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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

**FROM THE SEED TO ETERNITY: WILLIAM
BLAKE, MANTAK CHIA AND THE SEXUAL
BASIS OF MYSTICAL VISION.**

By

Andrew Jan

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy

Notre Dame University: Fremantle

2009

Approved by _____
Chairperson of Research Committee

Date _____

"I testify that this dissertation is my own work. It does not contain material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other university or institution. To the best of my knowledge, this dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the dissertation."

.....
Andrew Jan

Abstract

This thesis argues that for the two chosen mystics, Mantak Chia (Taoist) and William Blake (Christian), sexual feeling (energy) is vital for developing the mystical consciousness necessary to arrive at an end state of 'unity'. Their alchemical systems are broken down into a tripartite model that represents the whole person. Both tripartite models incorporate the brain, heart and sexual regions. Ultimately, this thesis shows that within their alchemical systems, sexual feelings play a role as a vital ingredient, starting point and catalyst in producing the end state of 'unity'. This conclusion is based on a critical comparative analysis of their respective practices and poetry using primary accounts and secondary literary sources. The thesis also comments briefly on the implications of their systems for an aspirant leading a chaste or married life.

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Introduction

*For the cherub [inhibition] with his flaming 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, whereas now it appears finite and corrupt. This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.*¹

William Blake, 1792

How do mystics sublimate sexual feelings in their practice to achieve mystical consciousness? The answer requires investigating the substantive (why) nature of their practice, which in turn deals with the prescriptive question of how this is achieved. Furthermore, it is inevitable to expose something of what is achieved by sublimating sexual feelings. While the answer to the latter is mystical consciousness there are other changes to external behaviour that occur on this journey, such as a tendency to a chaste life. Objectively this thesis claims that internalised sexual feelings are important in forming mystical consciousness, as found in the practices of two chosen mystics, William Blake (1757-1827) and Mantak Chia (born 1944). Its critical element involves analysing mystical experiences, techniques and conceptual material to uncover similarities in how these mystics use sexual energies to achieve this end.

The method used for this thesis is to analytically compare both mystics' respective practices. The process involves comparing and contrasting phenomenological mystical descriptions, techniques and their respective paradigms alongside the framework constructed by their tripartite models, and as obtained from primary and secondary literary resources. By this process an answer to 'how' and 'why' they use sexual feelings within similar tripartite models from two different systems, will be articulated.

¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 14; 39.

The scope of this thesis is limited to uncovering the basis of using sexual energies to form mystical experience in these two practitioners alone. Thus, it excludes examining mysticism as a means of essentialism between Taoism and Christianity. It, however, regards Blake's mystical end state of Eternity and the Taoist final mystical goal of the Nameless One as the same state of unity. The author acknowledges that sexual feelings are not essential to all Taoist and Christian mystical practice. This thesis does not cover the complete contextualisation of Blake within Christianity or Chia within Taoism. It will, however, present a limited biography and describe overt influences in their thinking.

Both Blake and Chia use similar tripartite models to represent faculties of the psyche. In their respective practices, the brain, heart and the sexual regions merge into one experience within the body, which then expands to the state of unity, again via sexual feelings. In Chia's system repeated couplings occur beyond the formation of the tripartite model to create an experience of the Nameless One. Coupling is an experience during meditation with an imagined alchemical cauldron that reduces experience from multiplicity to unity. 'Self intercourse' is another term Chia uses for coupling contrary states of experience when they are juxtaposed with sexual desire. The notion of self intercourse will be discussed in chapters two and three. In Blake's model, there is a similar experience beyond the tripartite model through an intermediary state called *Beulah* to Eternity. This thesis chooses to focus its analysis on the role of sexual feelings in forming the tripartite and limits examining the processes beyond it.

Argument within this thesis will not extend to justifying the tripartite model (sex, heart and mind) as a ‘model of the psyche’ in achieving mystical consciousness. The author acknowledges that other systems use different tripartite and quaternary models to describe human consciousness.² Key terms, including sexual feelings, heart (love) and mind (awareness), will be confined to how they are used within the two aforementioned systems.

