acting against
Albions melancholy, who must else have been a Dumb despair.)¹³

Repetition of language is such that the form and content of *Jerusalem* resemble the cognitive processes that prevent Albion from escaping from his despair. Blake proceeds to rework linguistic structures, replicates them in his work and, as Saree Makdisi argues, he rotates the imagery of his visual art so that one image can appear in different positions in varying contexts.¹⁴ The crucial facts of Blake's art revolve around such replication but this mutability is borne out at a more profound linguistic level, where ambiguity between and within lines of poetry, or in the visual art itself, is fundamental to a basic recognition of Blake's need to depict the contours of mental suffering through the contortions of language. Albion's own suffering is expressed through erroneous reasoning which leads to a disturbance of his perceptual faculties. In addition, as Julie Joosten has argued, 'Los's language [...] emerges to offer an alternative organizing principle to the melancholic symptomatology that diminishes

¹¹ Erasmus Darwin, *Zoonomia, or, the Laws of Organic Life*, 2 vols (London: J. Johnson, 1794–96), I, p. 395.

¹² Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 100.

¹³ William Blake, *Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion*, 40: 57–59; Erdman, p. 183.

¹⁴ Saree Makdisi, 'The Political Aesthetic of Blake's Images', in *The Cambridge Companion to William Blake*, ed. by Morris Eaves (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 110–131.

Albion'.¹⁵ The keynote of *Jerusalem* is Albion's insistence on monologic discourse, which excludes the possibility of escape from melancholy. Blake explores the nature of discourse as the prime constituent factor of mental illness and describes the proliferation of ideas that lead to 'Dumb despair' which results from over-analysis and continual rationalism. Blake's attempts to awaken his protagonist Albion also affect the mental life of the artist, 'Reasonings like vast Serpents infold around my limbs | Bruising my minute articulations'.¹⁶ The implication is that Albion's 'souls disease' is that of the artist and, by extension, his fellow man. The dialogic nature of illness resulting in dumbness is summarised by Blake as reasoning 'on both sides'.¹⁷ The 'One error not remov'd'¹⁸ that can pull the Self apart is specifically the cause of reasoning backwards and forwards and creating not a dialogue with the outside world but rather within the Self, which leads to a growth of 'Selfhood'. Los must also undergo the psychic disintegration that Albion experiences, the form of which involves a separation between what Blake refers to as his 'Emanation' and Man: 'Man divided from his Emanation is a dark Spectre | His Emanation is an ever-weeping melancholy Shadow'.¹⁹ An 'Emanation' is a feminine counterpart of the bisexual male figures in Blake's mythology and Blake refers to the Spectre as 'the Reasoning Power in Man'.²⁰ When mental debates persist, Blake's view is that melancholy is an inevitable result and that in order for the threat of monologism to be overcome, a process of 'Self-annihilation' is required. However, such a process is not possible when the Spectre and the 'melancholy Shadow' are resistant. This is the psychological system that Blake posits and in the context of eighteenth-century mind-body theorisation, it offers a dissection of the concepts of 'melancholia' or 'despair'. Blake

¹⁵ Julie Joosten, "'Minute Particulars'" and the Visionary Labor of Words', *European Romantic Review*, 19:2 (2008), 113–118 (p. 113).

¹⁶ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 4:13; Erdman, p. 146.

¹⁷ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 41:13; Erdman, p. 188.

¹⁸ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 41:11; Erdman, p. 188.

¹⁹ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 53: 25-26; Erdman, p. 203.

