

Repeating Yourself:

Printing, (re)Production, and Poiesis
in Blake's *The Book of Urizen*

// by Catherine Sulpizio

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To Spot —

The family hound with the ever-roving nose that knew:

“Those who restrain desire, do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained.”

-WB

Acknowledgments //

The undertaking of this thesis began at what seems like a vastly different epistemological stage, though my calendar tells me this was only a year ago. Shortly before that spring break, I asked my favorite professor, Marjorie Levinson, to be my thesis advisor. Blake was a much more cursory choice. Yet what I found over the past year was that this poet made intuitive sense. A fiery intellectual, reflexive contrarian, utopian and cynic, practical inventor, and sincere artist, Blake contained all the admirable traits one hopes to find in their subject of study. Blake became the lens I viewed the world through.

My closest know this, as an intellectual project is equally a personal one. Thank you Jana Sulpizio for being the warmest presence in my life. To my dad, John Gonzalez, your Blakean spirituality, vast practical knowledge, and short tolerance for extravagant academic verbosity have helped curb my worst scholarly impulses and propelled my thesis into exciting new directions. Andrew, you have been the partner I needed for this project, and even more.

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Abstract //

Produced by William Blake in the 1790's during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, the eight extant copies of *The Book of Urizen* contain an irksome formal irregularity and textual instability difficult to classify. Yet at their core, the eight reproductions contain a tension between the factory copy of the Industrial Revolution and an experimental type of copy, the Blakean copy, which is a form continuously in flux.

The poem exploits this tension by operating on two levels. At the level of narrative, the poem offers up a critique of type of deadening, subtractive repetition found in the factory. Written with a profusion of repetition (narrative, linguistic, and sexual) that is inlaid with the political and economic baggage of the early Industrial Revolution, the poem registers industrial reproduction as a psychoanalytical symptom,

But at the level of textual form, the poem positions itself as a radical type of copy resistant to its milieu. *The Book of Urizen's* poesis is entwined with a radical politics, as it was produced with a novel printing method invented by Blake, relief etching, that unified processes separated in commercial printing. Beyond this, of the eight extant copies of *The Book of Urizen*, each functions as a unique variant, with individual plate orders, tonal illustrations, and thematic emphases in each copy. What emerges from the analysis of *The Book of Urizen's* form is a workable model of the Blakean copy. In poetic practice, *The Book of Urizen* effaces standard linear and spatial constructions found in the factory and suggests a radical post-Newtonian ontology verified by modern physics.

Key words: William Blake; *The Book of Urizen*; Industrial Revolution; Blakean copies; reproduction & repetition; commercial printmaking

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Citational Note //

All references to Blake's poems are to:

Blake, William. *Blake's Poetry and Designs*. 2nd ed. Eds. Grant, John E; Johnson, Mary Lynn. New York: Norton, 2008.

Parenthetical citations include initialed poem title, plate, and line numbers.

BU: The Book of Urizen

MHH: The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Introduction //

In the politically repressive climate of the 1790s, Blake's subversive works — namely an unfinished series titled *The French Revolution* — became a legal liability, as journalists and writers all over England were increasingly prosecuted for sedition and treason. In particular, prophecy, with its radical politics, was identified as a contagion that had to be neutralized by law. Mark Lyle Barr cites Richard Brother's *Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Time* and his subsequent arrest as an exemplar of the danger that these works posed to not just the king but to the divine source that legitimized the monarch's powers (740). For obvious reasons, then, during the last half of this decade, Blake's work took a turn into the opaque and trans-historical, following metaphysical and ontological concerns, as compared to his preceding works whose topical critiques were thinly concealed behind allegory (*America A Prophecy, Europe A Prophecy, Africa, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*). These new poems, generally categorized as the "prophetic" works, were stripped of temporal markers, sanded into ahistorical, politically neutral objects that could slip through a censor's grip. But while the earlier works contained critically reactive elements, Blake's prophetic works, which begin with *The Book of Urizen* and culminate in *Jerusalem*, can be judged as creative at an even more fundamental level. After all, faced with a society that reproved his fiery vision, Blake found a way to sidestep these political contingencies, while also legitimizing the status of his oeuvre: this was achieved by arcing back to the origins of the world and imagining the conditions of its creation that shaped present society, in effect, constructing a teleology for the fallen world. As W. J. T. Mitchell states, this new strain of work "delineated the beginning and the ends of a cosmos in which Blake's kind

of topical prophecy would be coherent” (85). Many critical readings of *The Book of Urizen* have identified the various layers of textual strategy working in opposition to each other within the poem: Mollyanne Marks writes that it “perceives . . . simultaneously, so that the structure of the poem itself reenacts the conversion of true vision into fallen form;” (583) and Andrew M. Cooper notes that “Blake’s narrative undergoes a progressive decrescendo, a self-contradictory fall into the facticity of the present,” (187) moving in antiparallel to the gradual conglomeration of power that Urizen attains. What critics get at is the precarious logic that grounds Blake’s ontology — the self-contradictory, unstable foundation that anticipates the myriad symptoms of a fallen world, all of its topical problems, hypocrisies, and blind spots.

Published in 1794, William Blake’s grand illuminated poem *The Book of Urizen* imagined the origins of a universe, with the cosmic width and breadth one would expect. Over the course of the narrative, an Abrahamic God-like figure, Urizen, is exiled from the stagnant realm of the Eternals. Confined to a “self-closed, all-repelling” void, Urizen creates a “fallen world” not dissimilar to ours, which he rules with an iron fist. As retribution, the Eternals send Los, a poet-prophet figure, to bind and forge a human image for Urizen while he slumbers. At the end of the seven ages of Urizen’s embodiment, Los weeps over this pitiable bondage. From these tears, the first female, Enitharmon is born, who gives birth to Los’ son, Orc. The poem comes to an abrupt end as Urizen awakes from his sleep to survey his “generations,” before weaving a web of religion that keeps his progeny in blind subservience.

Originally envisioned as parts of a straightforward trilogy, the works that followed *The Book of Urizen* — *The Book of Ahania* & *The Book of Los* — did less to advance the

plot in a coherent temporal order than to circle around, or more accurately, dwell on, that central act of creation. Indeed, these clusters of narratives function like a disordered psyche in textual form, with each work providing a fragmented perspective that overlaps, refracts, or repositions elements of the others. And with no growth or refining of knowledge, readers studying this troubled psyche are forced to wonder *why* the poems are so preoccupied with reenacting its trauma. Beyond narrative, this repetition is embedded stylistically, with its linguistic repetition, and genetically, via its characters' reproduction. Ultimately, *The Book of Urizen* is itself a repetition, in and of itself, because it is a reworking of Genesis that also draws inspiration from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

How to understand the work of repetition that *The Book of Urizen* both performs and narrates? This is the question I started with, envisioning a psychoanalytic reading of the poem's repetition confined to the horizon of *The Book of Urizen*. As Freud said, however, "from error to error, one discovers the entire truth." Because Blake's work is notoriously resistant to ideological containment — especially a school that locks itself within the claustrophobic chamber of the psyche — my study quickly expanded into the political and economic milieu of Blake's time, as well as Blake's material processes of engraving. Examining *The Book of Urizen*'s broader context, I realized that it was a special type of repetition, namely reproduction, that organizes the relevant aspects of both the Industrial Revolution and Blake's craft. Between these two spheres, I located *The Book of Urizen*, a text that critiques the conditions of its time, but also pushes itself beyond the horizon of those conditions. In this respect, I am treating *The Book of Urizen* as a poetic form which occupies two perspectives: at once, within the present dystopian conditions of the

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Industrial Revolution and forwards into the “real and eternal world of which this vegetable universe is but a faint shadow.”

Importantly, this form has a different purview than a God’s eye perspective, which is only wise because of its external omniscience. Instead, *The Book of Urizen* is able to simultaneously embody the two perspectives because of its etched, reproduced form. This reproduced form allows the poem, on one hand, to absorb the political and economic atmosphere of its time; on the other, it allows it to fashion itself as a Blakean copy. This term, introduced by the thesis, refers to an experimental reproduction which inherits features of its prototype, but also tweaks and remodels them so as to not efface its status as a unique object with an individual identity.

The structure of this argument is broken up into three regions: the germinal stages of the Industrial Revolution, the interior of *The Book of Urizen*, and the material processes of Blake’s poems. The first two spaces are joined together by their treatment of reproduction as a deadening, reductive form of repetition. In the first chapter, building from a survey of the political and economic theory of the time, the thesis examines how the process of commercial intaglio engraving acted as a metaphor for not just industrial labor organization, as labor theorist Charles Babbage argued, but of a production of an entire labor force writ large, churning out laborers and objects alike. Intaglio engraving is an apt model for these social and economic processes: using a great deal of force, the plate impresses its form onto a stream of papers, generating an exacting conformity to the original prototype. This “technology of conformity” becomes the key for producing, maintaining, and correcting a productive society in the early stages of industrial capitalism.

The second chapter applies theory to poetic practice. By delving into the poem, we explore how *The Book of Urizen* internalizes its milieu and reforms it into the fantastic universe of Urizen, who might be the factory supervisor exemplar. Blake activates industrial themes in this poem, from which we assemble a theory of commercial art that he seeks to avoid. And because this chapter is concerned with the internal psyche of the poem, it incorporates a psychoanalytic theory of repetition within the text's theme of reproduction. By shoring this gap between industrial reproduction and Freudian repetition, we can suggest how the poem registers historical concerns as a trauma at the level of the psyche. Here, the thesis relies on Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* to map the mechanisms of trauma and repetition.