Preliminary research revealed that many mystics candidly described their union with the divine via sexual feelings. Examples include: St John of the Cross (1542–1591), Teresa D’Avilla (1545–1582) and Mechtild of Magdeburg (1210–1285).³ A sexual methodology to achieve mystical consciousness contrasts with positions that perceive the spiritual as entirely asexual or sexuality as purely procreative. Certainly, ‘Embodiment Theology’ suggests that sexuality is an integral to spiritual experience.⁴

There are also mystics who do not overtly use sexual feelings in creating mystical experience. For example, St Thomas Aquinas (1225 -1274) provided demonstrations based on deductive reasoning with his five arguments for the existence of God.⁵ Holding a contrasting view, Fideists such as Blaise Pascall (1623 -1662), claim that experiencing the

² Examples of a triadic approach to experience include: Plato’s chariot (moral conscience, intellect and bodily drives); Yogacara’s three own beings (the imagined, dependant and consummate nature of man); Plotinus’ triad of the All-soul, Good and the Intellect and Pierce’s triadic of sign, object and interpretant. Examples of quaternaries include Plato’s four elements and Jung’s four aspects of mind (see chapter three). See: Miranda Shaw, “William James and Yogācāra Philosophy: A Comparative Inquiry”, *Philosophy East and West* 37/3 (July 1987), 236 & Josiah Royce, William Ernest Hocking, *Metaphysics*, (Albany, New York: SUNY, 1998), 94.

³ Magdeburg writes of her divine experience: “Stay, Lady Soul. / What do you bid of me, Lord? / Take off your clothes. / Lord what will happen to me then? / Lady Soul, you are utterly formed to my nature / That not the slightest thing can be between you and me. / Lord now I am a naked soul / And you in yourself are a well adorned God. / Our shared lot is eternal life / Without death. / Then a blessed stillness / That both desire comes over them / He surrenders himself to her / And she surrenders herself to him.” Quoted in: Steven Fanning, *Mystics of the Christian Tradition*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 100.

⁴ Martha Horn, & Ralph Piedmont, “Sexuality and Spirituality: The Embodied Spirituality Scale”, *Theology & Sexuality* 12/1 (2005), 81.

⁵ Woods says, “Aquinas for his part, developed five ways for demonstrating God’s existence in his *Summa Theologica* and described them at greater length in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.” See: Thomas Woods, *How the Catholic Church built Western Civilization*, (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2005), 62.

divine is primarily achieved through the heart;⁶ while other mystics, such as Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895 – 1986), speak of mysticism involving ‘no method’.⁷ It is not the object of this thesis to argue against these different approaches. A constructivist, such as Steven Katz, might argue that these approaches are preconditioned by “...concepts, beliefs, values and expectations”.⁸ Nevertheless, this thesis merely chooses to describe an approach amongst the many. Perhaps, the potential mystic has a range of choices of which a sexualised method is but one.

The author declares an inherent bias in choosing these two mystics. Furthermore, in comparing them there is bias in retrospectively looking for similarities; this is akin to ‘data dredging’. Potentially, there is selection bias in sorting through the enormous amounts of primary material to present those that suit the purpose. Nevertheless, the process is still worthwhile as this thesis will not generalise upon its findings but rather demonstrate the possibility of commonality of method.

Accordingly, it has been useful in selecting mystics with an alchemical framework to their method, because it offers a piecemeal and hierarchical structure well suited to philosophical analysis; while the research demonstrates similarities noteworthy of examination on how they use their described sexual energies. There are similarities from the outset, such as what faculties of the psyche are involved and how sexual feelings help achieve ‘unity’. It is expected they would diverge at some level due to ideological and

⁶ Pascall says, “It is the heart which perceives God and not the reason.” See: Blaise Pascall, *Pensées*, (London: Penguin, 1995), 127.

⁷ Krishnamurti says, “...‘meditation’ we do not mean something that is practiced. We have no method.” See: Jiddu Krishnamurti, *Beyond Violence*, (Chennai, India: Krishnamurti Foundation, 2002), 127.

