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## Eternal Death & Resurrection: From Single Vision to the Fourfold and the Mystic Number 4 in William Blake's Cosmogony and Mythology

When we begin to study William Blake's mysticism, it becomes apparent that some numbers, like codes describing a kind of secret truth for him, are highly important. Decoding the symbolic meanings of these numbers allows us to enter a world where we find ourselves in the realm of God assumed and proposed by Blake. In my treatment of this subject, I intend to grasp the concept behind the system on the basis of analysis of several examples. I will study the different types of vision that are related to the numbers 1 to 4, starting with the philosophical and theological background that could have influence on Blake's number system.

The importance of the number 4 was not new in Blake's time because its history even goes back to the number symbolism of Greek antiquity. Blake possibly knew a lot about the subject because he had a good relationship with Thomas Taylor, a well-known Neoplatonic philosopher of his age, who translated the complete works of Plato and Aristotle into English and was also skilled in mathematics. According to Raine and Harper, Blake obviously read Taylor's works,<sup>1</sup> and it is also known that Blake learnt mathematics from Taylor, which provides evidence of Blake's interest in both mathematics and ancient Greek philosophical systems. Taking this into account, it is not surprising that Blake applied the knowledge he acquired from Thomas Taylor and built it into his own system of ideas. However, of all the Greek mathematicians who used the number 4 as a basis for their logical systems, one group may have had greater importance for Blake, the Pythagoreans. Blake even named a character "Sipsop the Pythagorean" in his drama, *Island in the Moon* (1784). According to Damon, this figure in the drama was no other than a representation of Thomas Taylor.<sup>2</sup>

The Pythagoreans arranged things in sets of four. One such set was called a *Tetractys* ('a set of four things'). They used the following ten sets:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kathleen RAINE and George Mills HARPER (eds.): *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ágnes PÉTER: *William Blake illusztrációi a Jób könyvéhez*, Budapest, Könyvpont Kiadó, 2017, 86.

<sup>3</sup> Milena BOGDANOVIĆ: 'The number and its symbolism in ancient Greece'. *Journal of Arts and Humanities (JAH)*, Vol. 2, No. 6, July, 2013, 117.

Numbers	1	2	3	4
Magnitudes	point	line	surface	solid
Elements	fire	air	water	earth
Figures	pyramid	octahedron	icosahedron	cube
Living Things	seed	growth in length	in breadth	in thickness
Societies	man	village	city	nation
Faculties	reason	knowledge	opinion	sensation
Seasons	spring	summer	autumn	winter
Ages of a Person	infancy	youth	adulthood	old age
Parts of living things	body		three parts of the soul	

From the point of view of my study, the sets of Faculties, Seasons and Elements are especially interesting, because it is possible to find parallel ideas in Blake's number mysticism.

The first striking fact is that completeness equals the number 4 in both Blake and Greek number symbolism.<sup>4</sup> Many Greek philosophers liked to arrange everything according to a mathematical logic, and the number 4 was suitable to describe the world in a logical way. They used their number system in connection with all aspects of life, such as music, arithmetic, cosmology, architecture, and even the arts.<sup>5</sup> William Blake also used the number 4 to express the idea of fulfilment and completeness, and develop it into his unique concept of the fourfold. As he states it in *The Four Zoas*, 'Four Mighty Ones are in every Man.'<sup>6</sup> Samuel Foster Damon paraphrases this eloquently when he writes: 'Man, the image of God, is fourfold; God therefore must also Be fourfold.'<sup>7</sup>

The second analogy is that winter is the season that belongs to the number 4. In Blake's *The [First] Book of Urizen*, Urizen's (Reason) Disk was smitten by Los (Poetic Imagination) in winter, 'the night of Time'<sup>8</sup>:

4. Oppos'd to the exulting flam'd beam,  
The broad Disk of Urizen upheav'd  
Across the Void many a mile.

5. It was forg'd in mills where the winter  
Beats incessant: ten winters the disk,  
Unremitting, endur'd the cold hammer.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. William BLAKE: *[To Thomas Butts]: With Happiness stretch'd across the hills*.

<sup>5</sup> Milena BOGDANOVIĆ: 'The number and its symbolism in ancient Greece', 118.

<sup>6</sup> William BLAKE: *The Four Zoas*, Night the First (FZ).

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Foster DAMON: *A Blake Dictionary. The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake* (Updated Ed.), Hanover, New Hampshire, Dartmouth College Press, 2013, 419.

<sup>8</sup> FZ Night the Ninth.

<sup>9</sup> William BLAKE: *The Book of Abania*. 1:4-5 (BA).

It took ten winters to make the Disk, a number that suggests completeness or totality. The number 10 is also significant in Greek number symbolism, as it was a triangular number that they preferred above many others. It suggested completeness, the full scale of sets of four things.<sup>10</sup> In Blake, the number 10 implies a full period of time, a complete, finished term, as in the case of 'ten winters' cited above. It is also associated with completeness and the fulfilment of time in *The Ancient Britons*, number V. in *A Descriptive Catalogue for Pictures (1809)*:

In the last Battle of King Arthur only Three Britons escaped, these were the Strongest Man, the Beautifullest Man, and the Ugliest Man; these three marched through the field unsubdued, as Gods, and the Sun of Britain s[e]t, but shall arise again with tenfold splendor when Arthur shall awake from sleep, and resume his dominion over earth and ocean.