In the final chapter, this study comes to a juncture. After all, recent research has effectively restored the political implications to Blake's work. But from these studies, of which my work is included, a string of questions surface that relate to Blake's progressive aesthetic and political projects. How can an artist critique without "becoming what you behold" and falling privy to those ideological errors? As an engraver whose medium is indebted to reproduction, how can Blake avoid its deadening effects? To frame these inquiries as a positive statement: Blake's craft is necessarily mechanized by reproduction, but in order to create a working aesthetic theory not hindered by this, he must find a way to accommodate it, so that his method is not the blind spot in his scheme.

To attend to these issues, the final chapter turns to the material practices of Blake's work. By subjecting the processes of commercial intaglio engraving and Blake's invented method, relief etching, to a close reading, we tease out their respective philosophical and ontological implications. Finally, the last section addresses the poem's textual instability.

Of the eight extant copies of *The Book of Urizen*, each functions as a unique variant, with individual plate orders, tonal illustrations, and thematic emphases in each copy. What emerges from the analysis of *The Book of Urizen*'s form is a workable model of the Blakean copy. In poetic practice, *The Book of Urizen* effaces standard linear and spatial constructions found in the factory and suggests a radical post-Newtonian ontology verified by modern physics.

1 //

The Art of Reproduction*Copying Bodies in the Early Industrial Revolution*

“The same identity pervades all the arts of printing; the impressions from the same block, or the same copper-plate, have a similarity which no labour could produce by hand.”

Charles Babbage, *On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures*

“The great art, therefore, in managing the affairs of the Poor is to establish Systems whereby the poor man, verging upon indigence, may be propped up and kept in his station.”

Patrick Colquhoun, *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*

“These People know Enough of Artifice but Nothing Of Art.”

William Blake, From “A Public Address To The Chalcographic Society”

What was the sound echoing through 1790’s London, during the germinal stages of the Industrial Revolution? Saree Makdisi suggests an unusual answer — the clatter of the copperplate printing press, Blake’s own craft. After all, it was the engineer and philosopher, Charles Babbage, who devoted an entire chapter in his book, *On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures*, titled “Of Copying,” to extensively detail the major techniques of printing. Babbage concludes the chapter and generalizes its import as follows: “The principle of copying contribut[es] this, as in every other department of manufacture, to the uniformity and the cheapness of the work produced” (92). Indeed, the concept of reproduction would undergird the factory of the Industrial Revolution, mechanized by advancements in textile production, steam powering, and iron making. By the mid-19th century, England would account for 23% of global industrial production. This was because according to Babbage, “the efficient modern factory should ideally reiterate [the logic of copperplate printing], producing a stream of theoretically identical copies based on the same original ‘impression,’” (87) Makdisi writes. In this metaphor, the copperplate became the standard to which all reproductions must conform — an external reference point that determines the texture, shape, and size of copies. Deviations

from the standard prototype were not valued as unique features, but treated as instances for the larger mechanisms to intervene and troubleshoot, so as to extract a perfect conformity from each product.

But we might stretch this metaphor outside Babbage's original bounds and read copperplate engraving as not only a model for the factory, but society writ large. During this time, a large group of primarily conservative thinkers — among which were the familiar names of Jeremy Bentham, Patrick Colquhoun, and Babbage — were intellectually engaged with the social engineering and production of a working class, leading to an “explosion of interest in [and writing on]...London's worker” (100). After all, factory goods were only as efficiently produced as their producers were efficient. It was this link between factory objects and citizen subjects that conservative thinkers emphasized, extending the economic reverberations of the Industrial Revolution to the political realm. At the opposite pole developed a progressive discourse familiar to the 21st-century subject. This thought erected a staunch — and perhaps wishful — divide between the economic and political domains, claiming an irreducible political freedom for the subject, regardless of his economic class. What emerged in practice from this broad spectrum of theory, however, was a set of conservative techniques that refined the mass of individuals which populated an overcrowded, urban London into a coherent, synchronized labor body — in short, the application of factory's technology of conformity onto the human flesh. This strategy included an emphasis on surveillance, precise points of contact between authority and citizens, and the careful management of class systems.

The most visible evidence of this new technology of conformity was the Thames River Police force that patrolled the Pool of London in order to prevent the widespread cargo theft that routinely occurred there. The theoretical roots for this preventative policing were conceived by the merchant, magistrate, and intellectual Patrick Colquhoun, nicknamed the “architect” of police by 19th-century historian Melville Lee. Colquhoun writes in the Preface of his 1796 book, *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*:

Police in this country may be considered as a *new Science*; the properties which consist not in the Judicial Powers which lead to *Punishment*, and which belong to Magistrates alone; but in the PREVENTION AND DETECTION OF CRIMES, and in those other Functions which relate to INTERNAL REGULATIONS for the well ordering and comfort of Civil Society.

The Police of the Metropolis, in every point of view, is a subject of great importance to be known and understood; since every innocent and useful Member of the Community has a particular interest in the correct administration of whatever relates to the Morals of the People, and to the protection of the Public against Fraud and Depredation.

Colquhoun’s capitalization properly stresses the shifted focus on the internal machinery of law, which intercepts the crime before it can be carried out and processed retroactively by justice. His criminology retracts the study to embryonic stages of infraction and places the necessary apparatus, policing, at the very cusp of crime, so as to preempt and render unnecessary the punitive ends of the courtroom. The historian Peter Linebaugh notes the economic logic of Colquhoun’s theory when he writes, “It combined law and economics, the protection of property and the protection of production” (427). But even more than this, Colquhoun’s prose is inflected with the discourse of privacy and its disturbance — “prevention,” “detection,” and “internal” all connote the invasiveness of this type of policing. This is a policing which forces itself into the cracks and crevices of society and turns its incisive gaze onto the consciousness of the individual. It is a

policing which must impress itself on “every innocent and useful Member of the Community.” As Colquhoun continues later, it must be “one general Law, comprehending the whole of the excellent regulations made for the City of London . . . extended to every part of the Metropolis, and its suburbs; that a perfect uniformity might prevail” (599). The Blakean rebuttal to Colquhoun’s mono-law would be, as written in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, that “One Law for the Lion & Ox is Oppression.” What Blake instinctively grasps is that although a uniform code would seem to present the paradigm of a individual liberal democracy, it actually reinforces the counter-strategy: the homogenization of subjects, thereby transforming individuals into citizens who behave uniformly.

The creation of a homogenized citizenry included the formation of a reliable population of laborers. Before a crime was even enacted, Colquhoun was interested in calibrating the ideal conditions of poverty in which to keep a subject, which Linebaugh describes elsewhere as “Newtonian in its obsession with enumerating the ‘flux’ of wealth and crime” (427). Colquhoun writes in his chapter “The State of the Poor” that “Labour is absolutely requisite to the existence of all Governments; and as it is from the Poor only that labour can be expected, so far from being an evil they become under proper regulations, an advantage.” He continues, under his classification of the first class of poor — the useful poor — that “the great art, therefore, in managing the affairs of the Poor is to establish Systems whereby the poor man, verging upon indigence, may be propped up and kept in his station” (36-367). And indeed, Makdisi points to the creation of a whole swath of social institutions including the school, orphanage, asylum, and workhouse,

whose broader project was the “careful production from the raw material of the children of the indigent and poverty-stricken classes, of ‘industrious’ laborers” (102).

Michel Foucault’s seminal *Discipline and Punish* gives us a clearer and more encompassing picture of the “production” of the proper citizen, emphasizing the direct physical contact between disciplinary mechanisms and soldier’s bodies. In the chapter “Docile Bodies,” Foucault describes the process of military training: “By the late eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body; the machine required can be constructed; posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it ...” (135). Foucault’s precise syntax contains a profusion of passive voice — an expository technique that effaces the identity of monarchical disciplinarian and foregrounds the anonymous *mechanisms* of discipline. Lurking at the level of Foucault’s mechanical vocabulary is the suggestion that the soldier is a not a subject so much as a *factory object*, something to be produced. Power insinuates itself into every fiber of the soldier, leaving a precise outline and shape, thereby replacing the living contours of the individual with a uniformly tooled stamp of its own design.

It was through this technique of contact between power and individual that the laborer was formed. From policing to social institutions to the factory line, these multiple points of disciplinary contact corresponded to a much larger social design, which could seize the individual under its press and leave no surplus space of his identity unorganized by its force — not unlike the process of copperplate engraving which inscribes its design on the bare sheet.

“We find that these human beings are only regarded as parts of the machinery which they set in motion, and with little attention to their moral welfare,” (157) Charles Wing writes in *Evils of the Factory System, Demonstrated by Parliamentary Evidence*. But there was a great deal of attention paid to their moral welfare. After a visit to a factory, the labor theorist Andrew Ure wrote in the *The Philosophy of Factory Systems*, “Such is the factory system, replete with prodigies in mechanics and political economy, which promises in its future growth to become the great minister of civilization to the terraqueous globe, enabling this country, as its heart, to diffuse along with its commerce the life-blood of science and religion to myriads of people still lying in the region and shadow of death” (18). Interchangeable with commodity objects, cultural objects, (e.g.: “science and religion”) were equally fair game for Empire to diffuse into the hearts, minds, and pockets of consumers.