⁸ Katz says, “Rather they are given to the experiences, at their very inceptions, by concepts, beliefs, values and expectations already operative in the mystics mind.” See: Steven Katz, *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 62.

religious differences; however, this thesis is concerned with drawing out significant similarities.

Finding commonality in practitioners from different religions adds to the significance of this research. Though not arguing directly, this thesis takes a step towards mysticism as crossing religious and cultural boundaries. Carried further, it makes another step towards a possible essentialism of method. It will become apparent that both systems use a holistic approach to mystical consciousness. For the mystic to achieve realisation, they must integrate all parts of the human person. While arguing the role of sexual feelings, this thesis also makes a minor contribution towards all aspects of the human person contributing to an integrated state, which leads to the highest order of reality, namely mystical experience.

Sections of society, with their highly influential members whose exploits attract media attention, are characterised by glamour of the body, sexuality and altered mental states (often through alcohol and drugs). Society, not excluding the Church, is tainted by disturbances of sexuality. Exploring these two mystics and their healthy solutions to these desires provide a practical insight. They both are of the opinion that suppressing sexual desire leads to psychopathology. Despite constraints on its size, this thesis hopes to contribute to the discussion on these difficult issues.

William Blake was a radical Christian. He embraced Jesus Christ and the Bible, but wished to inject new meaning into the tradition. He was radical primarily because of his position on sexuality and consequent criticisms of the Church. Blake believed the outstanding fault

of Christianity was the cult of chastity.⁹ However, he was marginal because of his status as a mystic and Universalist. Blake adopted an essentialist position, exemplified in the poem, *All Religions are One*, where he conveys that beneath the doctrinal, epistemic and religious rituals, religions operate from one mystical experience originating in “Poetic Genius”.¹⁰ His mystic status is controversial as he is variously described as poet, prophet and madman; however, Josephine McQuail clearly states, "Most critics accept Blake as a mystic, pure and simple".¹¹

Despite his marginality, Blake’s academic and popular following is unique and large.¹² He is studied in philosophy, artistry, psychology, religious and literary disciplines; his writings seem to encompass or even transcend all these fields of study. As a product of his time Blake uses sexist language. Therefore in advance I acknowledge and apologise to the reader who may find some of the quotations and consequent secondary analysis still embellished with caustic male oriented language. Furthermore, many of Blake’s quotes have grammatical errors which have been kept in their original form.

Mantak Chia is forthright in using sexual energies as a pathway to mystical experience, and is useful to the argument of this thesis. There are many different Taoist religious

⁹ Blake says, “Of despair. while the Satanic Holiness triumphd in Vala / In a Religion of Chastity & Uncircumcised Selfishness / Both of the Head & Heart & Loins, closd up in Moral Pride. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 60.49; 211.

¹⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *All Religions are One* 1.

¹¹ Josephine McQuail, “Passion and Mysticism in William Blake”, *Modern Language Studies* 30 / 1 (Spring, 2000), 122.

¹² Quantifying his importance on the literary stage can be inferred by doing a ‘William Blake’ search in Amazon Books on – line. This search reveals over 16,000 titles to choose from. This could be compared to ‘Saint Augustine’ where Amazon cites over 13,000; ‘Pope John Paul’ numbers over 12,000; and the ‘Dalai Lama’ over 10,000. Currently, the *Blake Quarterly* is a journal purely dedicated to his works.

traditions.¹³ As an ‘internal alchemist’, Chia is also a radical one because he openly shares teachings that were traditionally only shared with a select few. He is worthy of study as he has written over 30 books and taught over 1,500 instructors. He was declared Chi Kung Master of the year in 1990 by the International Congress of Chinese Medicine.¹⁴ Despite this fame, to date there is a paucity of academic literature that comment on his system. Nevertheless, where possible this thesis will cite secondary sources on similar Taoist practices.