The third analogy is in connection with the Elements. In Blake's mythology, the elements are personified; for instance, in *The [First] Book of Urizen*, the four elements are the sons of Urizen. Remarkably, there are exactly the same four elements, and the order of their births is exactly the same as the order of the elements in the system of the Pythagoreans. To be more precise, fire is the first element in both cases; however, Fuzon, the incarnation of fire in Blake, is the 'first begotten, last born' of the four:

3. Most Urizen sicken'd to see  
His eternal creations appear,  
Sons and daughters of sorrow, on mountains,  
Weeping, wailing. First Thiriell appear'd,  
Astonish'd at his own existence,  
Like a man from a cloud born; and Utha,  
From the waters emerging, laments;  
Grodna rent the deep earth, howling,  
Amaz'd; his heavens immense crack  
Like the ground parch'd with heat; then Fuzon  
Flam'd out, first begotten, last born;  
All his Eternal sons in like manner;  
His daughters, from green herbs and cattle,  
From monsters and worms of the pit.<sup>11</sup>

The order of Elements in the Pythagoreans' division is fire, air, water and earth, represented by Fuzon, Thiriell, Utha and Gronda in Blake. I see in this division a verti-

<sup>10</sup> Milena BOGDANOVIĆ: 'The number and its symbolism in ancient Greece', 117.

<sup>11</sup> BU 8:3.

cal line of perception between the Sun and the ground. But Blake's intention was not merely to follow the Greek pattern, but to adapt it to his own system according to his idea of existence and creation. In Blake's concept, the flame of imagination and desire is an underlying power all along the process of creation. In both the system of the Pythagoreans and Blake, the creation of the world would be incomplete without the fourth Element. These multiple analogies suggest that there may be an ancient Greek influence working in Blake's thought that lives together with other systems and contributes to Blake's number mysticism.

Besides the possible ancient Greek influence, other contexts should also be considered. As David Groves writes in his article about Blake and the "fourfold", the Bible and Milton could also be sources for the concept. Blake openly liked John Milton and his great work, *Paradise Lost*, in which the word "fourfold" appears once.

Nor less on either side tempestuous fell  
His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged four,<sup>12</sup>

The same word occurs twice in the King James Bible (1611), although its usage is different to Blake's.<sup>13</sup> Despite this evidence, Groves argues that there may be a much more immediate influence behind Blake's concept of the fourfold: the work of the Presbyterian clergyman Thomas Boston.<sup>14</sup>

Boston became known in the eighteenth century for his book *Human Nature, in its Four-fold State* (1720), which contained the word "four-fold" immediately in its title. Blake usually wrote this word without a hyphen, but sometimes he used the same spelling as Boston did, as in the following lines of his prophetic book *Milton*:

From Golgonooza the spiritual Four-fold London eternal  
In immense labours & sorrows, ever building, ever falling,<sup>15</sup>

However, it is more important what Boston wrote in his book about the four stages of human experience: 1) 'State of Innocence, or Primitive Integrity,' 2) the 'State of Nature, or Entire Deprivation,' 3) 'The conscience is renewed,' 3) 'a *mysterious* union.'<sup>16</sup>

The first state is related to the birth of a human being, and it ends in that very short period of life. The second state is when a 'natural man' cannot do anything but sin. The third state is when a human being's conscience or moral sense is renewed and becomes important for them again. The last state is, as Boston wrote in his book, a 'mystical union betwixt Christ and Believers.'

<sup>12</sup> John MILTON: *Paradise Lost*, 6, 844–845.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. 2Sam 12:6; Lk 19:8.

<sup>14</sup> David GROVES: 'Blake, Thomas Boston, and the Fourfold Vision', *Blake, An Illustrated Quarterly*, Vol. 19, Issue 4, 1986. 142.

<sup>15</sup> William BLAKE: *Milton: Book the First*, Plate 6, line 1.

<sup>16</sup> David GROVES: 'Blake, Thomas Boston, and the Fourfold Vision', 142.

If we examine the states proposed by Boston, we may see that they correlate to St Augustine of Hippo's philosophy about the four states of *Libertas Naturae* ('freedom of nature'). The Church Father made the following distinctions:

1. *Libertas Adami* ('freedom of Adam'): this is the state before the Fall of mankind. Here a man has the ability not to sin.
2. *Libertas peccatorum* ('freedom of sinners'): a freedom within the limits of fallen nature. Here a man is not able not to sin.
3. *Libertas fidelium* ('freedom of the faithful'): a state where the Holy Spirit (or the Holy Ghost) regenerates nature, heals it, enlightens it. In this state, a person has both the ability not to sin, but also to sin.
4. *Libertas gloriae* ('freedom of glory'); the ultimate state that belongs to the blessed in heaven where a person is unable to sin.<sup>17</sup>

It is clear that the states defined by Boston and St Augustine follow parallel ideas. They also have their parallels in Blake. Blake's Albion, the 'Four-fold Man', the ancient of mankind, existed in the first state, that is, before the fall in Boston's and St Augustine's system. He could not commit any crime or sin; he was—like a newborn baby—pure and innocent. The second state is also similar in Blake, Boston and St Augustine. The fallen state is when sin rules, when there is disorder, when the powers of the fourfold are not in unison. This is the theme of the first part, *Night the First*, of *The Four Zoas*, where the powers within man are divided and turn against one another. The third state is also essentially the same for St Augustine and Boston, and Blake seems to share their views. This is the awakening of the moral sense, when the Seven angels call Albion to awake so that the Four Zoas can awake within Man, resulting in the restoration of divine order:

Awake Albion awake! reclaim thy Reasoning Spectre. Subdue  
Him to the Divine Mercy. Cast him down into the Lake  
Of Los, that ever burneth with fire, ever & ever Amen!  
Let the Four Zoa's awake from Slumbers of Six Thousand Years.<sup>18</sup>

The last state For Blake is the state of Imagination. It is when Albion awakes, the Four Zoas awake in Albion, the order is restored through the divine aid of Jesus Christ, and sin is no more.

Behold Jerusalem in whose bosom the Lamb of God  
Is seen tho slain before her Gates he self renewd remains  
Eternal & I thro him awake to life from deaths dark vale

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *The Four States of Libertas Naturae* in Reformation Theology. reformationtheology.com/2006/05/the\_four\_states\_of\_libertas\_na\_1.php (02/09/2019).