Where is William Blake in this environment? Makdisi chooses to position Blake’s philosophy within the conservative discourse, with the obvious caveat that Blake was of a pre-Foucauldian bent, in that his concern was how to wrest the subject *out* of this social machinery, rather than jam him in more snugly. This social machinery undergirds the texture of despotic Urizen’s universe in *The Book of Urizen*. As we will see in the next chapter, Urizen — illustrated in certain extant copies with a burin and quill — stands in for the factory master who reproduces and reproduces and reproduces. Like the conservative social theorists of Blake’s time, Urizen conceives of a universe that runs with the logic of a well-oiled machine, populated by conforming bodies that operate under a universal belief system. To reveal these parallels, Blake dramatizes the

mechanics of this fictional universe so that it will reveal the moral fault lines, hypocrisies, and psychological toll taken by the problems of his time.

2 //

Secrets of Wisdom

Repetition in The Book of Urizen

“Improvement makes strait roads, but the crooked roads without Improvement are the roads of Genius.”

William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

“That of the cameraman consists of multiple fragments which are assembled under a new law.”

Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”

“One command, one joy, one desire,
One curse, one weight, one measure,
One King, one God, one Law.”

Urizen, *The Book of Urizen*

In the previous chapter, we traced the copy as a structural unit of value through various registers of 18th-century London: from the humble copperplate and its stream of identical pages to the roaring Industrial-era factory and its reproductions, and finally, the superseding social system and its labor force. But where is the copy in *The Book of Urizen*? In the historically and politically opaque universe of *The Book of Urizen* (where form and narrative elements are an ingenious protection from stringent sedition and treason laws) the Industrial-era reverberations of reproduction can be hard to hear. Yet its politically neutral sister, repetition, echoes throughout *The Book of Urizen*. Words are repeated: in the first five stanzas, the word “unknown” is repeated as many times; in the rest of the chapter, “dark” and “unseen,” four and three times, respectively — all of which describes its eponymous character. Why does the poem prolong its epistemological uncertainty even though it is equipped with the authority of a narrator? More than this, Urizen repeats his dreadful labors; Chapter 4 appears twice in some versions; the characters genetically repeat themselves; and in formal terms, the narrative repeats itself, rewriting its origin story three different times. In each of the three cases, repetition

degrades the outcome: the products of Urizen's labors are steadily miniaturized; characters conceive "trembling and pale" "spectral repetition[s]" instead of proper children (Goss 426); and the poem never condenses into a conclusion from its retelling. But even if these repetitions do not cohere into an aesthetic grammar, as a compendium, they correspond to Blake's larger narrative scheme, which "undergoes a progressive decrescendo, a self-contradictory fall into the facticity of the present" (Cooper 187).

Reproduction and repetition are symptoms of this troubled facticity of present. In the last chapter, we positioned mechanical reproduction as a defining feature of Blake's milieu; and while the poem predates the school of psychoanalysis, it still sketches out many of the revelations that Freud and Lacan would later formalize into an infrastructure of repetition. These discourses are useful, for if Blake intentionally embeds the psychological profile of the fallen world into his poem, the symptomatic aporia and hypocrisies that bubble to the text's surface are not structural impasses, but deliberate architectural features, intended to critique the political and psychological systems of the present. Therefore the symptom is a positivity, one that will be examined and classified within the two familiar discourses of Marx and Freud. In later chapters, we will reach the point of the symptom's exhaustion, the point where *The Book of Urizen* is able to transcend its fallen world horizon.

I

Time on times he divided, & measur'd
 Space by space in his ninefold darkness
 Unseen, unknown; changes appear'd
 Like desolate mountains rifted furious
 By the black winds of perturbation (*BU*, 3:8-10)

While *The Book of Urizen* contains a narrative proper, a poetic stratum forwards a critique of creation that has turned mechanical and repetitive. The lines quoted suggest that fixation on repetition of a specific order, that of the factory assembly line, which would become the prime economic generator in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Prior to that, however, still in the prenatal “abominable void,” the poem constructs the conditions necessary for the factory we examined in the last chapter to produce its stream of ontologically stable objects and laborers. In these lines, Urizen renders the two foundational dimensions — time and space — fixed, objective, and stable, condensing or pressing them as a manufacturer might into the discrete and interchangeable units of seconds, minutes, hours, inches, feet, and miles.

Once these sublime forces are neutralized by Urizen, the action of the poem continues to shrink down to the scale of the terrestrial, while still retaining the reverberations of the factory, shown in this characteristically dense passage: “& the rolling of wheels / as of swelling seas, sound in his clouds / in his hills of stor’d snows, in his mountains / of hail & ice; voices of terror, / are heard, like thunders of autumn, / when the cloud blazes over the harvest” (3:30-5). From this wonderful chaos of mechanical and natural symbols, the poem transposes the industrial “rolling of wheels” and the authoritative “voices of terror” across the four spatial coordinates of nature: earth (mountains), water (swelling seas), air (cloud), and fire (blazes), all of which is anchored to the prudent season of harvest, in which one does not waste its agricultural bounty but “[reserve] for the days of futurity” (4:9). However, this cataclysmic refining of the elements turns out not to be the unique act of a fascist genius, but an iteration of a process that is continually repeated, recycled from Urizen’s first speech in the second chapter, which retells how he first subdued the

four elements (3:14-23). The poem foregrounds the steady de-escalation of creative action, the rote cycles into which Urizen feeds various bits of infinity, and the barren “desart” landscapes into which they harden. Instead of the spontaneous acts of creation that follow the through-lines of desire (“Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.” (*MHH*, 10:68)), Urizen creates, or rather *produces*, according to calculated strategy. His actions are merely the compulsory shadows that follow a thought, rather than meanings in and of themselves. In this way Urizen’s psyche operates like a factory. “[Becoming] what you behold” works in both directions, so it is logical that Urizen’s mechanical mind can only conceive of, and therefore produce, the inhospitable terrain of Earth. In a University of Michigan dissertation on Blake, John N. Cords echoes this thought, writing, “In other words, [Urizen] is acting less like a paragon of reason (as he is often depicted) and more like an automaton with no mindful guidance” (289). Elsewhere Cords writes, “Urizenic error — and this includes Urizen’s labor — once initiated, can only be repeated” (283).

But the poem is equally concerned with how exactly this inhospitable terrain *can* be inhabited and maintained — a problem that benefits from considering the aesthetic qualities of Urizen’s mechanical art, especially in the context of Walter Benjamin’s seminal essay on the subject. In Benjamin’s essay “Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” he writes of the estrangement between the film actor and the market through which the image of his visage is distributed:

But now the reflected image has become separable, transportable ... The market where he offers not only his labor, but his whole self, his heart and soul, is beyond his reach. During the shooting he has as little contact with it as any article made in a factory. This may contribute to that oppression, that new anxiety which ... grips the actor before the camera (11).

In the passage, Benjamin echoes Blake's own private angers about the pressure of commercialization that his artisan craft was registering in the 1790's, albeit of engraving not film. In a letter, Blake noted that that the practice was undergoing a transformation into "the Life's Labour of Ignorant Journeymen, Suited to the Purposes of Commerce no doubt, for Commerce cannot endure Individual Merit; its insatiable Maw must be fed by what all can do Equally well." (Blake's observation proved not to be paranoid, as labor theorist Babbage would use the engraving process as a conceptual model for the factory.) What both critiques articulate is the fragmentation of a whole into discrete and interchangeable parts so as to be circulated within the market. Both choose the language of cannibalism, though Benjamin's graphic rhetoric even surpasses the violence of Blake's. By the end of his essay, Benjamin, via a chain of rhetorical logic, will overcome these visceral reactions to mechanical reproduction, arguing that the ability to obliterate and re-shape is the medium's revolutionary potential. Yet Benjamin concedes that this purpose of art exists more in theory than in capitalist practice. *The Book of Urizen*, by enacting this theory, illuminates its critical junctures and flaws and may suggest Benjamin's vanguard creator, and a certain breed of artist that was Blake's peer, is a Urizenic one.

Benjamin argues that this mechanical automaton leaves no room for aura¹, but a Blakean view reveals that the aura is the very congealing gunk that binds all those disparate fragments and shards together. From the god's eye perspective of the reader,

¹ Miriam Bratu Hansen describes Benjamin's aura as "shorthand for the particular qualities of traditional art that [Benjamin] observed waning in modernity, associated with the singular status of the artwork, its authority, authenticity, and unattainability... [Aura] is defined in antithetical relation to the productive forces that have been rendering it socially obsolete" (336). Benjamin imbues the term with a negative valence.

The Book of Urizen scrubs all Romantic idealization from its barren Earth. But that does not mean that the same happens at the smaller level of narrative. In fact, we see the Earth stuffed into its thick, impenetrable envelope of the aura: “And a roof vast petrific around, / On all sides He fram’d.” (5:28-9) Blake names the final stages of this encasement the “net of religion,” but it is equally a Benjamin-like “fabric of tradition” that holds the inhabitants at arms-length, and perhaps most like Marx’s fetish that conceals the “relations of production [and] assumes a material shape which is independent of their control and their conscious individual action” (187). For if the dronish hordes did not have their senses paralyzed and shrunken, they would be able to see the metal rivets and oppressive defects of Urizen’s supposedly airtight “iron law.”