Chia uses a tripartite approach identical to early Taoist alchemists collectively called the ‘numinous triune natural life endowment’.¹⁵ The three parts are each called ‘*tan tiens*’ or ‘vitalities’, and are discerned by their location.¹⁶ Each *tan tien* is an energy centre, and reacts in its own prescribed way. The lower *tan tien* is located in the lower abdomen midway between the navel and lumbar region. This *tan tien* collects sexual and emotional energies.¹⁷ The middle or heart *tan tien* is located midway between the sternum and fifth thoracic vertebrae and collects energies primarily from the heart. The upper *tan tien* is located between the mid eyebrow and base of the skull and collects energy from the senses. Once each *tan tien* has been opened and developed they are fused with sexual energies. For the middle *tan tien*, the positive virtues of the heart manifested as love are amplified by

¹³ Within Taoism there are many sects and traditions and include: philosophic, devotional, folk and external alchemy. See: Eva Wong, *Taoism: A Complete Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Practice of an Ancient Spiritual Tradition*. (Boston: Shambala, 1997), vii-viii.

¹⁴ Mantak Chia & Dirk Oellibrandt, *Cosmic Healing II: Taoist Cosmology and Universal Healing Connections*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2001), 9-10.

¹⁵ The use of this term is traced to an alchemist Ko Hung of approximately 300 CE. See: Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Djen, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China, Vol. 5 Chemistry and Chemical Technology Part V Spagyric Discovery and Invention: Physiological Alchemy*, (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 26.

¹⁶ Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Djen, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 26.

¹⁷ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 182 & *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 61-76.

adding sexual desire. Chia explains that, "...compassion and sexual desire – can be harnessed together for spiritual development."¹⁸ Finally, the brain or third component of the model is prepared for mystical development. The rational mind and its thoughts are reduced by turning the senses inward and focusing on sexual feelings to create a new meditative awareness.¹⁹ The practitioner then fuses the three *tan tiens* into one experience of the body.²⁰ Sexual energy (enhanced with semen retention practices for men) plays a vital role in this fusion. The fused tripartite then expands awareness during meditation to seemingly connect with the heavens, which is a fourth stage in realising mystical consciousness. Experiencing duality is reduced to unity by imagined coupling with sexual feelings in any of the *tan tiens*.

Blake saw redemption for the fallen man as a reawakening of the generative powers. These powers lie in the place of seed, which are the sexual organs. Like Chia he also uses a similar tripartite approach first described in *The Four Zoas*. Blake said of these three anatomical regions: "Opened within their hearts & in their loins & in their brain".²¹ The three initial *Zoas* correspond to the anatomical triad above. The first, *Tharmas*, represents the body and its sexual desire; second, *Luvah*, represents the heart and passion; and thirdly, *Urizen*, represents reason and the rational mind. The fourth is *Urthona*, which is similar to the Taoist expanding awareness to experience the cosmos. *Urthona* holds the key to the

¹⁸ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 381.

¹⁹ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 7.

²⁰ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Healing I: Cosmic Chi Kung*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2001), 55.

²¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 8-100(1st).20; 373.

heavens,²² and is referred to as a “World of Solid Darkness, unfathomable, without end”.²³

Urthona represents awareness moving outside the body and communing with the beyond.

Therefore, it seems both thinkers have the same tripartite model, with a similar stage of awareness expansion before the final mystical experience can be accessed.

Sexual desire (*Tharmas*) must integrate with all of the *Zoas* to achieve this. Blake said this is “the Mystic Union of the Emanation in the Lord”,²⁴ and is an important step in the march towards mystical consciousness. For this sexual union Blake utilises a state of mind called *Beulah*; a place of pleasurable sexual union²⁵ between contrary states.²⁶ After this final union (sexual) there is Eternity where, “We live as One Man”,²⁷ the four quarters of existence are united as one²⁸ and time is annihilated.²⁹ As stated above, this thesis assumes that ‘Eternity’ is similar to the Taoist ‘Immortality’, a mystical state of ‘Oneness’.

Blake’s model is not exactly the same as Chia’s. Chia’s is rooted in the science of internal alchemy while Blake’s is more allegorical. In this thesis slight variations between the two systems will be discussed to draw out similarities of method, reason and consequences.

