THE VISIONARY ARTIST

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by

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" If the doors of perception were cleansed,
everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.
For man has closed himself up, till he
sees all things thro' chinks of his cavern".

(William Blake)

AN ELEMENT OF RISK

> Reading and personal experiences have often drawn my attention to the exceptionally high incidence of despair, "nervous disorder", alcoholism, nihilism and even suicide, among modern artists.

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Colin Wilson illustrates his awareness of this phenomenon in his "The Outsider". This work is penetrating but I think often misses the "soul" of his subjects through too intellectual and analytic an approach.@ Wilson, however, winds up by using a brilliant analogy that is uncharacteristically imaginative - taken from the history of early beyond-the-sound-barrier aviation. I would like to quote this in full:

> "When an aeroplane travels at speeds approaching that of sound, the air cannot get away from in front of its wings quickly enough, and builds up into a kind of concrete barrier. In the early days of jet travel planes .... always went into a steep dive, and crashed, and the harder the pilot pulled on the stick the steeper became the dive. And then one day an exceptionally gifted test pilot tried doing something absurd. Instead of franctically pulling back the stick, he tried pushing it forward - which, logically, ought to have made the dive steeper than ever. Instead, the plane straightened out. At speeds greater than that of sound, some of the usual laws of nature get reversed".[1]

@ I think that the philosopher-poet-painter, William Blake would assert the same view.

Blake was one of these gifted pilots, as were Yeats, Eliot, Braque and Exupéry.[@] Their contributions to philosophy and to living life to the full are as momentous as that test pilot's contribution to aviation.

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I would like in this work to look at the visionary, Blake, against the problem of 'breaking the sound-barrier' and against the background of disastrous attempts at this by modern artists[+].

The list of these attempts is endless.

Goya is one of the earliest examples of an artist who attempted to bridge the widening gap between personal vision and "ordinary" reality. As a young man his behaviour shows an extremism later to emerge in his paintings and etchings; he was continually involved in armours and knifings. A successful court painter and portraitist of the Spanish aristocracy, he bravely revealed the vanity and superficiality of that world. In his engravings he showed a growing awareness of the depravity of the Church (in the series "Los Caprichos"), and of the horror of war (in the series "The Disasters of War"). Images of black magic, mad houses, scenes from the occult and nightmares rose more and more powerfully in his work culminating in the "Black Frescoes" on the walls of Goya's country retreat, La Quinta del Sordo where in Goya's words "fantasy and invention have no limit". His was a remarkable denunciation of popular success. But, his life as a hermit, his deafness and his horror of

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@ Exupéry was, in fact, a commercial pilot besides being a writer.

+ The incidence of mental and spiritual struggle among artists seems to be a significant fact only in the "Modern Age".

man's inhumanity to man led him to paint more and more bizarre dark frescoes. His final horror was of life itself and he died insane.

Count Leo Tolstoy was a man with unusually perceptive ideas on philosophy, art and religion considering the narrowmindedness of the era in which he lived. A free thinker, he found it impossible to support the orthodox church, although he independently reached religious conclusions. He wrote extensively on many subjects and was an enlightened art critic. While his contemporaries sought only beauty in art ("Art is such activity as produces Beauty"), or "moral perfection", Tolstoy's vision stretched to ask, "What thoughtful man has not been perplexed by problems relating to art?" Defining art he wrote:

> "Art is not a pleasure, a solace or an amusement; art is a great matter. Art is an organ of human life, transmitting man's reasonable perception into feeling".[2]

However, in his later years, (by this time the famous author of "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina") he began to be troubled by the questions "What is life? Why should I live? Is there any meaning in life that can overcome inevitable death?" These moments of perplexity recurred more often, until his final breakdown. "I felt that what I had been standing on had broken down and I had nothing left to live on".[3] He committed suicide in the small railway station of Astapolo after having run away from home.

Vincent van Gogh (unfortunate subject of journalistic popular biographies) was a man of extraordinary intensity. This comes through clearly if one examines his letters and his paintings. A failed missionary among the poverty-stricken miners of the Borinage and incapable of fitting in with ordinary society, he lived in isolation among suspicious French villagers and plunged all his emotions into violent paintings, which for a while warded off his insanity. He felt that his life was becoming more and more of a burden to the world - especially to his brother Theo, to whom he wrote in his last letter: "Well, as to my work, I've risked my life for it, and my reason has half foundered ...". He later shot himself in the chest - the bullet failed to kill him immediately and he died two days later with the words "Misery will never end" on his lips.

Paul Gaugin left his wife and children for Paris where he showed his contempt for the insipid lives of ordinary people through his exhibitions of aggression in public. He "dropped out" of the milieu of French middle-class conservatism and thereby discovered the freedom to attempt the transcendence of ordinary reality. His first taste of the exotic was the trip to Martinique - he soon returned to Paris after being somewhat disillusioned. Four years later he again tried to escape "the rotten civilized world" by going to live in Tahiti. He hoped an answer was to be found by returning to primitive sources, but he did not really fit in with the islanders (although he took a native wife), idolizing in a rather naive way their simplicity, which he could never reconcile with their exotic mysteriousness and passion. He continued to use Christian symbols and western

precepts in his paintings which shows that he never did relinquish his heritage. In 1898 he attempted suicide with arsenic - a carefully planned attempt just after he had finished his pictorial will, "Whence do we come? What are we? Whither are we going?"

These were three blaring cries for which he could find no answer. He died five years later in 1903.

It is significant that his last painting was of a serene snow scene in his native Brittany. The exotic mystical reality he hoped to find in Tahiti and on the Marquesas had failed to provide him with a relevant alternative reality.

Vaslav Nijinsky, acclaimed by the critics "dieu de la danse", was also incapable of dealing with ordinary reality. He said, "The whole life of all mankind is death". He never escaped from ignorant and distructive lovers - first Diaghileff, who treated him as a pretty but brainless boy, who, having no artistic talent himself never understood the religious nature of Nijinsky's majestically empathetic dancing and never accepted him as a choreographer; then his wife, a young dancer, who also contributed to his failure through lack of understanding. The intervention of the war and his expulsion from the Russian Ballet by Diaghileff led him to exile in St Moritz, Switzerland. His <u>"Diary"</u> reveals his frustrations at the inactivity imposed upon him and his need to express his mysticism and passions through dancing. At this time he developed an interesting way of drawing with curves and lines but this outlet did not really satisfy. He explained "I am a man of action". While dancing he felt an instinctive marriage with universal force. "I am God in a body. Everyone has this feeling, but no one uses it, God is

fire in the head".[5] "I am feeling through flesh, not through the intellect".[6] The frustration of inactivity and of repressed creativity led him to insanity at the age of twenty nine.

Chaim Soutine, an extraordinarily introverted and intense painter chose self-exile from Poland to France where he, as alien, crept from one dirty tenement to another. In 1913 he enroled at Ecole des Beaux Arts but did not stay long. He felt that only by freeing himself entirely from all ties with official teaching could he realize his very personal artistic expression. His inability to cope with mundane day-to-day living is expressed in his work. His paintings show this irrational emotional state where paint is violently handled. It was said of him that he was like a patch of sky in which clouds suddenly gather to be as suddenly dispersed. He was at times as friendly as a child, at others sad and sullen, with sudden burst of violence against himself and others; all these mood alternating in him without any apparent cause. His sudden departures from one place to another, and then off again, were prompted by a search for the peace of mind he never found. His sense of alienation and of cruelty in the world is revealed in his theme of the underdog in society (in the "Bell Boy" and "Page" series and in his "Woman in Red") and in his theme of death (in the paintings of strung up dead animals, victims of the human hunter and effigies of the horror of death). Soutine was restless in his work. Nearly always unsatisfied with what he had done, he habitually destroyed his paintings. Perhaps no other artist at the beginning of the century shows in his work deeper perception of the troubled times in which he lived. Through

his Expressionist paintings he sought a deeper and more intimate reality, but like Nijinsky he failed to communicate in the everyday world. Soutine was in later years disgusted by his attempt to commit suicide successfully.