²⁰ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 74: 10-11; Erdman, p. 229.

does not appear to be interested in the debate concerning the categorisations of mania and melancholy as he never refers to ‘mania’ but instead supports an anti-rationalistic agenda in equating ‘despair’ with stubborn debates of the mind. The loss of the Emanation is indicative of the devouring of imaginative consciousness by an immersion in the folly of rationalistic discourse that Blake viewed as typical of Enlightenment thinking. One characteristic of ‘melancholia’ can be found in the writings of one of Pargeter’s contemporaries, Thomas Arnold. In terms of Arnold’s cataloguing of different contemporary definitions of melancholy, Blake’s analysis aligns itself with observations of the illness as ‘a permanent delirium’ fixing on single ideas, but his point of view concerning its cause is different.²¹ Blake’s descriptions are also distinct from those of Arnold, who distances himself from eighteenth-century notions of ‘melancholia’ that he views as Galenic. However, Arnold is especially interested in the ‘melancholia hypochondriaca of the ancients’, which is typified by, ‘an irrational, and insane imbecility of the mind’ arising due to ‘a distressed imagination’.²²

The prevailing ideologies against which Blake fought focused on the abasement of the imagination, the promotion of reason and the denigration of enthusiasm, psychological disturbance resulting from pride, ‘vapours’ and the ‘spleen’, and the treatment of the insane as animals. On this basis, it can be argued that early mechanistic theories, such as Nicholas Robinson’s early eighteenth-century idea that mental illness was caused by the improper elasticity of nerve fibres, or Thomas Willis’s late seventeenth-century explanation of mental phenomena as a result of changes in the central nervous system and animal spirits, led to

²¹ Thomas Arnold, *Observations on the Nature, Kinds, Causes and Prevention of Insanity* (London: G. Robinson and T. Cadwell, 1786), p. 26. Paul Youngquist notes in *Monstrosities, Bodies and British Romanticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) that Arnold’s allusion to ‘permanent delirium’ indicates that ‘aberrant speech becomes the main symptom of melancholia [...] in Coleridge’s day’ (p. 102). However, this is a misreading, as Arnold is merely citing one of the commonly held ideas of the period.

²² Arnold, p. 174.

deep-seated reductionism.²³ These influential theories, concerning the spleen, vapours and the types of nerve reactions, were used to explain such disorders as mania, melancholy, hysteria and hypochondria. These theories were inherited by Blake and his contemporaries and although the symptoms were studied and categorised, an understanding of psychological factors was rudimentary and undeveloped. In this context, Blake sought a system to explain the nature of mental phenomena, which was possibly in part due to a wish to understand his own visionary experiences.

Blake's View of Melancholy

In his visual and verbal works, Blake is frequently concerned with an exploration of guilt, panic and rage. This concern with the primitive level of Man's being provides the foregrounding for *Jerusalem*: 'ancient porches of Albion are | Darken'd! They are drawn thro' unbounded space, scatter'd upon | The Void in incoherent despair!'²⁴ At this point in the poem there is the recognition that the demarcation of identity can be lost, resulting in an 'unbounded' state, or that mental illness is connected with a lack of characteristics, or indefiniteness. Albion is 'Enlarg'd without dimension, terrible', adrift in the 'unbounded night' where his perfection is 'wither'd & darken'd'.²⁵ In the first book of *Jerusalem*, this indefiniteness of being is apparent in Albion, Jerusalem, Los, the Spectre and the children of Los and Albion, and Blake strives to explain the reasons for, and effects of, this disintegration. Blake situates these figures in the human 'brain' or 'breast', makes the remarkable claim that they control physical processes, such as digestion, and claims that they

²³ Nicholas Robinson, *A New System of the Spleen, Vapours and Hypochondriack Melancholy* (London: Samuel Aris, 1729); Thomas Willis, *An Essay of the Pathology of the Brain and Nervous Stock* (London: T. Dring, 1681).

²⁴ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 5:1-3; Erdman, p. 147.