²² Blake says, “I was Urthona keeper of the gates of heaven”. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 4-48.19; 332.

²³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 59.20; 209.

²⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 53.24; 203.

²⁵ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 43.

²⁶ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake’s Vala or The Four Zoas*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 201.

²⁷ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 34.17; 180.

²⁸ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 27:55, 125.

²⁹ Blake says, “For every thing exists & not one sigh nor smile nor tear, / One hair nor particle of dust, not one can pass away.” See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 13:66 -14.1; 158.

Variations may be complementary, showing subtle alternate ways of producing the same result. However, to keep the thesis contained, thorough investigation of differences - perhaps due to Blake's and Chia's different cultural and religious background - will be contained.

Blake's teachings can be traced through multiple sources. Marsha Schuchard, with her work on English secret societies, reveals his sexualised spirituality was influenced by the Swedenborg Church,³⁰ the Moravians, Kabbala and Hindu Tantric sexuality.³¹ Foster Damon believes he was deeply affected by Plato (428-348 BCE) and more directly, Paracelsus (1493-1541). He was inspired by many poets, particularly John Milton (1608–1674).³² All these influences were laid upon the foundation of the bible. Yet Blake was determined to create his own approach: "I must create a system, or be enslav'd by another Mans. I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to Create."³³ This thesis, while noting Blake's sources, will regard him as having his own system.

Chia's early teacher was Taoist Master Yi Eng, who collected internal alchemy teachings from all over China. Chia has also collected teachings from other sources, such as Kundalini Yoga, Buddhism, Shaolin Internals and Christianity. His other major teachers include Cheng Yao Lun and Pan Yu.³⁴ Like Blake, Chia is an eclectic mystic. Through this

³⁰ Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1722) was a Swedish born Scientist, philosopher and Christian mystic.

³¹ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 1-10.

³² S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 165.

³³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 10.21; 153.

³⁴ Unfortunately this thesis is unable to cite dates of birth and death of Mantak Chia's teachers. However, all are approximately born around 1920. Teachers are cited in the text: Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), xiii.

approach and teaching Western students for over thirty years and receiving feedback, he has developed his own 'Universal Tao' system.³⁵

Chapter outline

Chapter One: Beginning with Blake and followed by Chia, this chapter looks at the mystic's approach to inward sexual feelings, cultivation and reasons for positive facilitation. Brief analysis of the consequences of sexual suppression is discussed. It ends with an analytical comparison. *Chapter Two* follows the same structure, analysing the role of the heart as an organ, its role in generating feelings such as love and how these feelings or energies are integrated with sexual energies. Again, it ends with a critical comparison of the two mystics. *Chapter Three* looks at how Blake and Chia merge the brain and mind with sexual feelings to complete the tripartite model. The end of *Chapter Three* deals only briefly with the process of using sexual feelings beyond forming the tripartite model. For Blake this includes the sexual coupling of contrary states of experience in *Beulah* to achieve Eternity. For Chia there is ongoing coupling of experience in the alchemical cauldron with awareness beyond the tripartite. *The Conclusion* takes each analytical comparison forward to primarily answer 'how', 'why' and 'what' is achieved by these two mystics sublimating sexual feelings within similar tripartite models to achieve mystical consciousness.

³⁵ Prior to being called the 'Universal Tao', Mantak Chia's system was called the 'Healing Tao'. Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 15.

Chapter 1

Sex the Beginning

The only alternatives in coping with the sexual drive are to assert it or to transform it. When transmutation is not possible, repression is inadvisable from a spiritual point of view, for it may lead to inner paralyzing contrasts, to dissipation of energy, and to perilous displacements. Sufficient examples of this exist in emotionally based Christian mysticism.¹

Julius Evola, 1969

This chapter analyses the role sexual feelings play in each mystic's alchemical system, particularly the lower abdomen as manifested by the first part of the tripartite model. It briefly examines the consequences of sublimating and suppressing sexual feelings on external behaviour. Finally, this chapter will critically compare the methods used to cultivate sexual feelings within their respective systems.

William Blake: reawakening of sexual feeling is the first step to mystical vision.