The metal imagery that the poem perpetually links together — like links in a chain — are themselves yoked back to the Brass Books. The Brass Books encapsulate the poem’s awareness of itself as such, exemplifying what Paul Mann means when he calls the poem “a book about books” (49). As a bona fide Symbol, Urizen’s oeuvre holds the privileged status of being the Universe’s first art object, while simultaneously being a tool of oppression. Indeed, the nexus between art and weapon, between liberatory and propagandist modes of expression, that the Brass Books occupy is crucial to Blake’s view of art. The contents of the Brass Books are “secrets of wisdom” that Urizen will “unfold” to the world in Chapter 3. Far from suggesting a transcendent esotericism, the meaning of the “secrets of dark contemplation” — and the aura they emit — hinges on the double meaning of the word “secret.” Secret is derived from the Latin verb *sēcernēre*, which logically means “to separate, divide off.” But the meaning comes into sharper relief when we examine its other etymological offspring, the word “secrete;” Oxford English

Dictionary defines it as “the action of a gland or some analogous organ in extracting certain matters from the blood or sap and elaborating from them a particular substance, either to fulfill some function within the body or to undergo excretion as waste.” The physiological connotation elegantly coheres with the poem’s scheme, which is populated with organ-related and bodily terms, as well with reference to Urizen’s “body” of work. Armed with this, the etymological dialectic between “secret” and “secrete” can articulate the formal dialectic of the aura — a substance whose omniscience (in terms of its authority and circulatory secretion) is mechanized by its secrecy and self-abstraction, or the distance it forces between its art object and observer.

From here it becomes impossible to separate definitively, as Benjamin does, the secreted aura from the mechanical medium. Read literally as “secret(e)s of wisdom,” the Brass Books are spliced-up bits of wisdom held together by the formal constraints of a book. It is logical that Urizen’s art object corresponds with Benjamin’s revolutionary conception of art that “consists of multiple fragments which are assembled under a new law.” *The Book of Urizen* shows that in practice mechanical reproduction is still clogged with the gunk of aura, which will be harder to wipe off than by merely altering the medium.

While the Urizenic model of art certainly anticipates and critiques a conception of art that Benjamin would not theorize until much later, this mechanical art had a very real resonance in the Blake’s life. David Wagenknecht notes that the traditional art schooling that the engraver received “took the form of an economic process whereby works of art were technologically reproduced and “translated” — imitated, illustrated but also plagiarized, bowdlerized — by means that, for Blake systematically devalued artistic

qualities he favored” (327). Wagenknecht specifically highlights the artistic techniques “translated,” “reproduced,” “illustrated,” and “plagiarized” — terms that are united by the reproductive functions inherent to them.

II

Here it will be useful to clarify the link between repetition and reproduction, so that we can shore up the distance between the economic and psychological regions of the text. Both repetition and reproduction are contracted to a prior instance of time or space: repetition is obligated to rework an original traumatic event (a temporal coordinate), while the labor of reproduction is to recreate an archetypal object (a spatial one). In uniting repetition and reproduction, trauma and commodity, a Urizenic figure exercises control over Newtonian time and space in his mechanical universe. By integrating these two definitions into one unit, we can characterize repetition as a traumatic symptom that industrial reproduction is entwined with in the poem’s schme. It is these simultaneous intonations that the poem entertains which allow commodity to register as trauma, to dramatize historical patterns at the level of psychological symptoms.

But we need to determine the nature of the original trauma-cum-commodity that sparks this series of repetitions-cum-reproductions is². In short, what is the event that precedes, provokes, and shapes the poem’s course? In *The Book of Urizen*, this traumatic primal event coincides with the formation of Urizen’s identity. The fall from a formless void into the structured reality of Earth corresponds with Jacques Lacan’s mirror stage, which, the French psychoanalyst notes, is “the transformation that takes place in the

² Here I am augmenting Freud’s scheme of trauma and repetition with the earlier economic discourse. Freud first theorized repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, in which he classified a type of painful repetition that not only disobeyed the pleasure principle but which was in fact regulated by a perverse separate drive, *thanatos*.

subject when he assumes an image [the ideal I]...which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone” (76). To conceptualize this stage geographically, the subject is cut from the continuous and indeterminate space of the real by the violent penetration of the symbolic and forced into the constructed world of the imaginary. Practically, because the real exists beyond the threshold of language, it can only be conceptualized vis-a-vis its relationship to the symbolic and imaginary domains. Referring to this, Lacan writes, “The cut made by the signifying chain is the only cut that verifies the structure of the subject as a discontinuity in the real” (678). His statement suggests that the real and the symbolic have a symbiotic relationship that props the subject up between them. In this section, we will examine this subject — how Blake dramatizes Urizen’s violent rupturing from the Eternals (“rent from his side”) who represent the real, the locked interplay between Eternals and Urizen, the embodiment of Urizen’s form, and finally how Blake conjures the hazy shadow of ideal I that remains permanently beyond the cusp of Urizen’s realization.

To illustrate the effects of the traumatic ejection from the real, Blake foregrounds the emergence of Urizen’s delineated form against the nebulous backdrop of the poem, which deploys an ambivalence towards narrative order and character identity. Mitchell refers to some of these instances as “cosmic schizophrenia...[with characters] capable of becoming one another” (91). The Preludium, in particular, enacts this cosmic schizophrenia, as power struggles morph from clear transactions into tangled knots: “Of the primeval Priest’s assum’d power, / When the Eternals spurn’d back his religion; And gave him a place in the north,” (Preludium:1-3). This narrative detail prompts more questions than answers: is Urizen banished by the Eternals or does he escape to the

North? The action immediately following in the first chapter suggests that the “self-closed” Urizen voluntarily disbanded for the North. But Mitchell fruitfully complicates the coordinates of this banishment by anchoring Urizen’s exodus to the “place in the north” to the poem’s literary predecessor, *Paradise Lost*, which harbors a contradictory geography. Lucifer is ejected from the “place in the north,” or heaven, to a “place eternal Justice had prepar’d / For the rebellious.”

As in later work, *Milton*, in which Blake writes the eponymous character into the poem in order to salvage his artistic and moral fallacies and redeem his legacy, here, the poem receives inspiration from a divine source, only to scramble its origins and distort its relations. Unlike the traditional literary reference that validates the artistic gesture, this poem’s intellectual diversion only introduces epistemological uncertainty. Heaven is Hell and forced ejection is voluntary exit. The poem can’t even produce Urizen’s definitive identity. “Some said it is Urizen,” (3:5-6) and the inertia of the repetition of this phrase grants it the questionable status of a fact. Briefly emerging as “I” in the Preludium, the narrator drops below the surface of the poem, never to appear again. Lacking the status of an author, which superimposes a narrative and meaning onto the chaotic tangle of action, this lost narrator is merely a vessel for the turbulent, barely contained “dark visions of torment.”

At a level beneath narrative, identity and psychic state are also amorphous categories. Mitchell points out that the Eternals’ actions are forced into reactive lockstep with Urizen: “The Eternal’s reaction ... is really only an imitation of his activity” (91). Over the course of the poem, Los progressively mirrors Urizen’s identity, articulating the wordless and primordial moans of Urizen’s “unorganized” state and later his wounds

healing where Urizen's do not. Together, the Eternals and Los are fluid substances, filling in the negative space of Urizen's actions. Later in the poem, from Los' enclosed world, he "look'd back with anxious desire / But the space undivided by existence / struck horror into his soul" (3:45-47). "Anxious desire" is the key phrase; it suggests that Los is suspended between the tyrannical enclosure of Earth and the boundless, infinite abstraction of Eternals, with a mediated desire too weak to tunnel him out.

Upon this plane, which persistently destabilizes narrative and character facticity, is Urizen, who is distinguished by a oppressive forcefulness that instates a perimeter of bounding lines around his creation and his own identity. At the outset of the poem, Urizen is described in formless terms — "unknown," "unprolific," "soul-shuddering vacuum" — in much the same way that Lacan conceptualizes the real, writing that the real is that which "resists symbolization absolutely." Yet by subjecting Urizen to linguistic description and naming what he is not (known, prolific, a positivity), the poem hitches these features onto Urizen's identity. By the end of Chapter 5 and through the procession of seven ages, he has coagulated from a "soul-shudd'ring" vacuum into a positive body with proper organs and shape, albeit of Brobdingnagian scale ("till a roof shaggy wild inclos'd / In an orb, his fountain of thought" (10:33-34). "ribs, like a bending cavern (10:39)). From the tangled net of narrative and character, Urizen's "bounding line" (a Blakean term) triumphantly cuts through spatial and temporal coordinates, breaking up the dreary, formless stagnation of the Eternals: "Enraged & stifled with torment / He threw his right Arm to the north / His left Arm to the south / Shooting out in anguish deep" (13:12-15).

But Urizen's "bounding line" lends itself to two different interpretations. On one hand, the line restrains, working to enforce traumatic separation. On the other, restraint, delineation, and rational order are a necessary precondition of the Enlightenment episteme that Urizen produces from his "self-contemplating" labor — as compared to the incurious equilibrium of the Eternals that has neither bounding lines nor creative contributions. Yet to cross the threshold into the domain of the imaginary and symbolic, as Urizen does, is to construct a totalizing vision of the self, or ideal I, that is forever beyond the horizon of language and action. Mitchell expresses this sentiment (absent of the Lacanian connotation) when he writes that "Urizen is the personification of the imagination striving for this illusion of the absolute and the objective." Urizen's ideal I takes the shape of the "laws of prudence," (28:6) "reserv'd for the days of futurity" (4:9) — abstractions projected into the future that dictate present behavior.