Modigliani was the first artist to appreciate Soutine's talent. His life was similar to Soutine's. A hot-headed Italian living in France, he felt the same sense of alienation within the sedate bourgeoise of Paris. "It's my damned Italian eye that cannot get used to the light of Paris".[7] This quotation, understood in a broader sense, explains his feeling of estrangement. He was obsessed by women (and popular with them) and a habitué of alcohol and hashish. Max Jacob admits unsureness of the nature of Modigliani's obsession with women: "weakness of character, vanity or appetite". In his paintings and drawings he shows a desire to find the mystery and eternal nature behind outer reality. He spoke often about "the mystery of lines" and was shocked by Renoir's "degenerate" sensuality. He ended a short life, burnt out by drugs and a dissolute life style.

Sylvia Plath, a modern writer-poet, was frustrated at her inability to express herself or find creative fulfilment in the "real" world. A college intellectual and personally ambitious she was crippled by her inability to accept the boundary lines of her sex and her sense of inadequacy outside college. Her sense of alienation she called "the terrible birthday of otherness". Her attempts at suicide are famous (as her autobiographical novel, "The Bell Jar", and her many poems reveal). She finally succeeded in 1953. Her personal history is reiterated in the lives of other American female artists - Marilyn Monroe, Emily Dickinson, Judy Garland, Janis Joplin.

Jimi Hendrix used his guitar like van Gogh and Soutine had used their brushes. He also wrote lyrics of strange beauty whose visionary quality immediately reminds one of Blake. He was incapable, however, of dealing with his own powerful creativity which transcended ordinary reality and he, too, could not cope. He died of an overdose of drugs in 1969.

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One could continue ad infinitum with similar examples. However, I think these "potted biographies" are sufficient to show that all artists experienced Blake's problems of expressing personal vision and of dealing with a sense of alienation from "ordinary" reality.

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A short biography on Blake will be in place here.

William Blake was born in London in 1759. He spent his seventy years in poverty. With the exception of three years in the country (Felpham) between 1800 and 1803, he never moved away from his native city. His childhood was spent among the trades people of Soho. Early artistic intentions were not discouraged by his family but were turned to practical use. He left school at the age of ten to join a drawing school and was apprenticed at fifteen years to an engraver, Basire, as his parents were unable to afford entrance to a painters studio. This training in a practical craft was later to ease Blake's life of poverty as an unheard prophet and misunderstood poet-painter. (Also it gave him that knowledge of engraving processes which was to be put to good use when he was evolving his own printing

methods for his illustrated books).

Blake used his free time educating himself. This was the real making of Blake since he escaped the warping influences of the schoolroom and since there was no-one to artificially control his learning or stifle his imagination. He was free to think for himself - nothing could corrupt his interests. Since he was an apprentice engraver, his parents held no further ambitions for him, society did not pressurize him and Blake could educate himself naturally. At the age of twenty-one Blake, a lively creative young man, entered the Royal Academy. His stay there was not long - he despised the academic "copying of nature", which he said deadened the core of creativitiy, the imagination. He did become friendly with John Flaxman, the Neo-classical sculpton and with his contemporaries, the painters James Barry and Benjamin West. His own work was too unconventional and adventurous to be accepted in his time, so he was obliged to earn his bread by illustrating books.

Blake became more and more rebellious against contemporary manners and conventions, attacking especially the Church and its morality. During the French Revolution he became a political activist in England. His "Songs of Innocence and of Experience" and the "Prophetic Books" are intricate symbolic expositions of his ideas and vision. Blake claimed to have frequent visionary and mystical experiences, thereby considered a madman or crank by contemporaries. His one-man show in 1809 was described as a "farago of nonsence" by "The Examiner". The years that followed Blake's exhibition were his most obscure. He received only the most menial commissions and had more difficulty than ever in selling his original works. Yet

this did not affect the mood of his art; he did not allow lack of commercial success to affect him but continued to develop his visionary and creative faculties. He died still true to his inner vision, despite the decades of privation and opposition.

The essence of his vision is found in the quotation:

> "The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed by fire at the end of six thousand years, is true, as I have heard from Hell.
> For the cherub with his flaring sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at the tree of life; and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed and appear infinite and holy, where as it now appears finite and corrupt. This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.
> But first, the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged, this I shall do by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away and displaying the infinite that was hid.
> If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.
> For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' chinks of his cavern."[8]

A SENSE OF OTHERNESS

The mirror cracked from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me", cried
The Lady of Shallot.

(Tennyson)

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The awakening to a new way of perceiving - what Sylvia Plath called "the birthday of otherness" - seems to be a common experience among modern western artists.

James in "Varieties of Religious Experience":

> "when suddenly there came upon me without any warning just as if it came out of darkness a horrible fear of my own existence .... the universe was changed for me altogether".[1]

Nietzsche gives a more ecstatic version of the same experience:

> "the blissful ecstasy that arises from the innermost depths of man .... at this same collapse of the principium indivuationis and we shall gain an insight into the Dionysian".[2]

Satre's Roquentin in "Nausea":

> "I looked around me: the present, nothing but the present. Light and solid pieces of furniture encrusted in their present, a table, a bed,a wardrobe with a mirror - and me .... it was that which exists and all that was not present did not exist .... Things are grotesque, stubborn, huge -

nameless things .... Never, until these last
few days, had I understood the meaning of existence
.... I am condemned to be free".[3]

In Hesse's autobiography he writes that as a young popular poet the war led him to discover the corruption of his complacency.

"I had no less a task than to carry through
to the end my scrutiny of chaos with the
now soaring, now sinking hope of rediscovering
beyond chaos nature and innocence".[4]

Hermann Hesse in "Steppenwolf":

"I would traverse not once more but often,
the hell of my inner being". But also,
"Between two or three notes of the piano, the door
opened suddenly to the other world. I sped through
heaven and saw God at work".[5]

Nijinsky writes of his visionary insight in his "Diary":

"I am in a trance, the trance of love. I
want to say so much and cannot find the words ....
I want the death of the mind .... The mind is
stupidity, but wisdom (trance) is God".[6]

Blake himself wrote of the need

"To open the eternal worlds, to open the
immortal eyes
Of man Inwards, into the worlds of thought,
into Eternity".[7]

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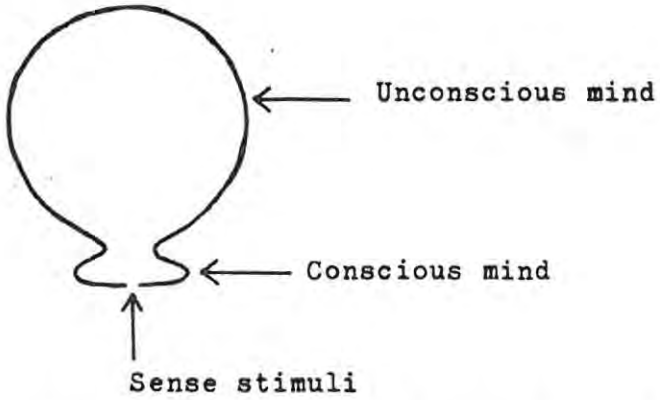
What is this alternative way of perceiving? My own experience gelled by reading Huxley's "Doors of Perception" and his "Heaven and Hell" allow me to attempt an answer to this question. Huxley used mescalin@ on himself and others to explore the unconscious. His conclusions seem to me to be psychologically valid. He discovered an extra dimension to "ordinary reality", a reality which most people experience only in dreams, for instance. Each object was freed from normal prejudiced perception and became "itself" - a plant no longer an object to be admired and watered but one that existed purely in a cosmic sense. He claims that the visionary way of perceiving reality is the birthright of man and was Adam's before he forfeited the garden of Eden. The world around us remains paradise but we have lost the ability of perceiving it as such. This faculty of perceiving, and, more important, of living in a super reality exists at birth. Hence the child's intense preopccupation with sensual experience of the world around him and his imaginative interaction with it. Blake's "Songs of Innocence" are an invocation of this state of oneness with Nature. The setting in these poems is rural and the symbolism is taken from nature. The poet is a piper of songs of joy to children, and not merely their teacher.