The first half of this chapter will analyse how and why Blake uses sexual feeling in his alchemical system. In his alchemical system, Blake introduces a new mode of awareness called 'exalted sensibility' and assigns sexual feelings to the *Zoa Tharmas*. For Blake sexual feelings need to be developed and heightened through various practices – certainly not suppressed.

Blake's system of mystical experience is based on 'internal alchemy'; the sources of which are primarily Plato and Paracelsus.² Internal alchemy has the same principles as external alchemy, whereby base metals, such as lead, are converted into precious metals, such as

¹ Julius, Evola. *Eros and the Mysteries of Love: The Metaphysics of Sex*, (Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1991), 216.

² S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 322 & 328.

gold.³ In internal alchemy the metals correspond to experiential states of feeling or energy. Lead could correspond to a negative emotion, such as cruelty, whereas gold might correspond with the feeling of love. The basic constituents of the system include four elements,⁴ of which each has correspondences to the four *Zoas*. The tripartite corresponds to three of these elements and *Urthona* makes four. Sexual feelings are a component and belong to the water element and the *Zoa Tharmas*.⁵ Blake's alchemical theory is intimately linked with his cosmology and his unique creation theory. In essence, to return to Eternity all elements must first be developed, purified and then merged into one.⁶

Sexual feelings and desire are essential to Blake's alchemical system. In external alchemy chemicals react to transform base elements, so where is sexual passion in the chemical reactions of internal alchemy? Urban in his book *Magia Sexualis*, adds some light by describing alchemical work "...as a spiritual, but also a highly erotic art."⁷ He explains that the philosopher's stone forms by repeated sexual unions between the principles of male and female, the sun and moon, sulphur and salt.⁸ Consequently, each element requires an extra force to bind them together, and sexual feelings are the catalyst allowing this to

³ Blake's internal alchemical system also involves the transformation of negative emotions. Negative emotions could represent lead. These emotions, such as anger, cruelty (*Orc*) and fear, are transformed into virtues such as kindness and love (*Luvah* in his higher state). Arrogance and self importance are transformed to self sacrifice to the larger purpose of the Blake's Brotherhood. Judgment of transgressions within the individual adept is transformed to forgiveness.

⁴ The variation is minimal between Western alchemists in the Christian era and consists of water, air, fire and earth. See: Carl Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, Translated by R. F. C. Hull, (Bollingen, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 229.

⁵ In *The Four Zoas*, Tharmas is described as "Demon of the Waters". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 4-48.17; 332.

⁶ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 94.

⁷ Hugh Urban, *Magia Sexualis: Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 49.

⁸ The philosopher's stone or *lapis philosophorum* has a range of descriptions. It is the condensation of the four elements into the *prima materia*. It is also correlated with Christ for the Christian Alchemists. See multiple references in Carl Jung: *Psychology and Alchemy*, Translated by R. F. C. Hull, (Bollingen, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993).

occur. In the forthcoming chapters the reader shall see how different experiential states, such as love and cruelty, thought and desire and the separate senses, can be fused together with sexual feelings.

Urban helps decipher Blake's sexualised system even further – providing insight into the role of sexual feeling, Jesus and the phenomena of rebirth. Urban explains the role of the God Mercurius as the “sperm of mercury” from the ancient alchemists.⁹ The philosopher's stone, initially inanimate, comes alive to become a new spiritual being.¹⁰ New life originates from fragments of lower experience states juxtaposed for mystical realisation. Blake assigns this sperm of mercury and sexualised role to Jesus. According to Blake, redeeming the fallen vision as a lower experiential state of being is only possible by reawakening sexual feelings. Sexual feelings are associated with the generative force needed for transformation. To redeem requires regeneration, hence the quote:” O Holy Generation! (Image) of regeneration! Birthplace of the Lamb of God incomprehensible.”¹¹

The *Zoa Tharmas* embodies sexual feeling, the body and its senses. In his lower form, he represents uncontrolled sexual desire and the immediate satisfaction of the senses via the external world. He seeks supremacy and becomes the false god of materialism.¹² Yet in his highest form, *Tharmas* provides the vehicle to form a spiritual body.¹³ The esoteric concept

⁹ Hugh Urban, *Magia Sexualis: Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 47-48.

