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# Eidetic vision in blake's london

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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سوره المجادلة

## Dedication

*To the owner of a fragrant biography and enlightened thought,  
who gave me the gift of dreams and the ability to realize them.*

*(My beloved father)*

*To the angel, to the pure lady who set me in the path of life, To  
those who supported my faltering steps and held my hands at  
every fall (my mom)*

*To my brothers and sisters*

*“To my best friend, who knows the chapters I left unsaid.  
To those who wished for this moment and were deprived of it(My  
uncle Youssef and my friend Zahraa, may God have mercy on them)*

*“For my guide, who saw in me what I failed to see in myself.”  
To the successful miss who did not give in to difficulties(myself) .*

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## **Abstract**

The Search about the Eidetic vision in William Blake's poem London, written based on many sources, including books and articles . It contains the eidetic vision of William Blake in his works in general and in the London poem in particular. It contains three chapters:

The first chapter talks about the eidetic vision in detail As a definition and a description .

The second chapter contains details of the writer's life and his talent, who discovered it, and who helped him to develop it, and The schools which he joined , his most important works

And his literary techniques Which he used in his works . The third talks about imagery vision in Blake's works and about the symbols, theme, and theory of the London poem .

## Chapter one

### 1.1.Eidetic vision

The intuition of essences, often described as "eidetic vision" or "eidetic reduction," is related to the Greek term *eidos*, which Husserl adopted from its Platonic meaning to designate "universal essences." Such essences express the "whatness" of things, the necessary and invariant features of phenomena that allow us to recognize phenomena as phenomena of a certain kind. For all of their differences, the overwhelming majority of phenomenologists have upheld a descriptive phenomenology that is antireductionist, involves phenomenological bracketing, focuses on intentionality, and aims at insight into essential structures and meanings. (Simmons, 2009)

The following is a brief formulation of a general phenomenological procedure for gaining insight into such essential structures and meanings with application to the phenomena of religious experience. In the "intuition of essences" (*Wesensschau*), the phenomenologist attempts to disengage essential structures embodied in particular phenomena. One begins with particular data: specific phenomena as expressions of intentional experiences. The central aim of the phenomenological method is to disclose the essential structure embodied in the particular data. Eidetic imagery, an unusually vivid subjective visual phenomenon. An eidetic person claims to continue to "see" an object that is no longer objectively present. Eidetic persons behave as if they are actually seeing an item, either with their eyes closed or while looking at some surface that serves as a convenient background for the image.(Greek Literature in the Roman Period and in Late Antiquity, 2014)

Furthermore, eidetic persons describe the image as if it is still present and not as if they are recalling a past event. The incidence of eidetic imagery is very low in children (2-10 percent) and almost nonexistent in adults. Imagine being able to memorize an entire sheet of Russian vocabulary, a list of math equations, or the window arrangement on a large building just by observing it for a few seconds. These are the abilities associated with eidetic imagery, more commonly known as

photographic memory. Eidetic imagery has been defined as (the ability to retain an accurate, detailed visual image of a complex Scene or pattern... or see an image that is an exact copy of the original sensory experience).

People capable of eidetic memory, or eidetikers, are therefore able to recall vivid images within their mind and examine these images as one would examine a photograph. Eidetic imagery has been studied for over a century and many studies have been done to test its validity. Individuals capable of superior memory were tested and many were found not to be. (Yewchuk, 1988)

## Chapter two

### 2.1. William Blake (1757-1827)

William Blake was born in London in 1757. His father, a hosier, soon recognized his son's artistic talents and sent him to study at a drawing school when he was ten years old. At 14, William asked to be apprenticed to the engraver James Basire, under whose direction he further developed his innate skills. As a young man Blake worked as an engraver, illustrator, and drawing teacher, and met such artists as Henry Fuseli and John Flaxman, as well as Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose classicizing style he would later come to reject. (Paley, 1978)

Blake wrote poems during this time as well, and his first printed collection, an immature and rather derivative volume called *Poetical Sketches*, appeared in 1783. *Songs of Innocence* was published in 1789, followed by *Songs of Experience* in 1793 and a combined edition the next year bearing the title *Songs of Innocence and Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*. Blake's political radicalism intensified during the years leading up to the French Revolution. He began a seven-book poem about the Revolution, in fact, but it was either destroyed or never completed, and only the first book survives. He disapproved of Enlightenment rationalism, of institutionalized religion, and of the tradition of marriage in its conventional legal and social form (though he was married himself).