<sup>18</sup> William BLAKE: *Milton: Book the Second*. Plate 39, lines 10–13.

The times revolve the time is coming when all these delights  
Shall be renewd & all these Elements that now consume  
Shall reflourish. Then bright Ahania shall awake from death  
A glorious Vision to thine Eyes a Self renewing Vision  
The spring. the summert o thine then sleep the wintry days  
In silken garments spun by her own hands against her funeral  
The winter thou shalt plow & lay thy stores into thy barns  
Expecting to receive Ahania in the spring with joy  
Immortal thou. Regenerate She & all the lovely Sex  
From her shall learn obedience & prepare for a wintry grave  
That spring my see them rise in tenfold joy & sweet delight  
Thus shall the male & female live the life of Eternity  
Because the Lamb of God Creates himself a bride & wife  
That we his Children evermore may live in Jerusalem  
Which now descendeth out of heaven a City yet a Woman  
Mother of myriads redeemed & born in her spiritual places  
By a New Spiritual birth Regenerated from Death<sup>19</sup>

Both Boston and St Augustine agree that the fourth state is when man does not and cannot sin. These correspondences are too strong to be due to a mere coincidence. In this case, we can assert that Blake's number mysticism was influenced by a long and traditional past that helped Blake to work out a system both Christian and scientific, but in an alternative way. In this new system, instead of the number 3 (Holy Trinity), the number 4 has the supreme significance.

After considering the background of Blake's number symbolism, one needs to focus on the *oeuvre* itself, in which Blake's vision is repeatedly articulated in terms of numbers. These numbers represent ways of viewing life as it is or should be,<sup>20</sup> and in certain important passages they seem to reveal that existence is actually rooted in the immortal Imagination. In the following lines from *The Book of Los*, Blake describes the birth of material life created by Los, the divine aspect of the Imagination:

6. The Immortal revolving, indignant,  
First in wrath threw his limbs, like the babe  
New-born into our world: wrath subsided,  
And contemplative thoughts first arose;  
Then aloft his head rear'd in the Abyss,  
And his downward-borne fall chang'd oblique.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> FZ *Night the Ninth*. Page 122, lines 1–20.

<sup>20</sup> cf. William BLAKE: [*To Thomas Butts*]: *With Happiness stretch'd across the hills*. bartleby.com/235/146.html (02/09/2019).

<sup>21</sup> William BLAKE: *The Book of Los*, Chap. II, lines 86–91. (BL) bartleby.com/235/262.html (02/09/2019).

However, this text is not the only one where Blake expresses his views about the world. This universe, as Blake describes it in his poem [*To Thomas Butts*]: *With Happiness stretch'd across the hills*, is based on the concept of rising towards the number 4, which in Blake's system represents perfection. Number 1 equals spiritual blindness and mental rigidity, a state when people become solid rocks in the stream instead of letting divine energies flow through them. A man of 'single vision' is the Newtonian man, the rational thinker, a human Urizen, who sees everything as it seems to be. Blake rejected this attitude because it denies the Imagination, the creative power that is divine in man. Nobody can realise that man is a 'Divine Image'<sup>22</sup> with a 'single vision.' Blake's idea of the fourfold vision is outlined in his letter to Butts (1802):

Now I a fourfold vision see,  
And a fourfold vision is given to me;  
'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight,  
And threefold in soft Beulah's night,  
And twofold always.—May God us keep  
From Single vision, and Newton's sleep!

1 is the number of linear and material thinking, while a "fourfold vision" is a combination of physical and mental perception and also the representation of a divine ability in man called the Imagination, which is a concept of the highest importance in Blake's poetry. The distance from it equals the distance from understanding Blake's idea of completeness in a mystical revelation. In Blake's world, the lack of Imagination is life without fluctuation, while regulation and law are death and rigidity as we can see it in the satirical *The [First] Book of Urizen*:

6. 'Here alone I, in books form'd of metals,  
Have written the secrets of Wisdom,  
The secrets of dark Contemplation,  
By fightings and conflicts dire  
With terrible monsters sin-bred,  
Which the bosoms of all inhabit—  
Seven deadly Sins of the Soul.'<sup>23</sup>

3. Sund'ring, dark'ning, thund'ring,  
Rent away with a terrible crash,  
Eternity roll'd wide apart,  
Wide asunder rolling;

<sup>22</sup> Cf. William BLAKE: *A Divine Image*.

<sup>23</sup> William BLAKE: *The [First] Book of Urizen*, Copy A, 2:6 (BU).

Mountainous, all around  
Departing, departing, departing,  
Leaving ruinous fragments of life,  
Hanging, frowning cliffs, and, all between,  
An Ocean of voidness unfathomable.<sup>24</sup>

William Blake used the four levels of visions not only to criticise the lack of Imagination and to offer a better attitude, but also to reveal a way of creation and to place this theory in his system of mysticism and cosmogony. To better understand this, however, we should first see in detail what the four levels mean in the Blakean perception of the world and existence.

The first level of visions is what Blake calls the 'single vision' or 'Newton's sleep.'<sup>25</sup> It is a way of perception and also a way of thinking, an approach to the universe, existence, and faith. When somebody sees another person and reduces that individual to a being of flesh and bones, nerves, blood and mind, nothing more, then that person is a single-vision man. This kind of person ignores many things associated with human existence and approaches a human being only with rules and dogmas. This attitude is best expressed in the idea of uniformity in *The [First] Book of Urizen*:

8. 'Laws of peace, of love, of unity,  
Of pity, compassion, forgiveness;  
Let each choose one habitation,  
His ancient infinite mansion,  
One command, one joy, one desire,  
One curse, one weight, one measure,  
One King, one God, one Law.'<sup>26</sup>

Uniformity is the opposite of what Blake held to be acceptable. "Single vision" leads to oppression, as we can read it in the last line of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: 'One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression.'<sup>27</sup> 'Single vision' is consequently a limited level of visions. Nobody needs to work on this ability to possess it, because it is natural, though insufficient. It is nothing else but the reduction of things into rules and laws. Blake's intention is to get closer to what Ralph Waldo Emerson stated in his essay on History: 'a man is a bundle of relations, a knot of roots, whose flower and fruitage is the world.'<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> BU 3:3.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. William BLAKE: [*To Thomas Butts*]: *With Happiness stretch'd across the hills*.