It is important to note that Urizen is forced into this scenario of over-determination in order to escape the Eternal void. In Donald Ault's analysis of a Blake illustration (a precisely drawn human figure against an indeterminate background), he suggests how contraries can function together in Blake's economy: "[The] figure is constructing a limited, fixed, and unchanging model of his fundamental experiences to stave off the sense of the dissolving quality of the outer world. Yet it is the very act of constructing the model that separates the worlds into inner and outer, definite and indefinite ... The background is both the cause and the effect of the central action." Similarly, there is no inspired answer in *The Book of Urizen*, only a set of actions driven by necessity and desperation rather than illuminated creativity. Neither is there any real independence of ideas, only a reciprocal determination. Thus, Urizen's lot to repeat is an extension of this

inevitability. “Rent from his side,” Urizen’s fall into bounded form is a traumatic event that echoes through the series of repetitions and reproductions of the poem.

It is important to note, however, that these iterations are not pure repetitions or reproductions. Using the thermodynamic map, Freud theorized in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that repetition was energy deployed and redeployed through a hardened psychic channel, through a multiplicity of contexts, i.e. “repetition with a difference.” Similarly, even as the homogeneous product is designed for a homogeneous market, the factory also accommodates, and relies on, this “repetition with a difference” as new variations of products are continually turned out for consumption. But while the constantly tweaked commodity may differ in specificities, it is produced by the same mechanisms (or to use Freud’s language, drive) of all other commodities and, therefore, functions identically in the marketplace. In both uptakes of repetition and reproduction, as Edward Larissy suggests, “plurality may suggest the arbitrariness of the sign” (63). So it is this “arbitrariness of the sign” at which the cycles of Urizen’s reproduction arrive — rhythms of creation that erode existing meanings and fail to produce new ones. Like a copperplate which has a finite amount of copies that it is able to produce before the quality of the copies’ details are degraded, Urizen’s original is eventually lost to abstraction and nothing new arises. Inhabitants of Urizen’s generation are “shrunk up from existence” (25:40) and whittled down and bound by their “narrowing perceptions” (25:47).

What emerges from these preoccupations with repetition and reproduction is a critical theory of art that Blake is advancing, one that reflected on the historical conditions surrounding his craft. In theory and poetic practice, art (and especially etching) was subject to the deadening effects of Urizenic reproduction. The poem displays a meta-

textual awareness, Mitchell argues, in versions of the poem's illustrations, where "Urizen is holding a quill pen in his right hand, and a burin, or a similar engraving tool, in his left, indicating that he is to be seen at least partially as an emblem of a certain kind of relationship between the arts of poetry and engraving" (84). But this emblem, and the various mechanisms that were producing it, ran up against Blake's utopian project for reading, which Makdisi characterizes as "a kind of reading that would open out from the text, rather than trying to seduce the reader into its hidden confines" (162).

This transparent, yet also pliable anti-esotericism is the antipode of Urizen's Brass Books that dominate his creation. If this reproduction of the fallen world exhausts its significance with every turn, the Blakean copy must accumulate meaning through its recreations. Therefore, Blake's artistic method occupies a unique juncture that accommodates these alternate preoccupations of reproduction, at once representing the subtractive "similarity with a difference," as well as opening up the possibility to be a copy that enriches itself through reproduction. So on one hand, Blake's reproduced poetry is conceived by and between Marxist and psychoanalytic understandings; yet on the other, the poetry as Blake conceives it must move beyond fallen world reproduction. Blake's art is necessarily mechanized by reproduction, but in order to create a working aesthetic theory not hindered by it, he must find a way to accommodate reproduction, so that his method is not the blind spot in his scheme.

3 //

Blake's Poetics of Poiesis I

Relief Etching as Radical Methodology

"Ideas cannot be given but in their minutely appropriate words. Nor can a design be made without its minutely appropriate execution."

William Blake, From "A Public Address To The Chalcographic Society"

"As the seventeenth century moves on the image of clock-work extends, until, with Newton, it has engrossed the universe."

E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism"

In Blake studies, there is a tendency to treat him as a poet first and an artist second, and, consistent with this, in most print formats, image is subordinate to word — an informational supplement to text. However, Blake's images resist this hierarchy. As we know, Blake's his broader aesthetic philosophy cannot be separated from his material practices as a printmaker. Originally aspiring to be a painter, Blake was instead directed at an early age to commercial printing by his father, who considered it to be a more practical vocation. Clinging to the allure of painting, however, the young artist, once he had finished his printmaking apprenticeship, enrolled in the Royal Schools to study painting (Ward 21). However, the experience left Blake somewhat disillusioned, because as Wagenknecht suggests that while "Blake's [developing] printing method, rather than a technology for distributing copies, was in fact designed to be anti-technological, less 'reproductive' and therefore closer to handwork than original printing," (328) the dominant "English school" pedagogy was increasingly including commercial reproductive practices in its curriculum.

These "English school" tendencies showed the same features as Blake's political and social milieu: a shift towards commercialization from craftsmanship and a shift from originality into reproduction. As a craft, intaglio etching encapsulated the technology of

conformity that modulated the conservative economic and political discourse of the time, as we found in the first chapter of the thesis. While the second chapter unearths the mechanical reproduction in the texture of the poem and traces it to a psychic trauma, this chapter is concerned with the manufacture of this poetic texture. Blake's poem operates on a number of levels, and the superseding level is concerned with escaping this horizon of reproduction. Ultimately, the poem's meta-textual task is to find an aesthetic theory that accommodates reproduction so that Blake's method syncs up with his broader artistic and philosophic projects. The Blakean copy must accumulate rather than lose significance with each iteration.

Insofar as we can locate Blake's workshop in the politically and economically charged nexus of the 1790's — a juncture between commerce and craft, factory facsimile and original work of art, subservience and independence — we can explore the radical potential of the Blakean copy. This chapter will consider Blake's novel model of engraving, relief etching, against its commercial precursor, intaglio; we will see how this aesthetic form relates to Blake's philosophical theory; and how this method produces objects resistant to economic notions of space and time.

In 1788, Blake invented a technique that came to be known as relief etching. In a 1793 Prospectus, he wrote that it was “a method of Printing which combines the Painter and the Poet” (Viscomi 41). This method was the inverse of intaglio etching, the widespread commercial method of the time. In the intaglio process, an acid-resistant mixture of wax and resin would be spread over a copperplate. After hardening the wax with heat, a paper design was laid over, and a needle-like tool called a burin was used to trace the design, cutting through the waxy surface in order to expose the copper beneath.

Following this, the plate was “bitten” with acid, leaving an indented design. Blake’s method, relief etching, reversed this process. Drawing with a “stop-out” varnish as the ink (a liquid used by etchers to prevent further corrosion after a plate had been sufficiently bitten), Blake would compose the text and design in reverse directly onto the plate. After being treated with acid, the finished plate of relief etching would be left with a raised design (Viscomi 43).

An important feature of Blake’s technique was the lack of preliminary drafting required before he wrote and illustrated the poem directly onto the copperplate using a quill and varnish and needing nothing more than the verbal text (Viscomi 47). Thus, with this method, the copperplate becomes a stand-in for a painting canvas, which Blake noted when in a “A Public Address to the Chalocographic Society,” claiming that “Drawing is the Foundation & indeed the Superstructure. It is Drawing on Copper as Painting ought to be Drawing on Canvas” (440). Why was Blake adamant to characterize his craft as drawing rather than etching? We can understand Blake’s resistance to etching by examining the mechanics of intaglio etching, which served as Babbage’s model of the ideal factory, and can be characterized by a mechanical divide between mental conception and material execution. As such, intaglio etching required that the unit of text and design be drafted on paper before being traced by the burin. This is because the burin, unlike the quill, which Blake used to distribute the stop-out ‘ink’ during relief etching, has a very thin tip. In order to mimic the impression of a solid line from the tracing sheet, the burin makes a variety of three-dimensional cuts rather than etching a single, fluid stroke. Because of these technical constraints, the process necessitates a translation from paper to copper plate, a mediating schema that dictates the movement of

the tools. Even at the level of individual steps, intaglio etching is inscribed with a division between conception and execution.

Antithetical to intaglio etching is painting, which Blake's relief method drew its ethos from. It requires no such mediation between conception and execution, no mental sketching or blueprint. In fact, it is only through the bare material processes — the direct application of paintbrush to a canvas — that the metaphysical artistic meaning was realized. As Joseph Viscomi writes of Blake's ethos, "Invention and execution are organically intertwined" (Essick, "Production of Meaning" 9). As such, the painterly practice is grounded in the overcoming of Cartesian dualism through a unification of mental and physical activity. This is precisely why the direct contact of quill and copper plate forms a critical nexus for Blake's artistic philosophy. It is the site of inspired activity — activity not indebted to the mechanical reproduction of a static mental model, but that which animates spontaneous desire. It follows that Blake's style is characterized by "tone subordinate to line" (Viscomi 37) because the unbroken line is the most fluid link between desire and conception. This smooth stroke is also the "bounding line" which contains meaning, but that can be transcended or transgressed when its boundaries are no longer relevant.