Hesse also writes of the state in his autobiographical "Childhood of a Magician";

@ A drug extracted from the Mexican peyote cactus.

> "Fortunately I had learned what is most valuable, most indispensable for life before my school years, taught by trees, by rain and sun, river and woods, bees and beetles .... and by a wise grandfather who possessed the veiled roguish smile of wisdom".[8]

This state of Purity is gradually lost during the process of a child's "education" and socialization. Thus he loses contact with the Universal Oneness. His perceptions of the world are influenced by an awareness of things outside himself purely in terms of self. His mind, a large area of Spirit fed by the senses, is divided by ego into two compartments:



The child loses his ability to perceive the outer world in a visionary way and loses contact with his own inner spirit. He has become alienated from Spirit; paradise is lost. In Blake's "Songs of Experience" he depicts this state of alienation. Darkness and suppression of vitality are the themes in these poems. Love becomes selfish in "The Clod and the Pebble". "The Chimney Sweeper" is a symbolic poem of a child whose innocence is abused by the new industrial society. The experiences of this child symbolize the death of pure vision, innocence and joy.

Joy is equally preyed upon by the Church, as in "The Garden of Love". "The Lamb" is replaced by "The Tyger". The culmination of the series is "London", where misery reigns, the chimney sweeper is again enslaved, the Church is blackened and the blood runs down the walls of State.

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The adolescent deeply feels this loss and in adulthood a deep-seated feeling of spiritual deadness and discomfort remains which is experienced by T.S. Eliot's Alfred Prufrock. He has dissipated himself in drudgery so that there is no energy or courage left to face "the universal question".

> "Streets that follow like a tedious argument
> of insidious intent
> To lead you to an overwhelming question
> Oh, do not ask, What is it?"
> Let us go and make our visit".[9]

Modern man spends his waking hours avoiding this question - he is safe from this confrontation while going to the office, watching television, reading, always keeping busy and incessantly talking. Many people experience tension and even fear when they find themselves alone. Thus, the radio plays to fill the emptiness; a tranquilizer lulls the mind into forgetfulness.

Meanwhile spiritually, a one-way process is occuring - from stimulated senses to conscious mind and then to the subconscious where healthy and unhealthy "memories" stagnate in a mental and

spiritual cul-de-sac, where there is no corresponding movement to balance. Normally, self expression is rare and even socially unacceptable - sudden bursts of anger, brief climaxes in coitus, excessive drunkeness are powerful enough to open the blocked subconscious momentarily. Drugs can also be used but this is often "illegal" and considered socially and physically unhealthy. (Huxley calls on scientists to create a safe and powerfully transporting drug for the use of modern man who is deprived of the experience of his subconscious).

I would like to quote here briefly the remarks of William James concerning alcohol as a means to "religious experience":

> "the power of alcohol over mankind is unquestionably due to its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature, usually crusted to earth by the cold facts of the sober hour".

Concerning the use of drugs to achieve inwardness and self knowledge I would like to refer to Thomas de Quincey's "Confessions of an English Opium Eater".

> "Opium communicates serenity and equipose to all the faculties, active or passive: and with respect to temper and moral feelings in general it gives that sort of vital warmth which is approved by the judgement and which would probably always accompany a bodily constitution of primeval or antediluvian health. In a sense then, man returns to the physical well-being of Eden. "Opium, thou buildest upon the bosom of darkness, out of fantastic imagery of the brain cities and temples .... and thou hast the keys to Paradise".[10]

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Drugs were used in a deeper and more constructive way by the American Indians. On looking at the most penetrating and direct exposé of the Indian "way of knowledge", written by Carlos Castenada, himself a novice-diablero, among the Sonoran Indians ("The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge") one is immediately struck by the amazingly complex procedures accompanying the use of drugs and by the question of motive: drugs were used for spiritual enlightenment and not for pleasure. The peyote plant was divine, and under its influence the god, Mescalito, made his appearance in certain forms. Don Juan severely rebuked Castenada when he mentioned peyote as a plant - this was great sacrilege, and more important, might anger the god who terrified peyote takers who used it for their own gain: "Mescalito is a teacher, not a power to be used for personal reasons". "Not everybody likes Mescalito; yet they seek him with the idea of profiting without doing any work. Naturally their encounter with him is always horrifying". The taking of the drug must be free of fear and ambition and accompanied by a will to see and to understand. Don Juan himself achieved a point where drug taking was not any more necessary pierce "the twilight crack between the worlds" which can only be finally achieved without the assistance of drugs which help man only to find and know that point. Therefore, man's will must take him through. The concept of will, to see and to understand the subconscious world, is central here and it was this will that Blake had to summon to achieve his own insight.

Men like Don Juan and Blake cannot ignore the natural urge of the soul to be free. Some like James (quoted earlier from "The Varieties of Religious Experience") try to avoid the confrontation but self

knowledge creeps up upon them. The reaction to the forcing open of the flood-gates of the subconscious which are now uncloseable, is fear and anxiety. Some men manage to handle the shock, others become habitués of asylums. After this "vision" it is impossible to go back to ignorance. One is committed to an attempt at breaking through "the sound barrier". To commit mind-suicide does not resolve anything for:

"After such knowledge what forgiveness".

(T.S. Eliot)

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I must point out here that this short résumé of Huxley's "Doors of Perception" cannot do justice to its writer. But the following quote illustrated the essence of what Huxley conveys - that man has to go through this perceptual experience alone.

> "We live together, we act on, and react to one another; but always and in all circumstances we are by ourselves. The martyrs go hand in hand into the arena; they are crucified alone. Embraced, the lovers desperately try to fuse their insulated ecstasies into a single self-transcendence; in vain. By its very nature every embodied spirit is doomed to suffer and enjoy in solitude ... The mind is its own place, and the places inhabited by the insane and the exceptionally gifted are no different from the places where ordinary men and women live, that there is little or no common ground of memory to serve as a basis for understanding or fellow feeling. Words are uttered, but fail to enlighten. The things and events to which the symbols refer belong to mutually exclusive realms of experience".[11]

Under the influence of mescalin Huxley finds the inklings of a solution:

> "In the final stage of egolessness there is an 'obscure knowledge' that All is in all - that All is actually each. This is as near, I take it, as a finite mind can ever come to perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe".[12]

He goes on to say that most people need Artificial Paradises:

> "Most men and women lead lives at the worst so painful, at the best so monotonous, poor and limited that the urge to escape, the longing to transcend themselves if only for a few moments, is and always has been one of the principal appetites of the soul. Art and religion, carnivals and saturnalia, dancing and listening to oratory - all these have served as Doors in the Wall. And for private, for everyday use there have always been chemical intoxicants ... all, without exception, have been known and systematically used by human beings from time immemorial".[13]

Finally, he attempts a solution towards an enlightened perception:

> "I am not so foolish as to equate what happens under the influence of mescalin or of any other drug, with the realization of the end and ultimate purpose of human life: Enlightenment, the Beatific Vision.

> All I am suggesting is that the mescalin experience is what Catholic theologicians call "a gratuitous grace", not necessary to salvation but potentially helpful if made available. To be shaken out of the ruts of ordinary perception, to be shown for a few timeless hours the outer and the inner world, not as they appear to an animal obsessed with survival or to a human being obsessed with words and notions, but as they are apprehended, directly and undirectly and unconditionally - This is an experience of inestimable value to everyone ..."[14]

In the sequel "Heaven and Hell" Huxley investigates the "geography of the soul" using as his transportation mescalin, and examines other vehicles used by mystics and visionaries seeking a union with the Inner and Outer Spirit of the universe - the Medieval ascetics fasting, chanting, self-inflicted insomnia or a period of confinement in a place of darkness and complete silence; Eastern yogis using mantras and the denial of basic bodily needs to similar effect; the use of hypnosis aided by the contemplation of an archetypal object of the Spirit world (very bright light, light reflectors like bejewelled talismans, vivid colour). The Celts, Ancient Greeks, Egyptians, Byzantines and Aztecs spring immediately to mind as peoples who incorporated these methods in their culture. What effort, time and expense they harnessed for the production of beautiful objects for contemplation!

