



Milton

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Places Discussed

Golgonooza (gol-goh-NEWS-ah). William Blake's holy City of Art, a spiritual form of London encompassing all Britain, like the biblical New Jerusalem. There at his seven furnaces Urthona's manifestation Los melts all of nature into gold for the City of God and gives form to uncreated things. His labor is the imaginative creation of all that can be redeemed. The architecture of the city therefore unites it with the four levels of human existence: Ulro, hellish nature untamed by humans; Generation, love's struggle to rise above savagery; Beulah, the subconscious realm of recovered innocence, a sleepy place of respite from the fury of creative inspiration; and Eden, a paradise where reason has been dominated by imagination.

Brooks of Arnon. Tributaries of the Arnon River in Jordan, where Milton struggles with the satanic spirit of reason, Urizen. These are biblical places where Jacob wrestled with God to gain a blessing for Israel, where the Jews escaped from bondage in Egypt, and where Moses was buried. Thus, symbolically, Blake connects his myth with the religious journey of God's chosen people into liberty, nationhood, and deliverance from the tyranny of law. Urizen baptizes Milton with the icy river water (religious dogma). Milton uses the living red clay to make a human form for Urizen. Thus their struggle ends in a victory of imagination over reason.

Bibliography

Bloom, Harold. *Blake's Apocalypse: A Study in Poetic Argument*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963. A comprehensive, virtually line-by-line exposition of Blake's prophetic poems. Sensitively explains the intricate subtleties of Blake's myth and traces its connections to biblical and other literary traditions.

Damon, S. Foster. *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*. Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 1965. This handy glossary collects and interprets clues to Blake's terminology, which is scattered through all of his works. There are entries for each character, work, symbol, and geographical or historical reference. Omits most of Blake's contemporaries in the arts. Includes maps, illustrations, and diagrams of difficult concepts such as Golgonooza.

Fox, Susan. *Poetic Form in Blake's "Milton."* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976. Patiently establishes the structural principle of parallelism beneath the seeming chaos of the poem. Explores the echoes, paired passages, cyclical patterns, and thematic symmetries.

Frye, Northrop. *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1947. A brilliant analysis of Blake's poetry and thought, the most important and influential work of Blake criticism. Chapter 10 examines *Milton* in depth.

Howard, John. *Blake's Milton: A Study in the Selfhood*. Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1976. A psychological analysis that credits Blake for anticipating twentieth century psychological theories. Focuses on Milton's descent as a journey within the psyche and analyzes Blake's Spectres as models of self-paralyzing inhibition.

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