Blake's unorthodox religious thinking owes a debt to the Swedish philosopher Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), whose influence is particularly evident in Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. In the 1790s and after, he shifted his poetic voice from the lyric to the prophetic mode, and wrote a series of long prophetic books, including *Milton* and *Jerusalem*. Linked together by an intricate mythology and symbolism of Blake's own creation, these books propound a revolutionary new social, intellectual, and ethical order. (Curran & Bentley, 1980)

Blake published almost all of his works himself, by an original process in which the poems were etched by hand, along with illustrations and decorative images, onto copper plates. These plates were inked to make prints, and the prints were then colored in with paint. This expensive and labor-intensive production method resulted

in a quite limited circulation of Blake's poetry during his life. It has also posed a literary critics and art historians.

Most scholars of Blake find it important to consider his graphic art and his writing together. Certainly Blake himself thought of them as inseparable. During his own lifetime, Blake was a pronounced failure, and he harbored a good deal of resentment and anxiety about the public's apathy toward his work and about the financial straits in which he so regularly found himself. When his self-curated exhibition of his works met with financial failure in 1809, Blake sank into depression and withdrew into obscurity; he remained alienated for the rest of his life until his death in London in 1827.

Blake's contemporaries saw him as something of an eccentric—as indeed he was. Suspended between the neoclassicism of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the early phases of Romanticism, Blake belongs to no single poetic school or age. Only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century did wide audiences begin to acknowledge his profound originality and genius. (Curran & Bentley, 1980)

## **2.2.Literary vision in Blake's works**

After the death of William Blake in 1827, his friend George Richmond kissed him and then closed his eyes 'to keep the vision in'. This anecdote, found in Blake Records, illustrates how significant both the physical perception of beauty and the spiritual perception of vision were to the poet and those who knew him well. Throughout his life Blake believed in the importance and power of visions, as Richmond later attested. In the margin to Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake*, he wrote:

He said to me that all children saw 'visions' and the substance of what he added is that all men might see them but for worldliness or unbelief, which blinds the spiritual eye. Such a lack of vision was not an affliction suffered by Blake. As a child he was once beaten by his mother for 'running in and saying that he saw the Prophet Ezekiel under a Tree in the Fields. (Bentley, 2004)

Despite the impression this cruel experience made on the young Blake, it apparently did not inhibit his visionary capacities. Indeed, his life story is littered with

accounts of visitations from spirits: the Ghost of a Flea, angels in the trees of Peckham Rye, the spirit in the Sun, the departing spirit of his beloved brother Robert, and even Satan himself all appear on the roll of his visions. His paintings, engravings and poems are alive with the powers of vision and the visionary imagination. The Importance of such vision is also established by a more recent biographer, Peter Ackroyd, who begins his account of Blake's life in these terms: In the visionary imagination of William Blake there is no birth and no death, no beginning and no end, only the perpetual pilgrimage within time towards eternity. (Andrew Green, 2004)

Blake always felt the spirit of Robert lived with him. He even announced that it was Robert who informed him how to illustrate his poems in “illuminated writing.” Blake’s technique was to produce his text and design on a copper plate with an impervious liquid. The plate was then dipped in acid so that the text and design remained in relief. That plate could be used to print on paper, and the final copy would be then hand colored.(Jackson, 1981)