²⁵ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 5: 5-8; Erdman, p. 147.

are of ancient origin, ‘the Daughters of Albion | Names anciently rememberd, but now contemn’d as fictions! Although in every bosom they controll our Vegetative powers.’²⁶ The depth of Blake’s psycho-physiological analysis of mental disturbance is unique in a period when psychological factors were not considered to this degree and political attacks on dissenters arose as a result of the fact that mental illness was equated with religious fanaticism.²⁷

George H. Gilpin notes that, ‘[t]he abstraction and inhumanity of the prevailing science and philosophy had been a target of Blake as early as his burlesque of a fashionable salon of intellectuals in *An Island in the Moon* (1784)’.²⁸ In fact, the denigration of a dependence on reason is exemplified throughout this work, in which the commentators, such as ‘The Antiquarian’, are blind to their own error, and in which the poet claims that ‘Voltaire was immersed in matter, & seems to have understood very little but what he saw before his eyes’.²⁹ In defiance of the beliefs prevalent in his historical context, Blake sought a system to explain the nature of dysfunctional mental phenomena. In *The Book of Urizen*, *The Four Zoas* and *Jerusalem*, rational thought is presented as a contributing factor to the development of solipsistic despair. Urizen and Albion’s insistence on rationalistic enquiry is frequently referred to by scholars as the Ulro of ‘single vision’ and leads to further errors of perception and confusion. Blake argues that in order to escape from an endless cycle of false perception, exemplified in Albion’s ‘deadly sleep’, his obsession with the nature goddess Vala, and the reasoning Urizen’s entrapment within the body, a transcending of ‘Selfhood’ is required.³⁰ Without this, Man’s entrapment in his spectral state is considerable. Blake expresses this state

²⁶ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 5: 37-39; Erdman, p. 148.

²⁷ Roy Porter states that, ‘In his Satires, Swift saw lunacy infecting Dissenters and free-thinkers’ (*Madness: A Brief History* [New York: O.U.P., 2002], p. 79).

²⁸ George H. Gilpin, ‘William Blake and the World’s Body of Science’, *Studies in Romanticism*, 43 (2004), 35-56 (p. 35).

²⁹ William Blake, *Island in the Moon*, 1, 1: 84-85; Erdman, p. 451.

³⁰ William Blake, *Jerusalem* 15:6; Erdman, p. 159.

in terms of not being ‘Organized’, being a ‘Non-entity’ and experiencing the perpetual, cyclical torments of ‘Despair’.³¹ Blake explains the nature of this entrapment in referring to the spectre as being ‘mutually tormented by | Those that thou tormentest’, highlighting the double-bind nature of disturbing mental discourses.³² As exemplified, Blake’s narrative is a maelstrom of psychological activity, as each faculty is a world unto itself, but ever-changing and attempting to adapt to the influences and control of other faculties. As Blake’s inscription illustrates, ‘Each Man is in his | Spectre’s Power | Untill the arrival | of that hour | When his | Humanity | awake | And cast his Spectre | into the Lake’.³³ The image of the ‘Lake’ suggests a repository of the consciousness, a place to which spectral thoughts can be consigned. A stage of wakefulness is necessary in order for this change to occur and such a stage implies that Man is asleep prior to the destruction of the ‘Spectre’ and while under its influence. The outset of the poem reveals the main conflict as being between Man’s ‘Humanity’ and his ‘Spectre’ with ‘Humanity’ unable to reign while the Spectral influence is in the ascendant. The implication is that the Spectre must be destroyed in order for Humanity to become dominant. According to this view, the Spectre and Man’s Humanity are not in communication with each other, but one exists while the other is asleep. At the outset of *Jerusalem*, Blake depicts the struggle between the Spectre and Man’s Humanity, with each trying to assert its dominance over the other.

Los, though not immune to the disease of Albion, does not fall prey to it immediately. Rather, after he has opposed Albion directly, berated him for his self-obsession and shown his refusal to do Albion’s bidding, the death of ‘Selfhood’ slowly but unmistakably creeps up on him. The disease itself is expressed in different ways: Self as explored in *Urizen*, *Milton* and *Jerusalem* involves linguistic repetition as in ‘One King, One God, One Law’, which

³¹ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 17: 41-47; Erdman, p. 162.

³² William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 17: 46-47; Erdman, p. 162.