Huxley maps the geography of the subconscious into three significant regions or, rather, depth levels: the personal subconscious which contains images from the sense knowledge of the individual; the collective unconscious which houses images common to collective man, (images which exist in their own right and are praeternaturally beautiful and significant in their "Is-ness") and finally, in the far reaches of the subconscious spirit, are found what Huxley calls the "antipodes" of ordinary physical reality. This is the visionary world inhabited by great spiritual explorers like Blake and Yeats.

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The crash victims then, are those who lost direction and motivation during the journey. Artists like Plath, Soutine and van Gogh, unbalanced by extreme emotionalism, got stuck in the realm of the personal subconscious; while others like Goya and Nijinsky delved at least into the realm of the collective unconscious. Few reached the realm of the subconscious spirit. Blake was one of the few - he lifted his plane out of the steep dive created by the shock of hitting the sound barrier. Was he especially gifted? Was he successful because of an extreme excercise of Will? Or was it a higher sense of balance, lacking in others less fortunate, which allowed him to level himself out of the dive? These possibilities I will discuss in the final chapter.

In the next chapter, however, I will examine a statement made earlier: that the incidence of mental and spiritual struggle and even of impassé among artists seem to be a significant fact only in the modern age.

THE GREAT IMPASSE

"..... when I am formulated, sprawled on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt ends of my days and ways
To say "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all ....".

(Alfred Prufrock - T.S. Eliot)

The "Modern West" has its beginnings in the Industrial Revolution. The feudal system was replaced, but the manipulation of the poor by the rich continued - a new class of landlord was to emerge, that of the employer. Although people crowded together in the cities, community interaction, however, was minimized. A survival-of-the fittest "warfare" between boss and worker resulted. Those who did not push themselves to commercial success became the manipulated, those who did realized that "time was money".

Naturally, the life of the spirit could not exist within such a system. Christianity could not survive intact with its doctrines of love, compassion and charity. As a cultural doctrine of living in spirit Christianity could not exist - so it had to be modified, or put aside altogether.

The mystery of religion, the doctrine of compassion and charity with its emphasis on spiritual rebirth, could not flourish in that new Western society. Instead religion became a nominal cultural religion,

with its emphasis on social stabilization. The status quo was further entrenched. The situation continues to the present. Most preachers are careful to avoid mystery in their sermons. Christianity as a spiritual method to society as a whole, is invalid because it glosses over the importance of the Spirit. However, man still experiences a spiritual discomfort and an emptiness deep in the recesses of himself. Hense the state of mind described earlier where Western man must keep busy, keep talking, keep tranquilized; he must be endlessly entertained to avoid the voice within and its "ultimate question".

He who faces this question, and attempts an answer, immediately becomes a rebel against his society, perhpas, too, a threat. He becomes an Outsider. Since art must concern itself with Spirit, the artist is an Outsider. He cannot serve the community as did the cave artist, who magically foretold or assured the success of the hunt or harvest by creating fertility symbols; he cannot play a part in organized religion as did the artists who built and decorated temples and cathedrals, which transported worshippers into the ecstatic state of visionary experience. The artist is divorced from social reality[Q] and from religion. He can expect little support from his contemporaries who are caught up with "getting and spending". His greatest loss is that of the power of symbolism; he does not have a language of symbols on hand to express the Spirit.

Q The Cubists attempted to realign art and everyday reality, but remained still inspired by Spirit. However, at the time, the public did not understand the significance of their "little cubes".

The meaning of most symbols has become obsolete. This is the greatest problem the modern Western artist has to face; how to express the intangible.

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I would like to quote Yeats at this juncture:-

"I believe

i) that the borders of the mind are ever shifting and that many minds can flow into one another, as it were, and create or reveal a single Mind, a single Energy,

ii) that the borders of our memory are shifting and that our memories are part of one great Memory@, the memory of Nature herself,

iii) that this great Mind and great Memory can be evoked by symbol".[1]

"A vast image of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands
of the desert
A shape with a lion's body and the head
of a man
Is moving its slow thighs .... ".

(The Second Coming - W.B. Yeats)

@ Mind and memory are called by Huxley and other psycologists, the collective subconscious.

Since the greater part of this chapter concerns the expression of Mind, Memory or the "Spirit of the Universe" by means of symbol, Jung's definition of symbol is relevant:

> "a term, a name or a picture (image) that may be familiar in daily life, yet that possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning. It implies something vague, unknown or hidden from us. It has a wider unconscious aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained. Nor can one hope to define or explain it. As the mind explores the symbol, it is led to ideas that lie beyond the grasp of reason".[2]

> "After great Cathedral gong
> A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains
> All that man is"

(Byzantium -W.B. Yeats)

In a more accurate (although obscure) sense the symbol is an image or sound that echoes in the subconscious. It has no specific meaning in itself.

The whole cosmos is potentially symbolic. In prehistoric art the symbol was an integral part of reality, married to art, not seperate. Perhaps the most recurring motifs are the animal, the

circle and the stone. Stores, rough and natural, were themselves symbols - believed to be the dwelling places of spirits or gods. Animal paintings on cave walls were not only decorative but had a magical function. A picture of a bison, found on a cave wall at Lascaux and probably painted about 60,000 years ago, covered with arrow and spear marks, indicates that cave dwellers believed that by ritually "killing" the image they would be more likely to kill an animal. Animal paintings also served magic fertility rites - mating bison took on a symbolic significance; it became the image of the living essence of the animal.

The circle (or sphere) was described by Jung as a symbol of the Self: ".... whether the symbol of the circle appears in primitive sun worship, in Christian rose windows, in mandalas, in myths or dreams, in the ground plan of cities, or in the spherical concepts of early astronomers, it always points to the single, most vital aspect of life - its ultimate wholeness".[3]

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With the birth of the Industrial Society and with the loss of Christianity as a relevant spiritual guide, the artist found himself in an unenviable position; there was no symbolic language to adequately express spiritual revelations. Should the artist use an obsolete symbolism he would be left with a hollow, almost literary, image. The Age of Reason furnishes many examples of artists who found themselves in this cul-de-sac where art was for the most part superficial and stylish although technically

brilliant. The cupids of the Rococo artists are evidence of the spiritual stupor of the age. Some artists replied to this situation through extremely witty satires - Hogarth comes immediately to mind.

Artists did not put up with a barren image, or an empty word for long. Poe and Baudelaire were among the first poets to attempt to break through this stalemate. Baudelaire invented his theory of correspondence, where he claimed a common relationship between word and spiritual sensation without the intervention of consciousness.

The theory was later adopted by Rimbaud@ who referred to "the hallucination of words" and who, like the creator of "les correspondences" had to abandon it because of its innate obscurity. Somehow it just missed the Truth. Yeats and Eliot later both struck the stumbling block of a limitation of words. They attempted to overcome this by developing a new symbolism.

Many artists have attempted to explore the subconscious, unaided and by using what Rimbaud called "a prolonged and reasoned derangement of the senses". Some created symbols which spring from the personal subconscious (Goya, Van Gogh) but because these were personal they were too esoteric. Others delved deeply into themselves and discovered instinctive and irrational imagery in the collective unconscious; the result was a symbolism which, although spiritually articulate, was only understood by fellow artists who were spiritual peers. "Art for art's sake" is a phenomenon of our time.

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@ Rimbaud forsook the vocation of poet, disgusted with the triteness of his contemporary poets, and despairing of his inability to express his vision "Inventions of unknowness must have new forms".