¹⁰ Hugh Urban, *Magia Sexualis: Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 47-48.

¹¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 7.67; 150.

¹² S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 399.

¹³ The spiritual body is described in *To Tirzah* in *Songs of Experience*, where the hidden purpose of birth, negativity, the senses and Jesus all declare themselves in the formation of a spiritual body. Blake says in the illustration, “It is Raised a Spiritual Body”. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William*

of a spiritual body is difficult to understand, but is the mechanism by which consciousness can leave the body and allegedly perceive or imagine the heavens directly. *Tharmas* provides the sexual drive necessary for entry back to Eternity. He also shapes the forms that arise in Eternity. Blake attempts to poetically describe *Tharmas*' higher function in the eternal worlds with, "Tharmas sifted the corn" for the "Bread of Ages".¹⁴

Blake enunciates the positive aspects of harnessing sexual feelings and the negative consequences of sexual repression. The latter he attributes to false indoctrination by the Church of his time. Healthy sexual desire and the ecstasy resulting from sexual activity are degraded to lust and shame, and guilt ensues. He says in *Jerusalem*,

The Eternals Ones laughed...
...where a Man dare hardly to embrace
His own Wife, for the terrors of Chastity that they call
By the name of Morality¹⁵

In this he emulates and predates the work of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939). This claim is supported by Diana George and Daniel Majdiak. George claims that much of Blake's poetry is "Freud's voice again a hundred years later".¹⁶ Majdiak in his paper on *Blake and Freud: Poetry and Depth Psychology*, explains, "Both as a visual artist and as a poet Blake shows himself to have anticipated ideas that Freud was to articulate a hundred years later."¹⁷ He concludes that Blake articulates how the cycle of repressed libido (through

Blake, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *To Tirzah*, text on illustration; 30.

¹⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 9-138.17; 406.

¹⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 32:43-47; 179.

¹⁶ Diana Hume George, *Blake and Freud*, (London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 101.

¹⁷ Daniel Majdiak and Brian Wilkie, "Blake and Freud: Poetry and Depth Psychology", *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 6:3 (July 1972), 92.

shame and guilt), which continually breaks out in rebellion and aggression, results in a chaotic convulsion in the inner psychic life. In *Europe a Prophecy*, Blake creates a series of characters that highlight the stages of sexual repression under chastity (*Enitharmon*). Sexual desire (*Manathu – Varycyon*) becomes altered under moral law to become *Leutha*, which deteriorates into frustrated desire and jealousy (*Oothoon* and *Theotormon*). Finally, sexual desire becomes its ultimate perversion - a desire for war (*Sotha*).¹⁸ More simply in *Jerusalem* the character *Albion* (representing liberty and England) says, “I must rush again to War, for the Virgin has frown’d and refus’d”.¹⁹ Here Blake directly connects unsatisfied sexual desire with war.²⁰

Beyond the negativity of suppressed sexuality, Blake postulates that sexual repression creates illness and psychopathology. Like Freud, he believed, imposed morality with the consequent shame and guilt results in mental and physical problems. *Outward disease becomes a manifestation of inner turmoil*.²¹ Blake finally surmises that hospitals were made up of those patients with such diseases. He says these patients were those, “fearing the joys of Love”.²²

¹⁸ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Europe a Prophecy* 13:9 - 14:28; 60-61 & S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 124.

¹⁹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 68.63; 222.

²⁰ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 348-9.

²¹ Brenda Webster, *Blake's Prophetic Psychology*, (London: Macmillan, 1983), 24.

²² William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Song of Los* 3.26; 67.