In a summary of the critical field, Robert N. Essick rehearses Morris Eaves' counterargument that Blake, to the contrary, foregrounded the mental conception of his artistic production over the material execution. Eaves bases this argument on a statement in Blake's "Public Address," reading, "Execution is only the *result* of Invention," (Essick, "Production of Meaning" 9) as well as Blake's hostility to materiality, or

“nature, the vegetable glass” that other Romantic artists sentimentalized, such as in Wordsworth’s naturalism.

However, there are reasons to push back against Eaves’ argument. While Blake distrusted the belief that nature contained inherent metaphysical meaning, he did envision nature as a blank canvas upon which the boundless human imagination could project its self-derived bounding lines; “where man is not, nature is barren.” (*MHH*, 10:68) Indeed, it is only through this entanglement of mental and physical practice that man fully realizes his creativity. To prioritize conception over execution is to bifurcate a symbiotic process, thereby artificially limiting the creative results of such a relationship and compounding the delusion that “man has [a] body distinct from his soul.” (*MHH*, 4:1)

In fact, the finished product of intaglio etching illustrates the dangers of splitting form from artistic meaning, execution from conception. After all, the acid biting drives the unit of text and design deep within the plate. Like Urizen’s “secrets of wisdom,” the artistic meaning withdraws from the surface into the hidden recesses of the copper plate, structurally withdrawing its wisdom. In short, execution obfuscates conception. Larissy writes that “whereas Blake extrudes design and text, intaglio incises them” (67). With relief etching, after the untreated sections of the plate are bitten away by acid, the wax-coated text and design unit is elevated above peripheral material. More relevant, both text and design are the positive structural result of the corrosion of the acid. The unit of artistic meaning exists, not in spite, but because of the wax-covered design’s exposure to its chemical opposition. Blake characterized this as “the melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.” Quite literally, artistic meaning is spatially

realized by this interplay of chemical contraries, accruing its soul through the construction of its body.

If Blake's method relies on the spontaneous and fluid entanglement of form and meaning, intaglio etching severs the aesthetic process into a series of discrete parts. Not only does the commercial intaglio method disrupt the relationship between mental and physical activity, it also divides the labor of text and design. According to Viscomi, the text and designs of a conventionally illustrated book were produced separately, even when the two units shared same leaf. After a page was typeset at the printers, it would travel to another design shop where it would be impressed with a pictorial plate, thereby joining together the work of two separate laborers (Viscomi 41). Far from an isolated practice, intaglio etching's division of a labor is connected to a much larger economic trend in the factory, which was as Ure writes "The principle of the factory system [i.e.] to substitute mechanical science for hand skill, and [to] partition ... a process into its essential constituents, for the division or graduation of labour among artisans" (20). Beyond disabling the role of a singular craftsman in the modern economy, this transition from artisan labor to factory labor also marked a new model of time — in which intaglio was ultimately enmeshed.

To examine what this new industrial time felt like, we must first analyze the workflow of the pre-commercial craftsman, who was the simultaneous conductor and musician in his orchestra of production, performing the entire series of tasks whose unified goal was the realization of a larger design. But during the object's production, there was no stable mental model to which the craftsman's labor must conform. Instead, the object could be revised throughout its production, its features modified, compounded,

or excised — illustrated by Blake’s ability to improvise not only the spatial placement of text and design but their aesthetic features during his process. In what E. P. Thompson calls task-orientation, “the day’s tasks seem to disclose themselves, by the logic of need, before the [craftsman’s] eyes” (59). In this orientation, the craftsman and the object were bound together in an intimate relationship, in which the craftsman had the ability to determine the “speed, intensity, rhythm, and flow” of the object’s production (Makdisi 121). The result was an imperfect and inefficient stream of labor with gaps of time unclosed by production, what Ure characterizes as “innumerable short pauses, separately of little account, but great when added together” (7). In short, time was an elastic substance. Thompson demonstrates this temporal fluidity in practice: “Within the general demands of the week’s tasks...the working day might be lengthened or shortened” (71).

Factory labor, conversely, sewed up these inefficient gaps by substituting a fixed blueprint for the craftsman in the role of the unifier of production, the common denominator. In order to produce this blueprint as efficiently as possible, a fluid stream of action was broken up into discrete segments, the craftsman demoted to factory worker, his range of movement limited and forced into repetition — in much the same manner as how commercial printing separated text and design into different processes. Spontaneous improvisation in the factory had the potential to throw the production line into chaos, unlike in the craftsman’s process, rendering nonconformity not just unnecessary but dangerous. With this factory narrative no longer accommodating poetic gaps and idiosyncratic rhythms, labor was overlaid with the homogenous beats of the metronome, forcing factory workers into lockstep with the steady ticking of the clock. Thompson notes that “by the division of labour; the supervision of labour; fines; bells and clocks;

money incentives; preachings and schoolings...new labour habits were formed, and a new time-discipline was imposed” (90). Because of this new rigor applied to uniformity of process, the stream of objects produced were evacuated of an individual character.

How do we position Blake’s process within this temporal grid? Against Makdisi’s author metaphor and Ure’s formalist analysis, we might interpret the craft of relief etching as a form of production in the Romantic tradition, a poetry of poiesis, if you will — in which spontaneous construction, imperfect form, and primitivism were key features. These “innumerable short pauses” produced by Blake’s task oriented labor, his disruptions in “speed, intensity, rhythm, flow” were not superfluities that had to be excised in the next cycle of reproduction, but were enmeshed in the object’s unique texture, the features which denoted each work’s identity. *The Book of Urizen* was produced by this irregular method, and post-printing interventions further radicalized the poem’s extreme inter-textual irregularity between its eight extant copies. The final section will position *The Book of Urizen* as a Blakean copy, a destabilized reproduction that invites new conceptions of time and space.

Blake's Poetics of Poiesis II

The Book of Urizen's Radical Physics

"Absolute, true, and mathematical time, in and of itself and of its own nature, without reference to anything external, flows uniformly."

"Absolute space, of its own nature without reference to anything external, always remains homogenous and immovable."

Sir Isaac Newton, *A Principia*

"The lesson of special relativity is, therefore, that there is not time, but times, that these have different rhythms, and that the successive order of events is always an order of succession relative to a given referential."

Pedro M. S. Alves, "Objective Time and the Experience of Time"

"Art is a road which leads towards regions which are not governed by time and space."

Marcel Duchamp

"The hours of folly are measur'd by the clock, but of wisdom: no clock can measure."

William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

This final section is an examination of the status of *The Book of Urizen's* identity, a project which is hard to formally conceptualize for the simple reason that there is no prototypical³ *The Book of Urizen*. Of the eight extant copies — each printed from the same set of relief-etched plates between 1794 and 1818 — none share the same plate order; the ten full-page pictorial plates never appear in the same order, or even all together [Appendix, Figure 1]. Copy A and B, both printed in 1794, are the only to contain all 28 plates, while the remaining six contain between 24 to 27 plates. Essick's scholarship provides a sense of the overwhelming plate differences:

Copies D and F have the same number of plates, but both lack plates 4 and 16, the latter a full-page design the absence of which does not affect the narrative sequence. Copy C also lacks plate 16, contains a second impression of plate 2, and is without two text plates, 7 and 8. Both copies B and C contain plates printed in two colors of ink, suggesting that they are composites of two press runs. The inclusion of plates 8 and 10 in

³ I am using a dictionary definition of "prototype": the standard model, a first, typical or preliminary model of something, especially a machine, from which other forms are developed or copied.

all but copy C adds a further anomaly, for the text on both these plates begins a chapter headed "IV." Copy E lacks plate 4, three full-page designs, and the final plate, the absence of which might be explained by some accident, or action taken by a binder, that altered the original composition of the volume. The last copy (G) is unique in having 27 plates, with only plate 4 absent. ("Variation" 230)

Therefore, to encounter a specific *The Book of Urizen* is only to glimpse "a performance among several available possibilities" (97). Mitchell's use of "among" is key: *The Book of Urizen* asserts no hierarchy of prototype to copy, or even of proper copy to defective copy. Each copy circulates among the others and none can assume authority over the others. Without a governing prototype⁴, the eight variants of *The Book of Urizen* will not cohere into a stable text. They run headlong against the Platonic maxim ingrained in our cultural heritage that "we customarily hypothesize a *single* form in connection with each of the many things to which we apply the same name." This Platonic hierarchy that places Eternal Form above the increasingly diluted forms of representation (i.e. art is a bastardized third-order representation) is the same hierarchy that indentures lowly reproductions to modeling themselves after their industrial prototypes. Like Plato's hierarchy of representations, the process of industrial reproduction has a subtractive effect on the quality of the copy, in which, as Babbage writes, "the successive copies become gradually deteriorated" (399).

The Book of Urizen rejects this hierarchy by dispersing a striking originality into each of its copies, without at the same time effacing all of their commonalities. The poem, considered as a loose compendium of its eight variant units, demands a new status of

⁴ I am using it in the first OED definition: "A first, typical or preliminary model of something, especially a machine, from which other forms are developed or copied"

copy, a Blakean copy, one that is both of *sui generis* and a species form. Each copy is a part of a species that draws from the same genetic material of the 28 plates, but each copy is also *sui generis* in that its unique configurations of the 28 plates render its identity unique. Or, to try on yet another discourse, this copy could be understood as Jean Baudrillard's simulacrum: "it is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality...it is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself...leaving room only for the orbital recurrence of models..."(2). It is this lack of room for a hard-and-fast, fixed narrative real that defines *The Book of Urizen*, a poem whose inter-textual discrepancies are its most crucial openings for interpretation and intervention. By considering these discrepancies, this final section will tease out the thematic implications that various changes have on the poetic narrative, before suggesting how this Blakean copy is irreconcilable with the Newtonian mechanics of fixed time and space, and then finally situating it within a modern conception of physics.