Because of the obscurity, danger and the obstructed way to the subconscious it is easier for many artists to merely adopt a symbolism. The Surrealists, for instance, turned to Freud's dream symbols. But accepting anothers ready-made symbols does not lend itself to creativity. The great artists are those who turned into themselves, who accepted influences only if they echoed or had a parallel in their own subconscious.

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I would like to conclude by giving an illustration of such artists - a dancer, a writer and a painter, all of whom found intuitive symbols to express the intangible "Spirit".

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Vaslav Nijinsky overawed his audiences with an almost magical ability to actually become the part he played - they were struck by the fact that what they saw was not only a performance but an actual event. Nijinsky empathized into the soul of the part and expressed that self's vision of Spirit. For him it was not a performance but an actual experience.[@] It is not his dancing but the symbolism in his choreographies that I wish to examine.

His first ballet "L'après midi d'un Faun" looks beyond early mythologies to the dawn of man. This is not a story but an

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@ Nijinsky continued to dance although the curtain had fallen after a performance.

invocation of a state of being. The Faun lanquidly counteracts with a group of nymphs who were choreographed into dancing angular group motifs in a line. They form an elaborate screen, or frieze, reminiscent of Egyptian art and Greek pottery. The angular gestures interlace, creating a formal design like the endless Arabic line. Their sexual games resemble animal courting rituals and primitive tribal dances. The set is brought forward, there is no obvious line dividing stage and background and the dancing is angular, sideways-on and screen like, so that the essential effect is that of decorative flatness, of design. There is a removal of what Yeats called "the blood and mire of human veins". Nijinsky was not creating a picturesque exotica like those of his predecessors in the Russian Ballet, but rather the ballet is an expression of an intuitive feel for the physicality of sexual freedom known naturally by primitive man. This sexual freedom is in itself a symbol of pure being, of Oneness. Nijinsky was himself something of a Faun, a wild creature trapped by society and ill at ease.

Nijinsky's "Jeux" is a similar ballet but set in modern times. The dancers are very young, untainted as yet from social inhibitions or natural responses. The ballet opens with a tennis ball bouncing from the wings onto the stage. It is dusk. There are stylized patches of electric light creating a strange dream-like illumination of the setting: a tennis court environment of hedges and shrubs. Behind these stand a forbidding jail-like mansion. The bouncing ball aided by the music further creates the strange atmosphere: somewhere there are invisible tennis players on an invisible tennis court .... An athletic young man enters to

recover the ball, casts a secretive eye about and disappears behind a bush. Two young girls enter and their dance confides adolescent romantic secrets to each other. There is a sound of rustling leaves and they realize that a young man has been watching them secretly. They attempt to flee but their curiosity and the young man's hypnotic gestures lure them back. The three play together, their stylized dances full of innocent sexual experiment. Another lost tennis ball falls on stage. The three flee, their forbidden game broken up. The orchestra thunders and this has been suggested that this represents an aeroplane crash. Whether it is a symbol as pointed as this or just a vague representation of crisis, the symbolism clearly points to the breaking of a magic spell, the birth of guilt, the death of openess of response.

It is surprizing that Nijinsky should have so totally departed from the trite classical ballet and the self-indulgent exotica of the romantic ballets of his day. That he was misunderstood is evident from written descriptions of his audience's reaction which so often required police action to restore peace. Since ballet is the one art form that is free of the abstraction of word, of sound and of image, as art which expresses itself most basically and instinctively in the body, it seems amazing that before Nijinsky, and even after, no choreographer has shared his vision.

Antoine de Saint - Exupéry uses a symbol of a little prince in his children's story "Le Petit Prins". This symbol was not suddenly decided upon, but grew for a long time within its creator -

a perfect entity in its own right that does not have "a meaning" but a unique significance that has to be intuitively recognized since it has its conception in the collective unconscious.

Exupéry's earlier more serious novels included many instances of pilots in crises returning to the world of childhood imagination, to rediscover the "little prince" that lies lost in the adult man. Before writing "Le Petit Prins" Exupéry spent hours drawing pictures on resturant serviettes that later evolved as illustrations to his story. When asked whom he was drawing, Exupéry replied, "It's a little fellow I carry around in my heart". Earlier remarks seem to refer to the growing awareness of the petit bonhomme solitaire:

> "Too soon deprived of God at an age when one still seeks refuge, here we must struggle for life like little solitary fellows".

It is evident that Exupéry saw the little prince as a serious meaningful symbol and not just as a pleasing fictional character with which to amuse children. At the same time other symbols connected with the little prince - those of gardens, flowers, deserts, stars and of the treasure of friendship - appear and reappear in his work:

> "the earth is at once a desert and a paradise rich in secret hidden gardens" (Paradise will be found if it is sought for everywhere)
>
> "gardens inaccessable but to which the craft ever leads back ...."[@]

@ Exupéry's craft, his aeroplane, was his vehicle to discovering his subconscious - he meditated alone in the air. Marius Richard in "Revue de France" said that Exupéry needed to get away from the earth in order to come closer to it.

> "bit by bit, nevertheless, it comes over us that we shall never hear the laughter of our friend (the little prince, symbol of Innocence in Blakeian terms)
>
> "that this one garden", (Paradise - the world of the unconcsious), "is forever locked against us. And at that moment begins our true mourning".

These are examples of only the unconcsious symbolism in "Le Petit Prins" that are common to all Exupéry's writings. The moral lessons taught by the little prince himself are fraught with symbolism, such as the "preciousness of friendship". Exupéry shows in these his disdain for adults who have lost the ability to see as children - who have lost contact with Innocence and Nature.

I have attempted to illustrate through Exupéry, the idea that an intuitive symbol is something personally conceived, which grows inside the creative spirit, and then is born into a significant existence.

Fánally, I would like to refer to Braque's intuitive symbol; that of the bird which so often appears in his later paintings. Despite his social introversion, Braque's comments on his own work and philosophy are accurate and precise. When speaking of his entry into analytical cubism he made a statement which describes the simultaneous entry of the bird symbol in his paintings:

> "the separation was made by means of instinctive efforts. At such moments one obeys an almost unconscious imperative. One does not know just what will come of it. It is an adventure; the conscious mind plays no part in it".

Referring to his interest in birds he said:

> "One summer a few years ago I was in the Camargue. I saw some huge birds flying above the waters. From that vision I derived aerial forms[@]. Birds have inspired me .... While they interest me as living animal species, I have to bury in my memory their natural functions as birds .... so that I can draw closer to my essential preoccupation: the construction of pictorial fact".

This pictorial fact Braque described as "an organization of coloured stressed". His bird was a form recognized by the instinctive unconscious and was used to create a new super-real order that cannot include the bird as it is "in the flesh": in other words, the bird recognized as a symbol of unconscious collective Mind, was used as a symbolic form and not a real object.

@ Once the birds entered his compositions, they were no longer merely birds but "aerial forms".

> "I ended up with a kind of alienation from the object so as to give it pictorial meaning, sufficient to its new life".

Braque's bird then, has entered a new existence that is mysterious and therefore disturbing: The Viewer begins to see the intangible world through the symbol. ("Art", Braque said, "is meant to disturb you; science, to reassure you").

We have seen then, in this chapter, the impassé the modern Western artist has arrived at and the birth agonies he has experienced to find a relevant way of expressing intangible Spirit. Finally, the artist must face the loneliness of esotericism, the fact that others do not understand. Some artists not only invented a personal symbol but a system, a mythology, in which they express the many aspects of Spirit and the material world. I have attempted to establish a foundation on which one can establish an understanding of Blake, who was one of the latter artists, who created an intricate mythology of symbols representing the many married - but apart- - principles of Spirit, through which he was able to show "his vision".

A PARADISE REGAINED

"I assert for myself that I do not behold
the outward creation, and that to me it is
hindrance and not action, it is the dirt upon
my feet, no part of me. "What", it will be
questioned, "when the sun rises do you not
see a round disc of fire, something like a
guinea? Oh no, no, I see an innumerable company
of the heavenly host ....".