<sup>26</sup> BU 2:8.

<sup>27</sup> William BLAKE: *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. (MHH) bartleby.com/235/253.html (02/09/2019).

<sup>28</sup> Ralph Waldo EMERSON: History, in Ralph Waldo Emerson: *Emerson's Essays*. Washington, D.C., National Home Library Foundation, 1932, 23.

The second level is 'twofold vision' or 'double vision'.<sup>29</sup> This is what Blake attributed to the state when someone can see the world through images, when the object perceived immediately carries a reference to something else, when it functions as a poetic symbol. When a person can associate two things in his mind and can possibly feel the two things together, 'twofold vision' is achieved. This level of visions prevents the individual from relying on mere prejudice, semblance or appearance, an outward form of an existing reality. Blake claimed that he possessed this vision all the time and saw the world through 'twofold vision':

For double the vision my eyes do see,  
And a double vision is always with me.<sup>30</sup>

Blake also provides his readers with another example of double vision in the same poem, when writing about his own visionary ability:

With my inward eye, 'tis an Old Man grey,  
With my outward, a Thistle across my way.

These lines reveal two things: the fact that for Blake everything is antropomorphic, and that 'double vision' is the normal, ordinary way of seeing the world.

The third level of visions mentioned in the poem is 'threefold vision,' when the images start to act, when the poet starts to dream. This is a three-dimensional vision, a state when poetic insight becomes possible. This vision is a daydream in daylight and a dream during the darkness of the night. This stage of imaginative perception is the state that Blake describes as 'soft Beulah's night' where Beulah is the Paradise on Earth. The name 'Beulah' is found in John Bunyan's seventeenth-century Christian allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In Bunyan, it is the Promised Land, a direct biblical reference to the *Book of Isaiah* which contains the name 'Beulah' used for the land of abundance,<sup>31</sup> and also to the holy city of Jerusalem in the Revelations.<sup>32</sup> Bunyan's work is itself a good example of threefold vision, where the poetic Imagination works as a creative force and catches the message of a sacred text. This Imagination places the text into the dream of an artist in the case of both Bunyan and Blake. All of us are capable of reaching this stage of vision, which leads us to the ultimate level of Blakean imaginative perception, 'fourfold vision.'

'Fourfold vision' offers a poetic insight into the nature of the cosmos, best described by Blake in *Auguries of Innocence*:

<sup>29</sup> William BLAKE: *[To Thomas Butts]: With Happiness stretch'd across the hills.*

<sup>30</sup> William BLAKE: *[To Thomas Butts]: With Happiness stretch'd across the hills.*

<sup>31</sup> Isa 62:4–12. I use the King James Version of The Holy Bible for my study.

<sup>32</sup> Rev 21:10.

To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And eternity in an hour.

As we have seen, in the poem entitled *[To Thomas Butts]: With Happiness stretch'd across the hills* Blake places 'fourfold vision' above the other three and claims that he is able to be in that state:

Now I a fourfold vision see,  
And a fourfold vision is given to me;  
'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight,

When one enters a fulfilled desire, one moves into 'fourfold vision' that causes delight. This is a dream while one is awake. This is the stage of visions where people can experience the unity of the cosmos and be connected to God's infinite Imagination that operates within themselves:

VII. The desire of Man being Infinite, the possession is Infinite & himself Infinite. Application. He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself only.

Conclusion. If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic character the Philosophic & Experimental would soon be at the ratio of all things, & stand still unable to do other than

repeat the same dull round over again.

Therefore God becomes as we are, that we may be as he is.<sup>33</sup>

This requires practice and is the opposite of 'single vision.' A 'fourfold vision' is not one interpretation, not one way of perception among many; this is a power of creation with Imagination and also the realization of the fact that life is multi-dimensional. Blake's statements about this state are in line with St. Paul's words from the New Testament:

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!  
For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?  
Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?  
For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> William BLAKE: *There is No Natural Religion [h].*

<sup>34</sup> Rom 11:33–36.

Although Blake starts by asserting man's infinite desire and St. Paul by contemplating the infinite knowledge of God, the shared point is their focus on divine infinity. This is an ultimate attribute of divine existence and also a power that allows man to manipulate the world. This is possible only if man becomes one with God; the glory of man depends on whether the 'likeness'<sup>35</sup> in which God created man could become a complete, fulfilled reality.

However, if we further examine the number 4 in Blake's philosophy and art, we can realise that it is not only the symbol of the most complex way of seeing, but the whole Blakean universe and mythology are in fact built upon this number. It is the true aspect of man, which is presented in Blake's *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*. It is the 'Fourfold Man' called 'Albion' in whose sleep the creation began. It is his slumber in which the fallen world as a dream exists:

There is from Great Eternity a mild & pleasant rest  
Namd Beulah a Soft Moony Universe feminine lovely  
Pure mild & Gentle given in Mercy to those who sleep  
Eternally.<sup>36</sup>

After the fall, Albion's sleep is a sleep of death, a fallen state where Man has to wait, or act for an awakening, for the slumber of Man is being rent from the unity within:

Throughout the whole Creation which groans to be deliver'd,  
Albion groans in the deep slumbers of Death upon his Rock.<sup>37</sup>

The dream of the 'Ancient Man' is in a state where his four elements—Humanity, Spectre, Emanation and Shadow—are in disharmony and fall into division. The Humanity is Man's central personality, the Spectre is the power of reason, the Emanation is Imagination and emotions, but not like the Shadow which is rather a kind of restrained desire in Blake:

Those who restrain Desire, do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained;  
and the restrainer or Reason usurps its place and governs the unwilling.  
And being restrained, it by degrees becomes passive, till it is only the shadow  
of Desire.<sup>38</sup>

While one element permanently oppresses another by force or simply because of the weakness of the other, there is no balance in a human being. Only when the four elements are in full unison can harmony be restored, allowing Albion to wake.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Gen 1:26, 5:1.