A key lacuna to consider is the omission of Plate 4 from five copies (D, E, F, J, G), which has puzzled critics because it cannot be categorized as either error or a strategic choice. The plate features Urizen's only monologue, which describes the formation of his Brass Books "from the depths of dark solitude," thereby making Plate 4 an "essential, not peripheral" (Essick, "Variation" 231) segment of text. Essick convincingly argues that for Copy G, the omission was the result of a "simple error in alignment and Blake's inability to correct it," (234) suggesting the degree to which accident and chance played a role in Blake's aesthetics. Helen B. Ellis, conversely, writes that omission of this plate deliberately upset the economy of character, effacing Urizen's psychological motives and

narrative role while strengthening Los' presence in the poem (103). Either way, the omission creates aporias that would be hard for a cursory reader to resolve. Plate 3's final phrase, the first line of Chapter II's third stanza, "Shrill the trumpet: & myriads of Eternity" is followed by Plate 4's intended continuation of the stanza in Copies A, B, and C [Appendix, Figure 2a]. But to omit Plate 4 requires that the lines be placed before the final two of of Chapter III's second stanza, creating an eccentric numbering system with two third stanzas in a row, which Blake chose not to correct in Copy D, F, or J (though he did in G), as well as a clunky line structure [Appendix, Figure 2b]. Furthermore, while Essick argues that Copy G's omission of Plate 4 was a mistake, in Copy A, the earliest copy, the last line of plate 3 and the first two of Plate 5 (in effect Figure 2b's text) are lightly crossed out, indicating that from the beginning, Blake was at least considering how to efficiently omit Plate 4 without disrupting the narrative. It is therefore a curious coincidence that Blake's misalignment of Plate 4 in Copy G and its subsequent omission are consistent with his earlier aesthetic impulse. It is this merging of randomness and precision, error and accuracy through which we can read *The Book of Urizen*.

Moving from the assumption that Plate 4's omission implies an action somewhere between a partaking of both the intentional and circumstantial, it is important to consider the effect it produces. Most strikingly, Plate 4's omission obscures the reader's dialectical vantage points of Urizen: the hyper-articulate character who masters the four elements and searches for a "solid without fluctuation" in Plate 4, but also the "unorganiz'd" Urizen whom the Eternals call "a clod of clay" and who is "rifted with direful changes" in Plates 6 and 7. Removing Urizen's despotic monologue (which introduces the Brass Books and their "secrets of wisdom") makes the Eternals' immediate severance from him

a preemptive rather than retributive move. In the copies lacking Plate 4, it is only the muted utterance of “Urizen, so nam’d / That solitary one in Immensity” (3: 42-43) which triggers the sublime “sundr’ing, dark’ning, thund’ring!” of the Eternals’ cleavage from Urizen, rather than Plate 4’s equally magnificent “Words articulate, bursting in thunders / That roll’d on tops of his mountains” (4:4-5). In short, the omission of Plate 4 warps the balance of action between Urizen and Eternals, disrupting their reactive symmetry. This symmetry constructed by Plate 4 effectively aligns Urizen’s cataclysmic words with the Eternals’ apocalyptic fissure, thereby granting words the agency of consequential action. Without Plate 4, however, the poem, “self balanc’d stretch’d o’er the void,” loses its equilibrium; its textual parts dislocate from each other, further fracturing the poem’s logical continuity.

To understand why a poem would dare disturb its narrative equilibrium, one must command, one joy, one desire, / One curse, one weight, one measure / One King, one God, one Law” (4:38-40). Ault suggests that these Brass Books resemble the philosophy of Newton who “was arguing for a single unified proto-philosophy and religion” (277). Like Newton’s *A Principia*, Urizen’s intellectual project is to transcribe “a joy without pain, / For a solid without fluctuation” (4:10-11) — in short, to find a universal, stabilizing theory of knowledge. Yet the accompanying images of the Brass Books subvert this project. After all, in each copy of Plate 5, which depicts the open leaves of the Brass Books, a different chaotic morass of knowledge is pictured: serpentine hieroglyphs (G), proto-Abstract Expressionism (A), pointillist blobs of pigment which have not yet coalesced into shapes (D), and layers of the above, as if exposing the sedimentary stratification that knowledge is built atop (B) — all of which are

aesthetically contradictory to Blake's clearly-delineated illustration style.⁵ Masked by a deceptive unity, Urizen's theory of knowledge is in fact a murky and chaotic system that scribbles over, trespasses, conceals and distorts.

But insofar as the Brass Books are the epistemological linchpin of Urizen's universe, their omission has implications for the physics of that universe. A theory of knowledge that imposes "One Law" upon all universal forces is the Urizenic equivalent of the Newtonian theory of absolute space and time — both systems providing an inflexible frame of reference that affixes events to objective and stable coordinates. While Urizen's law situates events in absolute moral dimensions, and Newton's within physical and temporal dimensions, they both maintain a type of knowledge that is reducible to a single truth. Though Newton's absolute time and space are imperceptible to the flawed human eye, Urizen's universe of knowledge is practiced in the industrially reproduced book. Every copy's narrative traverses an identical temporal and spatial structure; perspective is confined to a single vantage point that emerges from its Urizenic author, and as such, meaning is stabilized under "One Law." The stable book, reproduced *ad infinitum*, engineers a Newtonian mechanics at the level of narrative, by nature of its own formal fixity.

By erasing the Urizenic law that dictates this (namely Plate 4 and its Brass Books) each individual copy of *The Book of Urizen* is able to present the narrative at a temporal pace and spatial placement unique to itself. The most striking example of this is in Copy E (which sold in 1999 to an anonymous buyer for over \$2.5 million). In it, the Preludium

⁵ Blake wrote in his 1809 exhibition catalogue: "The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life is this: That the more distinct, sharp, and wirey the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art; and the less keen and sharp, the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling."

is anomalously placed between the fourth and sixth pages — the only variant to alter the Preludium’s placement from the second page immediately following the title plate. After all, the Preludium is unilaterally a beginning. The plate features a floating horizontal female figure in flowing garb with her arm outstretched to a small child, interspaced between the title, “Preludium to The Book of Urizen.” The text underneath is an invocation to the Eternals by the poet-narrator, reading:

“Preludium to The Book of Urizen:
 Of the primeval Priests absum’d power,
 When Eternals spurn’d back his religion:
 And gave him a place in the North
 Obscure shadowy void solitary,
 Eternals I hear your call gladly
 Dictate swift winged words & fear not
 To unfold your dark visions of torment.” (2:5-7)

In Copy E, Blake lifts this opening plate and places it after Plates 5 and 9. Plate 5 pictures Urizen grasping his vast Brass Books [Appendix, Figure 3], with text below that describes how the Eternals “rent [themselves] away with a terrible crash,” (5:4) and enclosed Urizen in a “roof vast petrific around, / on all sides” (5:28-29). Plate 5 is succeeded by the full pictorial Plate 9 [Appendix, Figure 4], which depicts a solitary Urizen against a background of black-and-white rectangular shapes. Because of this placement, the Preludium — which introduces the narrative framing of “The Book of Urizen” — suggests that the text that follows are the contents of Urizen’s book pictured in Plate 5. By introducing this *mise en abyme* amid an unbroken narrative, Copy E falls into a recursive self-reflexivity. For just as the poem records the enclosure of Urizen within the bounded form of a body, the text simultaneously divides itself into a text within a text. From here, Plate 5’s image of Urizen perched at the precipice of his book

transforms from an image of Newtonian authority who has ordered/authored the universe into the image of an “eternal mind, bounded” within the leaves of a book. In the full plate design that follows, Plate 9, the blocky shapes that surround and confine a forlorn Urizen can be viewed as the telescoped black-and-white type of a “sentence” — a word that in the context of Urizen’s involuntary enclosure absorbs its secondary legal definition. By exposing the poem’s margins and showing the narrative of Urizen’s embodiment to be transcribed, written “dark visions of torment,” rather than unmediated reality, the text denatures its immediate potency, forcing the reader to consider the architecture of language and form that determines any given narrative. The “swift winged words” unloaded upon the narrator are indeed winged — able to fling themselves into radical new contortions and alignments — though they will often masquerade as the inflexible font of Urizen’s “Iron Laws.” In short, Copy E engineers a narrative fault line within itself in such a way as to suggest that there may be other fault lines in other seemingly iron-clad texts. Linguistic sentences have not the iron-clad fixity of legal sentences.

Taken as a whole, the variation among the copies of *The Book of Urizen* advances a profoundly different model of reproduction from that of the stable factory copy. When the poem’s symbolic centerpiece (the epistemologically air-tight Brass Books) vanishes in five of the copies, because of actions somewhere between predetermined and random, we experience its omission as a ghostly void in the other three. And beyond this, in various iterations of the poem, beginnings may be transformed into middles (and vice versa), destabilizing linear temporal priority; chapters occur twice, degrading objective authority; and full text plates appear and disappear, effacing structural logic — thereby remodeling a book with contained, orderly meaning into an experiment with what we

now call chaos theory. Specifically, this references the first essential feature of chaotic systems, identified by Robert L. Devaney, which suggests chaotic systems are exquisitely sensitive to initial conditions, in that slight variations have profound reverberations in the system's development. Reading the eight variant plate orders as the initial conditions for eight different systems, we can theorize that eight different textual identities arise from their respective environments.