### **2.3.Technicality in blake:**

After experimenting with this method in a series of aphorisms entitled There is No Natural Religion and All Religions are One (1788?), Blake designed the series of plates for the poems entitled Songs of Innocence and dated the title page 1789. Blake continued to experiment with the process of illuminated writing and in 1794 combined the early poems with companion poems entitled Songs of Experience. The title page of the combined set announces that the poems show “the two Contrary States of the Human Soul.”( Wicksteed, 1999)

## Chapter three

### 3.1. Imagery vision in William Blake's work

The poems of Blake emphasize the rebellious mood with a combination of Religious and mystic frames. Social conflicts which have arisen in the era of Industrial revolution in England confused the perception of Blake. Through the Years the author got the new vision of his poems what was expressed by the Difference between the imagery of Introductions and the Song's of Nurse in The Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience. The author expresses his Own perception of the world.

The use of imagery helps Blake to represent the Image of Nature as the main character of the Songs. Imagery as a set of mental pictures or images is the main characteristic of poetry. Analyzing works of William Blake, we can find such characteristics as visual imagery, kinetic imagery, personification and metaphor.

Visual imagery is the most important characteristic of both works. Analyzing the Introductions we can notice that the Introduction of Experience contains more visual imagery than the Introduction of Innocence. In the Introduction of Innocence we find such examples as "Piping down the valleys wild, piping songs of pleasant glee, on a cloud I saw a child". (Rawlinson, 2003)

Visual imagery of the Introduction of Experience: the Bard, that walked among the ancient trees;(fallen, fallen light rene)

The last quatrain presents a consistent visual imagery:

Turn away no more;

Why wilt thou turn away?

The starry floor,

The watery shore,

Is given thee till the break of day.

N thee till the break of day. (Weber, 2016)

In the Nurse's Song of the Innocence we can find more visual imagery than in the Nurse's Song of the Experience: "in the sky the little birds fly"; "the hills are all covered with sheep" .

An example of visual imagery of the Nurse's Song in the Experience: "my face turns green and pale" . We can make the conclusions that Blake pays more attention to the visual characteristics in the Song of Experience. I think that the use of visual imagery emphasizes the Infinity of Blake's imagination. (Weber, 2016)

Word choice is very important to the author. He treats them as live beings which can coexist only in cooperation with other live creatures. "The Holy Word" of the Introduction of the Song of Experience is an example of the kinetic imagery. However, Blake doesn't use this imagery often. He prefers to use personification to show the vitality of the lifeless things. In the poems we can find the following examples: "the days rise", "the morning appears", "sun is gone", "Earth returns and arises", "the morn rises", "light fades away" . The use of personification helps to create the whole picture and to add the action.(Thomas & Jones, 2003)

All poems are full of metaphors: "the Holy Word walked among the trees, calling the lapsed soul and weeping in the evening dew"; "the Holy Word might control the starry pole". "The morning appears in the skies". The main metaphor of the Nurse's Song is the image of Nurse as the metaphor of Nature which cares about her children – people. Metaphor is one of the most important elements of poetry which shows us the form and expression of Blake's poem. (Bowra, 1947)

### **3.2.London' by William Blake:**

The speaker travels to the River Thames and looks around him. He takes note of the resigned faces of his fellow Londoners. The speaker also hears and feels the sorrow in the streets, this is the focus of the final three stanzas. There is a true pain in the hearts of men, women, and children. The most prominent of those suffering in London's streets are the prostitutes.' London' ends with a fantastical image of a carriage that shuttles love and death together around the city .

### 3.3.The Symbolism of Blake's 'London'

#### Charters

The reference to 'each charter'd street' and the 'charter'd Thames' in Blake's opening lines reveal a London thoroughly mapped out and restricted

#### Manacles

Blake's 'London', the manacles are 'mind-forg'd': in other words, they aren't physical, but imaginary, or mental. Blake is suggesting that Londoners have restricted themselves by narrowing their mental horizons

#### Cries and Sighs .

Blake uses the word 'cry' three times in 'London': as well as the 'cry of every Man' and 'every Infants cry of fear', we find 'the Chimney- sweepers cry'. These cries are cries of desperation, fear, and despair, and once again they symbolise the misery at the heart of life in the industrial capital.