<sup>36</sup> FZ Night the First.

<sup>37</sup> William BLAKE: *Jerusalem* (J).

<sup>38</sup> MHH 13–14.

According to Blake, only Jesus Christ, the Saviour and 'the Lamb of God' can heal 'Fourfold Man.' 'The Divine Body of the Lord Jesus' is for him the divine Imagination. In *Jerusalem*, there is a need for this power to solve the conflict between reason and the emotions or desires for the sake of 'Universal Man.'<sup>39</sup> Reason is presented as a force of death in itself:

From them they make an Abstract, which is a Negation  
Not only of the Substance from which it is derived,  
A murderer of its own Body: but also a murderer  
Of every Divine Member: it is the Reasoning Power,  
An Abstract objecting power, that Negatives every thing.

This is the Spectre of Man: the Holy Reasoning Power,  
And in its Holiness is closed the Abomination of Desolation.

Jesus is the only one who can unite the divided forces and settle the conflict. He is everything that is good, a God of mercy, forgiveness and self-sacrifice, a God of infinite love. His aid is necessary for the awakening of Albion from dreaming a fallen, bodily and earthly creation in the stormy struggle and turmoil of the four 'Mighty Ones,' the divided powers in every individual:

Four Mighty Ones are in every Man; a Perfect Unity  
Cannot Exist. but from the Universal Brotherhood of Eden  
The Universal Man. To Whom be Glory Evermore Amen<sup>40</sup>

These powers, 'the Four Eternal Senses of Man'<sup>41</sup> are personified in Blake's cosmogony and mythology as 'the Four Zoas.'<sup>42</sup> Here again the mystical number 4 plays a crucial role in the vast Blakean system. The Zoas are the powers that inhabit the depth of the human individual. As Blake writes in *The Four Zoas*: 'Four Mighty Ones are in every Man.' They are named Urizen, Luvah, Urthona and Tharmas, the main characters in Blake's mythology together with the figures of Jesus and Satan. As the Zoas are described in *Jerusalem*, they all have a dominion to rule; they are body parts of 'Fourfold Man':

South stood the Nerves of the Eye, East in Rivers of bliss the Nerves of the  
Expansive Nostrils, West flow'd the Parent Sense, the Tongue, North stood  
The labyrinthine Ear: Circumscribing & Circumcising the excrementitious  
Husk & Covering into Vacuum evaporating, revealing the lineaments of Man,

<sup>39</sup> J Plate 32, line 26.

<sup>40</sup> FZ Night the First.

<sup>41</sup> J Chap. II.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. J; FZ.

[20] Driving outward the Body of Death in an Eternal Death & Resurrection,  
Awaking it to Life among the Flowers of Beulah, rejoicing in Unity  
In the Four Senses, in the Outline, the Circumference & Form, for ever  
In Forgiveness of Sins which is Self Annihilation, it is the Covenant of Jehovah.

The Four Living Creatures, Chariots of Humanity, Divine, Incomprehensible,  
[25] In beautiful Paradises expand. These are the Four Rivers of Paradise,  
And the Four Faces of Humanity fronting the Four Cardinal Points  
Of Heaven, going forward, irresistible from Eternity to Eternity.<sup>43</sup>

When these powers or senses are divided in Man, harmony disappears, Man cannot discover the holiness within. Only Jesus can help to restore the unity of the Zoas, and thus only he can save the man who wishes to be reborn.<sup>44</sup> Jesus says to Albion the following words:

[...] if God dieth not for Man & giveth not himself  
Eternally for Man, Man could not exist, for Man is Love,  
As God is Love [...]<sup>45</sup>

In the moment of glory and restored balance, the 'Four Mighty Ones' act together in a perfect harmony:

The Druid Spectre was Annihilate, loud thund'ring, rejoicing terrific, vanishing,

Fourfold Annihilation, & at the clangor of the Arrows of Intellect  
The innumerable Chariots of the Almighty appear 'd in Heaven,  
And Bacon & Newton & Locke, & Milton & Shakspear & Chaucer.  
10 A Sun of blood red wrath surrounding heaven on all sides around,  
Glorious, incomprehensible by Mortal Man, & each Chariot was Sexual Two-fold.

And every Man stood Fourfold, each Four Faces had, One to the West,  
One toward the East, One to the South, One to the North, the Horses Fourfold.  
And the dim Chaos brighten'd beneath, above, around ! Eyed as the Peacock  
[15] According to the Human Nerves of Sensation, the Four Rivers of the Water of Life.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> J Plate 98, lines 16–27.

<sup>44</sup> cf. ÁGNES PÉTER: *William Blake illusztrációi a Jób könyvéhez*, 115.

<sup>45</sup> J Plate 96, lines 25–27.

<sup>46</sup> J Plate 98, lines 6–15.

The Zoas are originally good when they are in their unfallen state enjoying a complete unison, but when they are rent from one another and are in a fallen state, they become evil and are quite rampant. This is natural, since justice without mercy and love is usually cruel or cold-hearted. The just man should combine justice with mercy to have a merry and peaceful life:

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment,  
and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:  
And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor;  
and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.<sup>47</sup>

In *A Divine Image*, Blake had already asserted the same:

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
All pray in their distress;  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is God, our father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is Man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity a human face,  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;  
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.