(William Blake)

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The primary question in this study of Blake's philosophy, a question the modern artist has to face against all odds is: How does one reach the antipodes of ordinary vision and gain the kind of insight where the sun carries in its invisible aura, spiritual imagery?

How did Blake gain this union with Spirit?

It is significant that Blake had only minimal school education. He was early apprenticed and continued his education alone, through wide reading and personal experience. His education was therefore voluntary, undirected and natural. This education did not enforce a conformity of thought or a divorce from an intuitive knowledge of truth, as does the regimentation of school children and the socialization of young adults. Society demands of young adults that they spend the greater part of their time "getting and spending", to use Blake's phraseology, to fulfil the norms and values of group living.

But Blake committed himself to a quiet contemplative life instead. He had the physically satisfying experience of working at a concrete practical craft, the intellectually satisfying experience of freely reading and thinking and the spiritually satisfying freedom to contemplate, paint and write. He obtained a balance of stimulation and response. Thus, he never lost the ability to enter his subconscious world and the outer world of universal spirit.

> "If the spectator could enter into one of these images of his imagination, approaching them on the fiery chariot of his contemplative thought, if .... he could make a friend and companion of one of these images of wonder, then would he arise from the grave .... then would he meet the Lord in the air .... then he would be happy".[1]

Blake seldom dissipated himself in social activities, although with his growing independence of thought and action there came a marked opposition to authoritarianism that characterized subsequent publications; rebellion in the New World ("America"), revolution in the old ("Europe"), sexual repression and other forms of slavery ("Visions of the Daughters of Albion"). He sympathized with radical extremists of the time and became aquainted with the social reformer Tom Paine - soon to be driven from England for his support of the French Revolution.

Blake realized that popular artistic success was not necessary for creativity, despite lack of recognition and in some cases even derision. He said, "Fame is not necessary to the man of genius". His first important commercial commission was the decoration of the

poet Edward Young's "Night Thoughts", with 537 rich border illustrations. Only part of this ambitious project was actually published, but it did lead to a further private commission of a similar nature; the decoration of the fashionable poems of Thomas Gray.

Blake's individualism culminated in his decision to address the public directly, by producing books which he wrote, designed and printed himself. The method that Blake used to produce these represented a technical breakthrough, for it enabled text and illustration to be designed and printed on a single plate. The process involved drawing and writing on a metal plate with an acid-resistant gum. The plate was then placed in a bath of acid so that the uncovered areas were eaten away, leaving the inscribed parts in relief. It was from these raised sections that the impression was taken. The method involved no elaborate machinery and could be practiced at home. After printing, each page would be hand-coloured by himself (or sometimes by his wife!) Every copy of every book was unique.

The first work in which this process was successfully used was the "Songs of Innocence", then in its sequel "Songs of Experience". In the "prophetic" books of the next two decades the same process was used. These books were larger both in scope and format, progressing from the satirical "Marriage of Heaven and Hell" (1970) to the final book "Jerusalem", which reviews the whole history of man, showing the misery caused by his limited spiritual vision, and, predicting his salvation and ultimate unity with eternity.

Blake realized how important the art of inner vision and contemplation was - that art which allows things to happen in the psyche and brings about action through non-action. There is nothing in this art that is mystical or impractical, and there is nothing of the dreamer in Blake, all his values are clear cut. This philosophy pertains especially to the line in drawing and etching:

> "Leave out the line, and you leave out life itself; all is chaos again".[2]

> "The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this: that the more distinct, sharp and wiry 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".[3]

> "General knowledge is remote knowledge", he wrote; "it is in particulars that wisdom consists, and happiness too. Both in art and life general masses are as much art as a pasteboard man is human".[4]

Blake was committed to a positive response to life - impulses should not be denied. Blake preached: "Know thyself", become harmonious and undivided. In order to achieve this unity self-expression must not be denied. If it is suppressed, it will find other unhealthy ways out. Blake says, "Rather murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unsatisfied desire".[5]

Also in the same vein, is his famous "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom"[6] and "If the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise".[7] Samuel Palmer wrote in his diary: "Excess is the essentially vivifying spirit, vital spark, embalming spice of finest art".

Jung puts forward the same idea of obeying the impulses:

> "The art of letting things happen, action in non-action, letting go of oneself became the key to me with which I was able to open the door to "the Way".[8]

This positive response to the impulses brought Blake into opposition on two fronts - society
- the chaos of the personal subconscious.

Blake's confrontation with the new world created by the Industrial Revolution was to make him an outlaw of society. He first attacked the "social machine" which preyed so mercilessly on the poor - especially women and children. Then, like many radicals, he suffered from the reactionary backlash in England that followed the revolutionary events in France, so he moved away from the centre of London to the relative isolation of Lambeth. He spoke out against the State (which led to his arrest and consequent trial) and finally, he attacked the Church:-

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And "Thou shalt not" writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love
That so many sweet flowers bore;

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars my joys and desires.[9]

The Church, in its institutionalized form and in its rejection of imagination rather than dogma, as truth, belongs to the vegetative.

"The world of the imagination is the world of Eternity. It is the divine bosom into which we shall go after the death of the vegetated body. The world of imagination is infinite and eternal, whereas the world of generation or vegetation is finite and temporal. There exist in that eternal world the external realities of everything which we see reflected in the vegetable glass of Nature".[10]

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The full acceptance of impulse as spiritually true and meaningful leads to an experience of chaos in the self (the personal sub-conscious) and in the outer universal spirit. This has to be understood in order to achieve a harmony. Hermann Hesse, whose philosophy was fundamentally the same as Blake's and who realized that the artist must discover his deepest purpose and then throw himself into it, said chaos must be faced. Real order must be preceeded by a descent into chaos:

> "The way to innocence, to the uncreated and to God, leads on, not back .... but even further into guilt, ever deeper into human life .... Instead of narrowing your world and simplifying your soul, you will have at the last to take the whole world into your soul, cost what it may".[11]

Many artists have floundered at this vision of self and universe but Blake did not. His unique adventuring, his hard-won sense of balance and his unwavering sense of forwardness led him to discover order in chaos, to express it in symbol, intuitively conceived and perceived.

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Vision is a way of seeing by images and symbols.

> "A Spirit and a Vision are not, as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing; they are organized and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and persihing nature can produce .... The painter of this work asserts that all his imaginings appear to him infinitely more perfect and more minutely organized than anything seen by his mortal eye".[12]

But what are these spirits and visions, and how can these images of reality be perceived? According to Blake this is a real art of which few people know anything.

W.B. Yeats said of Blake that he was the first artist of modern times to preach the indissoluble marriage of all great art with symbol. Yeats' definition of a symbol is pertinent: "A symbol is the only expression of some invisible essence, a transparent lamp around a spiritual flame. It is a revelation .... Religious and visionary people, monks and nuns, medicine - men and opium-eaters, see symbols in their trances; for religious and visionary thought is thought about perfection and the way to perfection; and symbols are the only things free enough from all bonds to speak of perfection".[13]

Blake wrote "Vision or imagination (expressed in symbols) is a representation of what actually exists, really and unchangeably".[14] At the same time it is spiritually rather than ordinarily true and is perceived and conceived through the intuitive collective consciousness.