#### The Chimney-Sweeper's Cry

Is a dark and dreary poem in which the

The cry of the chimney-sweeper – who, typically, would have been a young boy who was small enough to climb up inside the chimneys of houses – blackens the walls of the city's churches, Once again, the chimney-sweeper's cry is symbolic: Blake is not literally suggesting that the soot the boy coughs out into the air, whenever he lets out a cry of despair, is capable of turning the churches black.

#### The Marriage Hearse.

Blake ends 'London' with a powerful final image: a young girl, sold into prostitution, has given birth to a child out of wedlock. Venereal disease. The married men who pay women for sex, Blake suggests, destroy and degrade the institution of marriage because they take home all sorts of diseases to their wives.

This, in turn, turns marriage from a positive institution celebrating life and love into something akin to a funeral, mourning the death of something (here, love, and the

commitment and fidelity enshrined within the marriage service), hence the 'hearse'.(Frayn, 2019)

### **3.4.Theme of London:**

Misery: he uses the word 'woe' to describe the 'marks' which every Londoner carries around on their bodies.

Poverty :The people whom Blake focuses on in 'London Literary theory in blake's London soldiers, chimney-sweeps,

Disease and Decay.Blake also summons another blight on the city: disease.

Exploitation ,.Corruption, Industrialisation and Degradation .

### **3.5.Literary theory in blake's London**

Blake ends 'London' with a powerful image: a young girl or 'harlot', sold into prostitution, has given birth to a child out of wedlock . London is one of the grimmest of William Blake's songs of experience (see Songs of Innocence and of Experience. Like "The Tyger" and the "experienced" version of "Holy Thursday," this is one of the Comparatively few songs that seem to be written in Blake's own voice. ( Simpson, 2014)

The tone is one of reproach so severe that it defeats even sardonic irony. But it must be kept in mind that such reproach is partial-paradoxically, because it is so total as to affect the speaker himself and to jaundice his own view. Although he can see how terrible the world is, Blake is not exempt from the famous "mind- forg'd manacles" he sees binding everyone everywhere.(Tomlinson, 1987)

What are those manacles? They are, first of all, a metaphor for oppression that people could cast off if they wished to The manacles do not have material reality, although they have material consequences. But because people's minds, as well as their bodies, are enslaved, they are unlikely to cast the off the manacles. Their slavery and oppression goes deeper than material life can reach, although it is a consequence of the materialism and greed of the enslaving interests the rich and the government.

And everyone is enslaved: The speaker sees "marks of weakness, marks of woe" in "every face" he meets .

The poem's repetitive fury chartered, mark, every, cry-seems to leave no out at all. Indeed, the poem does not make room for the happiness of innocence that the Songs of Innocence have treated so touchingly. ( Simpson, 2014)

The infants in "London" cry with fear, and the chimney sweepers' cry is one of pain, not simply (as in the "innocence" version of "The Chimney Sweeper") meant as the announcement of their availability. The speaker of "London" may be correct in what he hears in these cries, but that is not the only thing to hear in them. Blake himself declares that poetic vision means seeing beyond the material world, the world of the senses, and not becoming enslaved to the oppression that it shows one everywhere. (Tomlinson, 1987)

In his book *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, he has the sublime Satanic figure who represents him ask: "How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way, / Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five?" The speaker of "London," then, while accurate, must also be regarded as partial, as himself unable to break his own mind-forged manacles There is reason for his despair, however.

The London he describes is real, and the oppression and misery that it contains ubiquitous. The statesman Edmund Burke, who famously defended what he called "the chartered rights of Englishmen," was violently opposed to the French Revolution (for which Blake had great hopes, as his 1791 prophetic poem *The French Revolution* attests). Against perfect liberty Burke set the materialistic rights of property, and it was these rights, enshrined in the charters-both the laws and the documents of ownership-that Blake saw as oppressive. ( Simpson, 2014)

The defense of these charters required the courage and blood of soldiers who might otherwise find no way to survive. The churches of London, parts of the established Church of England, supported the government's policies and did so at the

expense of the poor; here Blake refers in shorthand to his Chimney Sweeper poems when he writes of how the sweeps' cries appalled the churches that were blackening the children around them (who remove the black soot from the chimneys) with their indifference to the misery of the children and the poor .