<sup>47</sup> Zech 7:9; cf. Dan 4:24.

The provisional separation of the Zoas is exactly the same situation as denying love and disregarding the fact that each individual is a human being when one needs to decide, or refuse the words of sanity and reason. However, Blake states that the contraries are necessary for human life and improvement. Without the contraries of Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, there can be no progression:

Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.<sup>48</sup>

When Albion is in his fallen state, the Zoas are incapable of forming their holy unity. The following lines from Blake's *The [First] Book of Urizen* speak about this dark and gloomy separation in connection with Urizen, the Zoa of intellect, who resides in the North, in direct reference to the abode of Milton's Satan<sup>49</sup>:

Of the primeval Priest's assum'd power,  
When Eternals spurn'd back his Religion,  
And gave him a place in the North,  
Obscure, shadowy, void, solitary.<sup>50</sup>

It is important, however, to underline that it is not only Urizen, the 'King of Sorrow,'<sup>51</sup> or Reason, who is responsible for the fallen state. All the 'Four Mighty Ones' are responsible for the disorder in *The Four Zoas*.<sup>52</sup> The unity and order within man cannot be realised until their mutual reconciliation. 'Fourfold Man' needs all the four forces to awake in Eternity, which is the way of salvation by Imagination and the divine aid of Jesus Christ:

Behold Jerusalem in whose bosom the Lamb of God  
Is seen tho slain before her Gates he self renewd remains  
Eternal & I thro him awake from deaths dark vale  
The times revolve the time is coming when all these delights  
Shall be renewd & all these Elements that now consume  
Shall reflourish. Then bright Ahania shall awake from death  
A glorious Vision [of] to thine Eyes a Self renewing Vision  
The spring. the summer to be thine then sleep the wintry days  
In silken garments spun by her own hands against her funeral  
The winter thou shalt plow & lay thy stores into thy barns  
Expecting to receive Ahania in the spring with joy

<sup>48</sup> MHH The Argument.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. John MILTON: *Paradise Lost*, Book 5, 559 (See also Isa 14:12-14; Jer 1:14, 4:6, 6:1).

<sup>50</sup> BU Preludium.

<sup>51</sup> BA Chap. I.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. FZ Night the First.

Immortal thou. Regenerate She & all the lovely Sex  
From her shall learn obedience & prepare for a wintry grave  
That spring may see them rise in tenfold joy & sweet delight  
Thus shall the male & female live the life of Eternity  
Because the Lamb of God Creates himself a bride & wife  
That we his Children evermore may live in Jerusalem  
Which now descendeth out of heaven a City yet a Woman  
Mother of myriads redeemed & born in her spiritual palaces  
By a New Spiritual birth Regenerated from Death.<sup>53</sup>

Each of the Zoas are strong both together and alone, but their power together surpasses that which they possess in their fallen state. But as it is shown in the above lines of *The Four Zoas*, their unity is impossible without the help of the Lamb of God. Only Jesus can heal the sick world and bring back the glorious state of Eternity:

O Albion, mildest Son of Eden! clos'd is thy Western Gate  
Brothers of Eternity! this Man whose great example  
We all admir'd & lov'd, whose all benevolent countenance, seen  
In Eden, in lovely Jerusalem, drew even from envy  
The tear: and the confession of honesty, open & undisguis'd,  
From mistrust and suspicion. The Man is himself become  
A piteous example of oblivion. To teach the Sons  
Of Eden, that however great and glorious; however loving  
And merciful the Individuality; however high  
Our mildness and cities, and however fruitful are our fields  
In Selfhood, we are nothing: the greatest mildness we can use  
Is incapable and nothing! none but the Lamb of God can heal  
This dread disease: none but Jesus! O Lord descend and save!<sup>54</sup>

Luvah is the Zoa of emotions who rules in the Centre, in the East, in the Heart and Nostrils, in Fire. Tharmas is in connection with the Senses. He rules in the Circumference, in the West, in the Loins and Tongue, in Water. Urizen, one of the most elaborate characters in Blake's mythology, is the reasoning power. Although he can be associated with the North as well, he rules in the Zenith, in the South, in the Head and Eyes of Man, in Air. The fourth Zoa is called Urthona (Los<sup>55</sup>), who can be both instinct and inspiration. He rules in the Nadir, in the North, in the Womb and Ears, in Earth. The Zoas have four so-called 'Emanations', female pairs, one for each of them. Urizen's Emanation is Ahania representing Pleasure. Tharmas' Emanation is Enion who represents Sexual Urges. Luvah's Emanation is Vala rep-

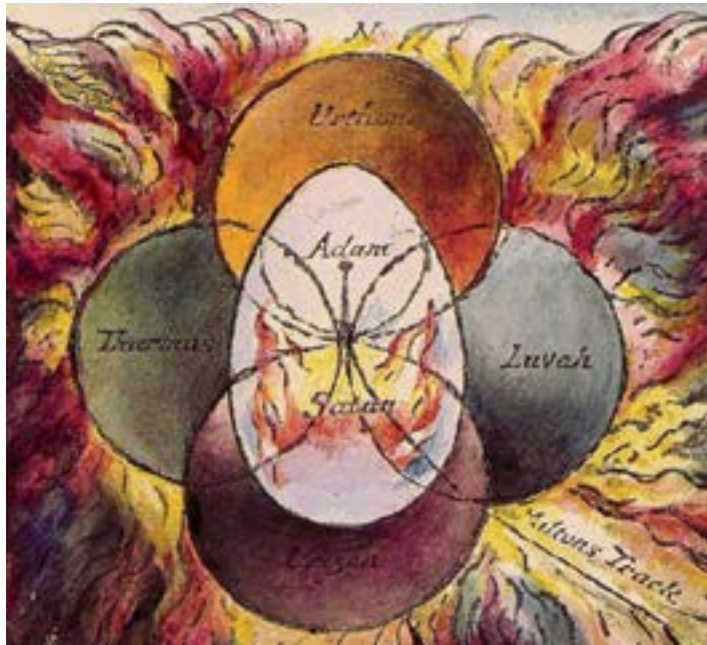
<sup>53</sup> FZ Night the Ninth.