Digby, perhaps one of Blake's greatest critics, agrees with Yeats on the importance Blake gave to the symbol. He says that the image or symbol is not an inferior means of expression, nor is it subjective and arbitary, as it is still regarded by many other critics. On the contrary, the power of apprehending archetypal symbols and images springs from one of man's most precious faculties, his intuitive faculty. It is on this faculty that he must rely for perceiving the truth about actual living experience; man can never know the truth about himself unless he develops his power of intuition. The intuitive imagination, which works through symbols, is the very essence of art.[15]

Blake was a symbolist who had to invert his own symbols. He was a man crying out for a mythology, and trying to make one himself because he could not find one to hand. He had to turn back to ancient mythology (as did Blake's contemporary Fuseli) because the power and meaning of symbols had been lost in England for centuries. If Blake did speak confusedly and obscurely sometimes it was because he spoke of things for which he could find no models in the world he knew - not because he was unclear about what he wanted to say. Unlike van Gogh or Gaugin, whose symbolism was largely unconscious, Blake made all his work a conscious systematic exposition of symbolism. So Blake and Fuseli shared the fascination of their age with the legends of the ancient world. They made up their own mythology - dramatic and imaginative. It is interesting to note that Blake believed that pictorial images provided insights equal, if not superior, in value to those of words. Therefore he took as much

trouble to emulate the qualities of the art of the ancient world, as he did to imitate its myths. He improved his relief etching technique and invented a new printing process. This process involved taking an impression from a painted-up board. The "monoprints" were then touched up with pen and watercolour. In these prints appear symbols, as well as archetypal images of stars, flames, suns, moons which are characteristic of all Blake's work. A harsh law-giving deity Urizen, under whose influence Europe develops a repressive and materialistic society that eventually provokes the French Revolution, is shown measuring out the material world ("Europe, a Prophecy; the Ancient of Days" - Plate I). Two sprites, blasting the earth's produce with seeds of destinction, allegorically represent Europe's miseries ("Europe, A Propheey; Blighted Crops"- Plate V). An ecstatic figure, Albion - symbolizing England - rises from bondage with bright rays of light shining from him ("Glad Day or The Dance of Albion" - Plate II). The figure of Newton, transposed into an image of materialism, uses dividers (like Urizen) to impose a rational order on the world. ("Newton" - Plate III), "Nebuchadnezzar" (Plate IV) symbolizes man devoid of spiritual vision and is depicted as an animal - hair growing like eagle's feathers and nails like bird claws, eating grass like oxen. In " Visions of the Daughters of Albion; the Argument" the daughters depicted here are symbolic of the women of England. Blake used an invented mythology to attack sexual conventions and the suffering they bring to the "Daughters of Albion".

These figures do not represent concrete intellectual ideas. They are spiritual nuances that can not be expressed in words or explained. But because symbols speak not only to man's conscious, thinking side, but also to his unconscious, it is a difficult language. Digby says that the language of archetypal symbols and images stirs both sides of man's nature, and because it speaks to the whole man with the many different voices of his complex being, it has to be experienced rather than understood. The symbol-image has to be taken inside oneself and understood intuitively, for it is only in this way that it can come to life.

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In his time Blake was misunderstood and often severly derided. Even today Blake remains an enigma. One is struck by his technical clumsiness and the unfortunate esoteric nature of his symbolism because of a lost ability to perceive subconsciously "reality". Blake's great value lies not in the "aesthetic" qualities of his work, not even in his work itself. But in the daring constellation of the totality of his work, philosophy and spirituality.

Blake's solution, as a visionary, to the artist's dilemma is:

"To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an Hour".[16]

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3 Maude *Life of Tolstoy*, Vol I p 385

4 *Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky* p 54

5 Ibid., p 49

6 Ibid., p 66

7 D'Ancona *Some Aspects of Expressionism* p 48

8 Blake *Complete Writings* p 154

CHAPTER II

1 James *Varieties of Religious Experience* p 158

2 Nietzsche *Birth of Tragedy* P 26

3 Satre *Nausea* p 169-170

4 Hesse *Autobiographical Writings* p 61

5 Hesse *Steppenwolf* p 322

6 *Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky* p 49, 54, 47.

7 Blake *Collected Works* p 623

8 Hesse *Autobiographical Writings* p 23

9 T.S. Eliot *Collected Poems* p 11

10 de Quincey *Confessions of an English Opium eater*

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12 Ibid., p 24

13 Ibid., p 51,52

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1 Yeats Explorations p 153

2 Jung Man and His Symbols p 18

3 Ibid., p 21

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1 Blake Complete Writings p 611

2 Ibid., p 585

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4 Ibid., p 586

5 Ibid., p 152

6 Ibid., p 150

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9 Blake Complete Writings p 215

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PLATE I

"Europe, a Prophecy; the Ancient of Days"

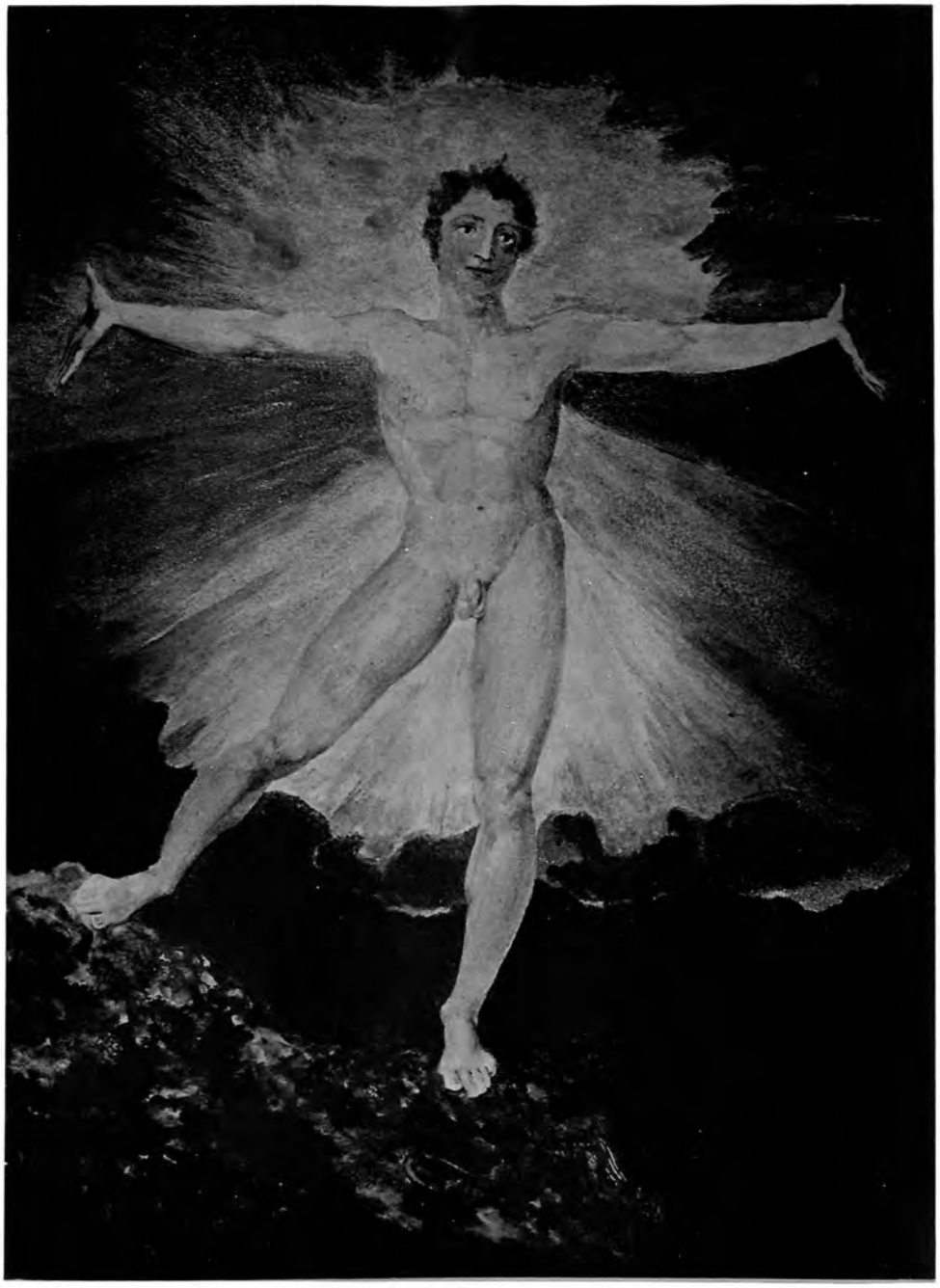

PLATE II

"Glad Day"