The children-perhaps like the nurse in the "experienced" version of "The Nurse's Song," or perhaps like her charges as she sees them-become harlots even in their youth, not only unsympathetic to their own illegitimate children who interfere with the only way they can survive, but to all the infants of the city. Their "curse" is an expression of bitterness, but also a physical state-both sexuality (menstruation, as Harold Bloom argues) and the woes that attend it within the vast hypocrisy of London as well as venereal disease: the plague with which they blight marriage. The "marriage hearse" of the poem's last line interprets what should be a joyful occasion as a deadly one: The groom will transmit to his wife the venereal disease he has become infected with through his consorting with prostitutes, even as he abandons the prostitutes to their own fate. ( Tomlinson, 1987)

The newlywed couple are going to their graves or are going to procreate children who will repeat the dreadful experience of life in London. The poem's vision of London is bitter and hopeless. But what are we to make of the speaker? In many ways he is an aspect of Blake, in the mode of the biblical prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel whom he so much admired and who blasted the Israelites from the wilderness or the dungheap. Blake makes the connection explicit in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* when he describes a fancy of dining with Isaiah and Ezekiel:

I then asked Ezekiel why he eat dung, and lay so long on his right and left side? He answer'd, 'the desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite; this the North American tribes practise, and is he honest who resists his genius or conscience. Only for the sake of present ease or gratification? The bitterness of tone in "London" is therefore not the last word. Its purpose is to demonstrate the baseness to which humanity has fallen, not in order to promote despair but to provoke change.

Thus, Isaiah, the other prophetic denunciator of his people, whom Blake imagines dining with him and Ezekiel, asserts the power and truth of his chastising vision when Blake asks him how he dared to assert he spoke on behalf of God: "I saw

no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing, and as I was then perswaded, and remain confirm'd, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences but wrote." (Kuiken, 2014)

The Important thing to see here is that an assertion of the stark and oppressive limitations of the material world is not the last but the first step toward speaking with the voice of God about the infinite in everything.

Those who would charter the city and the river are those who impose weakness and woe everywhere, and those who resist the determinate limitations of the material and financial world are those who can transcend human weakness for the transcendence offered to visionary power, hope, and love. Far from turning their backs on the world, Blake thinks such prophets, among whom he includes himself, will change it. (Tomlinson, 1987)

## Conclusion

The paper explores the representation of the human in William Blake's poetry. In order to grasp depiction of humankind in all its depth, a number of constructs in close relation to the human image are being investigated including the role and nature of God, nature, animal world, as well as the place and illustration of the world of children and adults.

All of the concepts are examined in regards to the poet's dichotomist depiction of the concepts in his both earlier and later literary works, culminating in the ultimate reconciliation and reunion of the seemingly opposing perceptions within the later literary writings.

The tone of the first series is admirably sounded by the introductory "Piping down the valleys wild" and that of second the dark picture of poor babes "fed with cold and usurous hand".

Blake is bitter against those who go "up to the Church to pray" while the misery of the innocent is around them. His theory of Contraries is summarized in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: "Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence." The essence of Blake's theory is that, in some paradoxical way, it is possible for the contraries of innocence and experience to co-exist within a human being. The crime of "religion" was its attempt "to destroy existence" by ignoring or minimizing the essential oppositions in human nature.

The word, "contrary" had a very specific and important meaning for Blake. Like almost all great poets, he was an enemy of dualism. Western thought has been intensely dualistic, seeing everything as composed of warring opposites, head and heart, body and spirit, male and female as though the split between the hemispheres of the human brain were projecting itself on everything perceived. A study of the poems in the two groups shows the emotional tensions between the two Contrary States .

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