<sup>54</sup> J Plate 40, lines 3-16.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. J Chap. III.



representing Nature. Urthona's Emanation is Enitharmon who represents Inspiration. Here the number 4 again plays an important part in building up Blake's cosmos. This Blake showed most lucidly on a plate in *Milton, A Poem*, illustrating the division of his universe where the significance of the number 4 is clearly visible:



COPY C, OBJECT 34.

This illustration shows that all four Zoas are divided into others, and a multiplicity of the number 4 exists in every aspect of life within man. Number 4 is also a reference to creation itself. It was on the fourth day God finished the creation of the material world,<sup>56</sup> the earthly dominion, after which the creation of animals began.

It was again not by chance that one of the prophets Blake used in *Jerusalem* was 'Ezekiel.' We can also find a lot of possible allusions to the *Book of Ezekiel* in the Blakean text.<sup>57</sup> The number 4 or its product in the visions of this prophet is of high importance. We can read about the anthropomorphic Cherubim with four wings and four faces, about human hands reaching out in four directions, four wheels made of fabulous stones with eyes around, the ability of the Cherubim to go upon their four sides without turning, and—of course—about a vision of God:

Also out of the midst thereof *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.

<sup>56</sup> Gen 1:14–19.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Ezek 1; J Plate 12, lines 45–66.

And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.  
And their feet *were* straight feet; and the sole of their feet *was* like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.  
And *they had* the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.  
Their wings *were* joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.  
As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.  
Thus *were* their faces: and their wings *were* stretched upward; two *wings* of every one *were* joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.  
And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; *and* they turned not when they went.  
As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, *and* like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.<sup>58</sup>

Blake gave the following description of the Cherubim:

The Western Gate fourfold, is closd: having four Cherubim  
Its guards, living, the work of elemental hands, laborious task!  
Like Men, hermaphroditic, each winged with eight wings<sup>59</sup>

These were interpreted by Blake in a way to see 4 as a number of power, glory and perfection, the number of Eternity:

The Four Living Creatures, Chariots of Humanity, Divine, Incomprehensible,  
In beautiful Paradises expand. These are the Four Rivers of Paradise,  
And the Four Faces of Humanity fronting the Four Cardinal Points  
Of Heaven, going forward, forward irresistible from Eternity to Eternity.<sup>60</sup>

Here the four rivers are also allusions to the Paradise on Earth, where Man and God were in close relationship without sin. The four sacred rivers are mentioned in the Genesis, and their names are Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates.<sup>61</sup> These rivers symbolize prosperity and richness because water in the desert is always more

<sup>58</sup> Ezek 1:5–13.

<sup>59</sup> J Plate 13, lines 6–8.

<sup>60</sup> J Plate 98.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Gen 2:10–14.

precious than gold. Where there is water, there is life. The rivers of Paradise are one while flowing through the Garden of Eden, then they divide into four heads. It is again the transformation from one into four, from single into fourfold, from simple blessing into foison.

Although there is a kind of revulsion on Blake's part towards the Old Testament and its image of God, which he identified with oppression, tyranny and oppressive law (stating in the last line of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* that 'One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression'), it is interesting that he sympathizes with the prophets of the Old Testament, mainly Ezekiel.<sup>62</sup> Prophets in the Bible represent prophetic inspiration, thus they deserve to be accepted and are necessary in the world to guard the flame of inspiration and Imagination. Blake, however, probably did not concentrate on some parts of the *Book of Ezekiel* when he made JHWH present the oppressor and stated that only Jesus is the true God, dividing the Son from the Father. The following passage shows that God did not build his world on written laws, those are just guidelines to find him.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.<sup>63</sup>

If we continue to read this text, it turns out that it is not God, but Man who commits abominations, and God who is One in the Old Testament and The New Testament, just leads people back to His ways.<sup>64</sup> If we can regard at the continuity of the Testaments, we will find the same good God Blake talked about, but not in the division of the Trinity and the opposition of the Testaments, but in the unity of God. The hypostasis reflects this unity as well, and the old ways of Man are just rectified by Jesus who did not abolish the law, but showed its true meaning. At this point, the orthodox Christian theology and Blake depart from each other, in spite of Blake's dynamic Christian reference system.

We can finally conclude that in Blake's mythology there is a system of fourfold correspondences leading the reader into a world of apparent confusion. Blake's system may suggest that the competent reader can easily decode the messages of the texts, but it is a harder challenge than one could expect. One of the difficulties may lie in the difference between the orthodox Christian number symbolism and Blake's own system. In Christianity, it is usually the number 3 that has a similar

significance to Blake's number 4,<sup>65</sup> the number of awakening into Eternity and of the restoration of the original state of Man in creation. In Blake, the number 3 corresponds to a married state that becomes complete only with the fourth dimension, Imagination. The difference between the two systems, however, is not qualitative but merely theoretical. The number 4 is also perfect to express completeness and the absolute. The fourfold is a central concept in Blake's philosophy. It is an underlying principle upon which the Blakean universe is built, but it is also a way of viewing existence. While the number 1 is Death, the number 4 is Resurrection. When harmony is restored in 'Fourfold Man,' the way to Eternity, the 'real Now,' 'the annihilation of Time,'<sup>66</sup> opens. For Blake it is in 'The Divine Imagination,' Jesus Christ, and in whom God showed Himself to the world, that we find the key to Eternity.