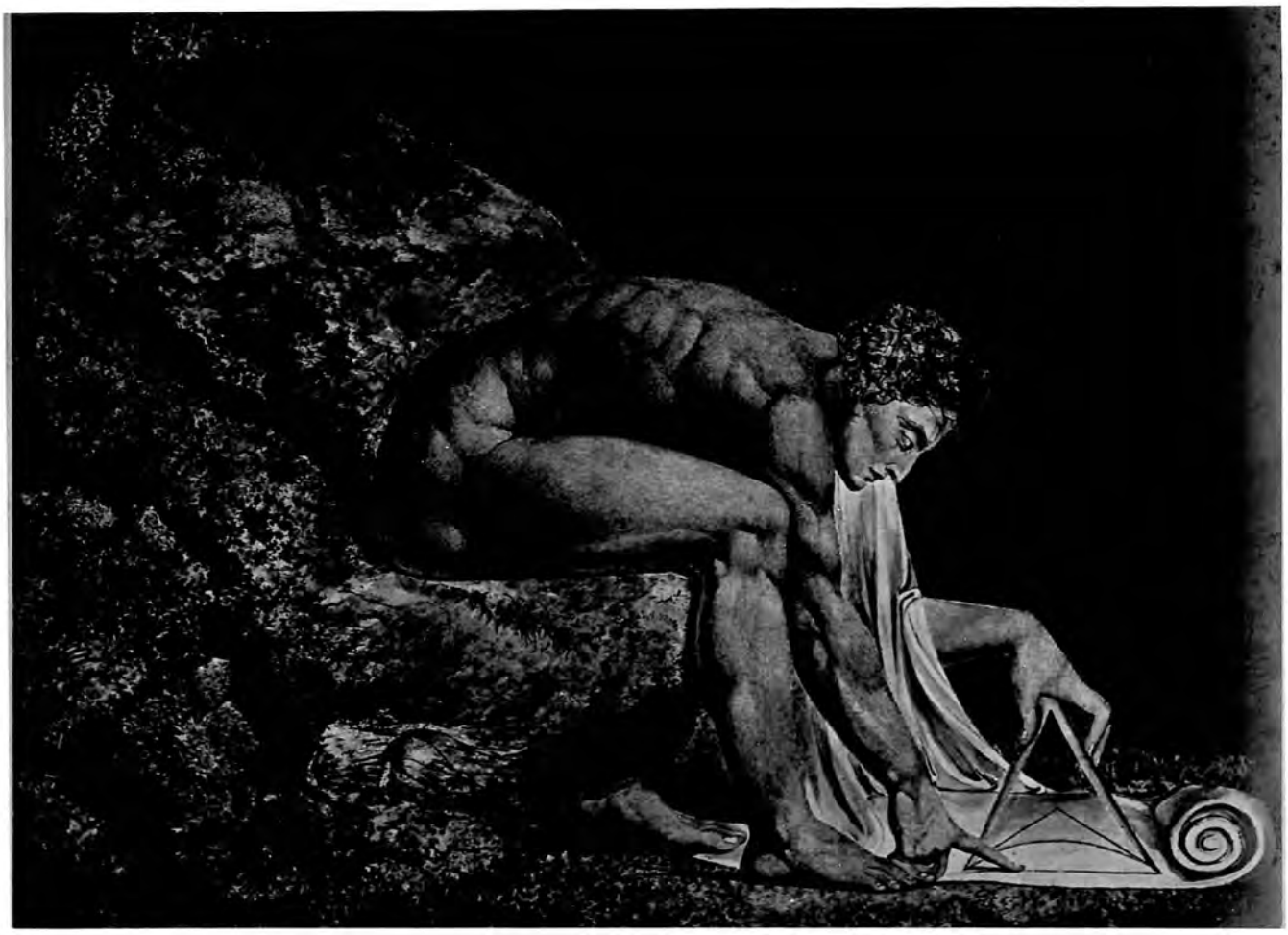

PLATE III

"Newton"

PLATE IV

"Nebuchadnezzar"

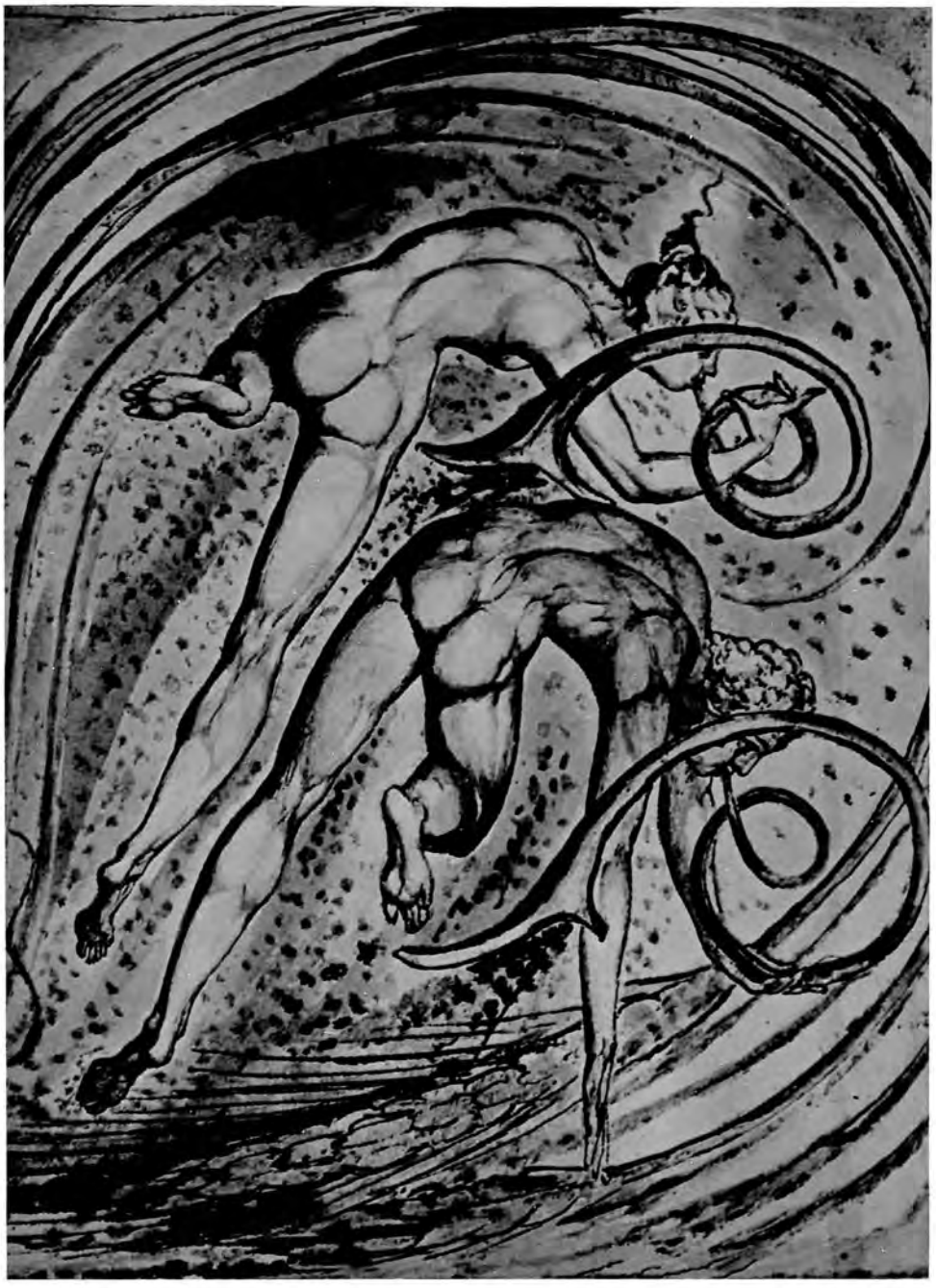

PLATE V

"Europe, A Prophecy; Blighted Crops"