³³ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 37; Erdman, p. 184.

compounds the idea that, in uttering a thought, the psyche must find itself enclosed to a greater degree.³⁴ The threats of annihilation and hopes of Self-annihilation recur throughout the texts but the way in which the ideas are explored offer a picture of the Self that is resistant both to the acceptance of other modes of discourse and persuasion as well as to its own modes of reasoning. The attempts to reason on both sides imply that there is dissatisfaction with both points of view. Although Self-annihilation, as Paul Youngquist states, ‘involves the clarification of identity by rejecting false accretions’, the process is obstructed by the Selfhood’s habit of dismantling its own rationalisations.³⁵ Throughout *Jerusalem*, Blake lists a range of symptoms connected with psychological demise: these are physical and mental problems, which later culminate in ‘raving’, a term of which Blake would have been aware in a period when people referred to ‘raving madness’. Such symptoms include physical shaking, nervous problems, depression (despair, melancholy), ‘shrieks’ and ‘pain’, and a range of other descriptions of mental disorder. ‘Selfhood’ is responsible for psychological pain, as Blake views the problem, and it is the growth of reason that leads to a range of psychic dilemmas and recurrence of complexes that lead to ‘eternal death’.³⁶

Conclusion

For Blake, the linguistic classifications and approaches of the Enlightenment theorists of the subject of mental illness - such as mania, melancholy and hypochondria, either with reference to ancient humoral theory or the discoveries of anatomical science on the subject of the nervous system - were indicative of the causes of such illness. For example, while Blake makes use of the imagery of anatomical science, as Ishizuka has demonstrated, his viewpoint is set against the findings of fibre theorists. In relation to the works of William Pargeter and

³⁴ William Blake, *The Book of Urizen*, 4:40 Erdman, p. 72.

³⁵ Paul Youngquist, ‘Criticism and the Experience of Blake’s Milton’, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 30: 4 (1990), 555-571 (p. 562).

³⁶ William Blake, *America, a Prophecy* 2.17; Erdman, p. 52.

Thomas Arnold, Blake's argument delves much more deeply into the cognitive aberrations which these theorists merely described without approaching an understanding of their causes. For Blake, Self-annihilation is synonymous with the painful process of wiping away the selfishness associated with the 'Selfhood', and it is this egotism that repeatedly stands as an obstacle to the annihilation of the Self. The process recurs, as trauma is not a problem that has a beginning and end. It moves from one extreme to the next and then repeats itself in different patterns. These patterns are shifting, irregular but strangely repetitive. This is the reason why in *The Four Zoas*, *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, cycles of trauma are evident on both the structural and thematic levels of the narratives. Trauma is the erasing of the Self's errors through the medium of despair, melancholy and pain. The loss of the spirit is one that occurs after 'the torments of Love and Jealousy',³⁷ the latter represented in the image of the 'wheel without wheel', the affections of Albion pushing against each other, much like a machine that generates the cavern of the Self.³⁸ The more restricted Man's vision becomes, the greater is the possibility of return to this cavern. This is the reason that eternity and hell are adjacent to each other in Blake: they are different experiential worlds but one leads to the other and vice versa. Trauma or the erasure of the errors of the soul can lead to illumination, as Self-annihilation creates the possibility of contact with eternity and the toppling of the high towers of the Self into chaos. In *Jerusalem*, Blake states that the Individual can never be so glorious that he is safe from the dangers within, and he states that one error can lead to a loss of equilibrium.³⁹ The implication is that the brain is asleep in a very specific and detrimental sense, as in this state Man accepts the delusion of his Self and the 'grand towers' of his individuality. This delusion of the Self is the sleep to which Blake refers and it generates a loss of Self and leads to insanity and despair. In stating this, Blake is associating reason with

³⁷ William Blake, *The Four Zoas*, subtitle; Erdman, p. 300.

³⁸ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 65:21; Erdman, p. 216.

³⁹ William Blake, *Jerusalem*, 41:11; Erdman, p. 188.

delusion as he is interested in dismantling the rational system that existed in his day. Deism, the monarchy and the rationalism of the Enlightenment theorists represent reason as tantamount to madness for the poet.