#### List of Abbreviations:

BA	The Book of Ahania
BL	The Book of Los
BU	The [First] Book of Urizen
FZ	The Four Zoas
J	Jerusalem
MHH	The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

#### Abstract

*Eternal Death & Resurrection: From Single Vision to the Fourfold and the Mystic Number 4 in William Blake's Cosmogony and Mythology*

*William Blake is one of the most influential figures in the world of Anglo-Saxon literature. He continues to shape literary thinking with his unique worldview, and his number mysticism and fourfold vision that describes the world occupy a central place in this worldview. Numbers have an important meaning to Blake, acting not only as symbols, but also as directing principles in his cosmological vision and self-created universe.*

*This article aims to shed light on the most important elements of Blake's number mysticism and attempts to highlight the analogies by which Blake developed his own system. I will pay special attention to the Neoplatonic influences on Blake, the ancient classical mathematical and philosophical schools, mainly the Pythagoreans, the biblical tradition of Christianity, and the philosophy of St. Augustine.*

*The article also aims to explain the significance and meaning of the mysticism of number*

<sup>62</sup> Cf. J.

<sup>63</sup> Ezek 36:25–27.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Ezek 36:31.

<sup>65</sup> In orthodox Christianity, there is the Holy Trinity as an image of bliss and perfection. However, the 4 Cardinal Virtues are taken from Plato's ethics, and St Augustine's four states of *Libertas Naturae* are also relevant here.

<sup>66</sup> Samuel Foster DAMON: *A Blake Dictionary. The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, 129.

*4 in William Blake's universe, a mathematical and philosophical expression of perfection and completeness in an age where the mysticism of number 3 was the ultimate ruler to describe life, completeness and perfection.*

#### Keywords

Blake, cosmogony, Pythagoreans, numerology, Trinity, Urizen, Milton, Ahania, Los, Fuzon, Zoa, Tetractys, JHWH, Augustine

#### Rezümé

William Blake az angol irodalom egyik legnagyobb hatású szerzője. Sajátos világképével mind a mai napig formálja az irodalmi köztudatot, és ebben a világképben központi helyet foglal el számmissztikája és a világmindenséget leíró négyes látásmódja. A számok Blake-nél fontos jelentéssel bírnak, kozmológiai látásmódjában és az önmaga által teremtett univerzumban nem csupán szimbólumként, de sajátos rendező elvként működnek.

A tanulmány célja, hogy bemutassa Blake számmissztikájának legfontosabb elemeit és rávilágítson azokra az analógiákra, amelyek mentén Blake kialakította önálló rendszerét. A vizsgálat során különös figyelmet kapnak a Blake-t ért neoplatonikus hatások, az ókor klasszikus matematikai és filozófiai iskolái, kiváltképpen a püthagoreusok, valamint a kereszténység biblikus hagyománya és Szent Ágoston filozófiája.

Céлом továbbá, hogy magyarázatot adjak a 4-es szám misztikájának jelentésére és jelentőségére William Blake univerzumában. A 4-es szám a tökéletesség és a teljesség matematikai és filozófiai kifejeződése volt egy olyan korban, ahol az élet, a teljesség és a tökéletesség leírására a 3-as szám misztikája volt uralkodó.

#### Kulcsszavak

Blake, kozmogónia, számmissztika, Szentháromság, püthagoreusok, JHWH, Urizen, Milton, Ahania, Los, Fuzon, Zoa, tetraktüs, Augustinus

## ÁGNES BERETZKY

### Women's Suffrage and Irish Home-Rule: A Comparative Analysis and Assessment of the Use of Violence against the British Establishment

In his new-year message, 1914 was characterised by the Archbishop of York as 'a very fateful year' in the history of the British Empire: the much debated issue of the Irish Home Rule and the similarly controversial demand for women's voting rights were the two top-listed challenges to social order.<sup>1</sup> In the background of both problems lay a long-standing contemptuous public attitude, which manifested itself in anti-Irish sentiments, and a stereotypical image of women being oppressed and subservient. The present paper aims to discuss some common features of the anti-Irish and the male supremacist sentiments in Britain, together with the parallels between the Irish home rule/independence movements and women's rights, especially suffrage movements. The law-abiding and the violent attitudes will be contrasted, in the light of their legacies: it is a fact that the organisations that promoted pacifism in both questions have faded from public memory, whereas there are forty-five Easter Rising Memorials throughout Ireland together with a statue of Emmeline Pankhurst at Westminster. Does history teach us that violence pays off?

The negative stereotyping of the Irish had been present in Britain since 1169, the year of Henry II's occupation of the island, and was further aggravated by the virulent anti-Catholicism of the reformation and that of the enlightenment. This prejudice was still widespread in 1836, when the young Benjamin Disraeli wrote: '[The Irish] hate our order, our civilization, our enterprising industry, our pure religion. This wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain and superstitious race have no sympathy with the English character. [...] Their history describes an unbroken circle of bigotry and blood.'<sup>2</sup>

As regards the situation of women in Britain, it was originally the misinterpreted Biblical 'inferiority and moral weakness' that offered the necessary justification for male domination in politics, society and culture. In 1822, Britain saw the passing of the world's first animal protection legislation, the *Cruel Treatment of Cattle Act*. It included fines up to five pounds or two months imprisonment for 'beating or abusing ox, cow, [...] steer, sheep, or other cattle.'<sup>3</sup> Apparently, bulls were excluded. So were women. Francis Buller, ridiculed later as Judge Thumb, supposedly stated in 1782 that a 'man had the right to beat his wife with a stick not thicker

<sup>1</sup> Mark BOSTRIDGE: *The Fateful Year: England 1914*, Penguin, 2014, 2–3.

<sup>2</sup> Robert BLAKE: *Disraeli*, Faber & Faber, 2010, 131.

<sup>3</sup> Richard BURN: *The Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer*, London, 1820, Vol. I, 125.