It is this simultaneous absence-presence of infinite aesthetic possibilities that defines *The Book of Urizen*, which taken as a compendium of eight textual identities, stitches together variant perspectives, not in order to reconcile them, but to present a different model of space-time in which multiple apprehensions of reality — that refract, contradict, and supplement each other — are equally valid.

What this suggests is a revision of Newtonian mechanics that Blake himself would have endorsed, with Ault explaining that “Blake saw that this doctrine of the ‘one true system’ required, at the level of explanation, the rejection, suppression, and ruling out of massive aspects of human experience” (277). To summarize: Newton's theory of absolute space and time, which posits space and time as two invariant and separate dimensions, was replaced in 1905 after Einstein reworked the Lorentz transformations, from which he developed his theory of special relativity. The theory of special relativity considers the speed of light to be fixed, meaning time and space must be able to change relative to the speed of their reference frame⁶ in order to keep the speed of light constant. The implications read like riddles: moving clocks slow down; moving rulers shrink; moving objects gain mass. And in an 1908 lecture, Einstein's student Hermann Minowski

⁶ These phenomena are called time dilation and Lorentz contractions, respectively.

delivered the most phenomenologically important implication, “From now on, the concepts of space per se and time per se should completely plunge into shadow, and only a kind of union of the two will preserve autonomy.” Space and time per se, vestiges of “commonsense Newtonianism,” as Pedro M. S. Alves writes, were to be united in Minowski’s four-dimensional conception of space-time. Alves describes the relativity of simultaneity:

The lesson of special relativity is, therefore, that there is not time, but times, that these have different rhythms, and that the successive order of events is always an order of succession relative to a given referential. Thus, from no point of view is it possible to speak about a unified and single time of the world as a universal reference frame for all events, i.e., about an absolute time in the three senses mentioned above (215).

While my argument does not attempt to read *The Book of Urizen* through special relativity, it suggests how a 20th-century model of time and space, which revises Newtonian mechanics, can be seen as an extension of the same type of thinking Blake was engaging in with *The Book of Urizen*. Jason Snart writes that “Newtonianism became the set of keys — even the key — that would reveal the logic of action at a distance, light, alchemy, and the Bible” (45). We can position *The Book of Urizen*’s strategy against this absolutist Newtonianism — viewing its eight variant copies together as a survey of the various rhythms and configurations that an event may take on, in effect, becoming an art-object impossible to reconcile with the Newtonian rigidity of absolute time and space, a Blakean copy.

If *The Book of Urizen* destabilizes every claim it makes as soon as it stakes it, undermines its own authority, and sabotages its uniform circulation by remodeling every copy into a unique artifact, how can one read it? What I have attempted to do in this last

chapter is suggest how the variants of *The Book of Urizen* are experimental reproductions, objects incommensurable with each other. If factory labor is always oriented towards producing a single form, *ad infinitum*, Blake's labor aims to produce a vast swath of experiential forms. The Blakean copy instinctively knows that as soon as it has crossed the lip of any lived experience it must implode itself and begin its production anew. If in the early Industrial Revolution, all surplus time had to be contracted to productive production, Blake's poiesis shakes loose these rigid demarcations so that time and space are free to repeat and repeat and repeat outside of the logic of economic progression. To read and re-read *The Book of Urizen* is to suspend a notion of temporal and spatial linearity, and to submerge oneself in the excessive ebb and flow of regenerative recursion.

Excessiveness is the lynchpin of this artistic practice. In the penultimate chapter of the *The Book of Urizen*, Urizen casts a binding net over the psyches of his generations, a web that compresses the human brain into a coiled knot that cannot budge from a fixed ontology. But the radical excessiveness of Blake's aesthetic is the counterpoint to this. If the Urizenic web keeps the brain in rigid lockstep, *The Book of Urizen* orchestrates its exit from such conditions by reimagining and refiguring its narrative identity with such freewheeling and spontaneous energy that it combusts any containment. Repetition is unburdened from its mechanical pacing and transformed into an exuberant practice of recombination and reorientation. To repeat, as the Blakean copy does, is to not re-find the same lessons or refine the old wisdom, but to construct manifold possibilities from a fixed set. It is to open up past experiences to new passages of discovery. With this model

of apprehension, we might view the world as Blake does in the opening lines of *Auguries of Innocence*, which is:

“To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.” (*Auguries of Innocence*, 1-4)

Looking Forward //
Blake and the Extended Mind

The Linguistic Link between Textual Identity and Environment

“What is now proved was once only imagined.”
William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

By radically experimenting with form and textual variance to the extent that Blake did (Larrissy 64), the adjoining definition of “reproduction” is stretched to its outer limits. My study built towards a model of Blake’s experimental reproductions only after first treating the centerpiece poem to the traditional literary techniques of historical contextualization and close readings. What if we arrived at the experimental reproductions earlier? Could we take a leaf from Blake and diffuse *The Book of Urizen*’s central identity into eight separate ones, treating each as a discrete textual identity with its own specific ontology, set of perceptive faculties, and logic that merits its own literary engagement?

If that sounds repetitive, it would be at times. But by pushing up the eight books together to examine their differences, we could begin to ask serious questions of the relationship between identity and environment. Where does a textual identity end and its environment begin?

In “The Extended Mind,” an influential paper in the field of philosophy of the mind, Andy Clark and David J. Chalmers argue for a radical externalism, i.e. that the environments of cognitive systems play not just a preliminary, “distal and historical” (9) role on the mind’s development, but an active and continuous role on cognitive function. In their paper, Clark and Chalmers write that “Language appears to be a central means by which cognitive processes are extended into the world” (11). The authors argue that language and its deployment act as external tools that supplement, and enhance, cognitive

processes. Yet, this process might also work in the other direction, with cognition implanting itself into its environment through language, thereby transforming external spaces into physical extensions of a brain's structure. For example, one could argue that the Brass Books were linguistic agents that expanded Urizen's internal ontology to include the psyches of his inhabitants. In the poem, words build worlds.

William Blake wrote that "Where man is not, nature is barren," indicating that his artistic economy presupposed that imagination, a cognitive process, had a physical impact on the environment. If that is the case, *The Book of Urizen* contains germane ground for teasing out the line between identity and environment. Not only does its narrative provide eight different "cases" of cognitive extension into the physical world, it also offers, on a textual level, the creation of eight textual identities, which generate eight various ontologies. Because each ontology progresses from the other, I could trace the genealogy of such thought and tease out a linear narrative of Blake's aesthetic development. But knowing the extent of Blake's creativity, it would be more fruitful to read the eight copies as clustered environments that produce active and continuous engagements with the cognition of each others. Examining the texts in conversation with each other, I might be able to find thematic sites of cognitive activity, such as Plate 4, that expose systematic fault lines and opportunities for rapid-growth.

Instead of treating the poem as a homogeneous unit, I might consider *The Book of Urizen* as a multicellular organism, teeming with autonomous parts which move with a 'mind' of their own, yet still maintain a connection to a larger structure. By exploring the entanglements and relationships of the eight variations, we might stretch further the definition of a "reproduction" until it finally snaps.

Appendix //

Figure 1

Plate order differences between extant copies of The Book of Urizen, numbered according to Bentley system

Copy A (1794): 28 plates / 1, 2, 22, 24, 3, 4, 12, 5-7, 17, 8, 10, 11, 14, 13, 18, 21, 19, 15, 16, 20, 9, 23, 26, 25, 28, 27

Copy B (1795): 28 plates / 1-4, 14, 5-7, 10, 12, 8, 11, 22, 13, 9, 15, 16, 18, 17, 19, 24, 20, 21, 23, 25-28

Copy C (1794): 25 plates / 1-4, 12, 5, 6, 9-11, 13, 22, 15, 14, 18, 17, 19, 21, 20, 23, 27, 24-26, 28

Copy D (1794): 26 plates / 1-3, 5-15, 17-28

Copy E (1794): 24 plates / 1, 3, 5, 9, 2, 6, 14, 7, 10, 8, 11, 22, 13, 15, 18, 17, 19, 12, 20, 21, 23, 26-28

Copy F (1794): 26 plates / 1-3, 5, 12, 6, 7, 14, 10, 8, 9, 11, 13, 22, 15, 18, 17, 19-21, 23-28

Copy G (1818): 27 plates / 1-3, 9, 5, 12, 6, 7, 8, 22, 10, 11, 16, 13, 15, 17-21, 23, 27, 24-26, 28

Figure 2a

Line order for Copies A, B, C
Plates 3, 4

Shrill the trumpet: & myriads of Eternity **3**

Muster around the bleak desarts, **4**

Now fill'd with clouds, darkness & waters

That roll'd perplex'd labring & utter'd

Words articulate, bursting in thunders

That roll'd on tops of his mountains.

Figure 2b

Line order for Copies D, E, F, J, G
Plates 3, 5

Shrill the trumpet: & myriads of Eternity **3**

In living creations appear'd **5**

In the flames of eternal fury.