To Blake, sexuality and sexual feelings are meant to be soft, joyous and inviting - like flowers.²³ They are so beautiful that all negativity melts in their sweet fragrance and in this milieu invites effortless union and a glimpse of Eternity. Blake says:

Thou perceivest the Flowers put forth their precious odours!
And none can tell how from so small a center comes such sweets
Forgetting that within that Center Eternity expands²⁴

Somehow the most subtle sweet smell is powerful enough to guide the potential mystic home without any rational thought or effort. The flower as metaphor for positive sexuality, and its connection to visions of Eternity, is supported by Blake scholars, such as: Elaine Kauvar,²⁵ Nelson Hilton²⁶ and Damon.²⁷

Blake proposes that within this ambience of imposed chastity and morality, sexuality loses its former identity and becomes a negative force. It becomes a disgusting, perpetrating, violent and short act. Sex now aims to remove pleasant sexual feelings from itself. Sex is now a state of self disgust akin to self harm and suicide. Blake equates male sexual desire with a serpent in the ensuing poem, usually referenced by the opening line: "I saw a chapel of gold".²⁸ In it he challenges the Church and its most important sacred symbols. No longer does the chapel, with its alter, bread and wine, belong to organised Christianity – it belongs to the physical and genital reality of Blake's sexual partner and wife Catherine.

²³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 5-64.2-7; 343.

²⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 31.46; 131.

²⁵ Kauvar says, "Thyme is called Christ's ladder as it grows up the mountains and guides the reader to the heavens. It is an "emblem of sex, creation and Eternity..." See: Elaine Kauvar, "Los's Messenger to Eden: Blake's Wild Thyme", *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly Newsletter* 39 10/3 (Winter 1976-77), 84.

²⁶ Nelson Hilton, "Some Sexual Connotations", *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 166.

²⁷ Lilies represent newlywed love floating on the sea of time and space. See: S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 403 & 240.

²⁸ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Notebook, I Saw a Chapel*; 467.

Schuchard goes further and explains that in Jerusalem, Catherine is referred to as “Cathedron”.²⁹ Schuchard explains Blake’s perspective where she says, “...the repressive forces of priestcraft condemn the female genitals as shameful, making ‘their places of joy & love excrementious’,³⁰ the sanctification of the Yoni (vagina)³¹ is crucial to human and divine regeneration.”³² Hilton interprets Blake’s perspective of the female genitalia as “the holy of holies” while George sees it “as a religious shrine”.³³ Ostricker explains Blake’s understanding of the female chapel as the “*vagina dentata*” for it is “binding and catching”. It is both an instrument towards enlightenment but also a trap.³⁴ The poem goes:

I saw a serpent rise between
The white pillars of the door
And he forcd & forcd & forcd
Down the golden hinges tore

And along the pavement sweet
Set with pearls & rubies bright
All his slimy length he drew
Till upon the altar white

Vomiting his poison out
On the bread & on the wine

So I turnd into a sty
And laid me down among the swine³⁵

Blake implies in this poem that sexuality has become rushed and violent and misses out on the spiritual richness there to be enjoyed. Sexual intercourse remains a bestial act, merely

²⁹ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 331.

³⁰ Schuchard quotes Blake here from: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 88.39; 247.

³¹ Author’s parenthesis.

³² Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 331.

³³ Nelson Hilton, “Some Sexual Connotations”, *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 166 & Diana Hume George, *Blake and Freud*, (London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 104.

³⁴ Alicia Ostricker, “Desire Gratified and Ungratified: William Blake and Sexuality”, *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 161.

³⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Blake’s Notebook* 467-8.

serving the flesh and not the heart and mind in its journey of becoming pure and whole. Instead of being held for longer, semen becomes a poison in its premature ejaculatory form. Instead of obtaining a glimpse of Eternity, the final experience and vision is a soiled act akin to a pig sty. Sexual drive is needed for eternal vision. Ejaculation removes this opportunity.

This revelation by Blake has profound implications for the Church of his time and today. Firstly, Blake blames the Church as the cause of the perversion of sexuality. He attributes imposing morality and chastity as the cause of the degeneration. Secondly, having a sexual partner - as long as sexuality is kept in context of his alchemical framework and semen retention is practiced - means a mystical vision may be more easily accessed. Celibacy and suppressing sexual desire can create the opposite of what was intended. Nevertheless, without pre-empting Chia's works in the latter part of this chapter, Blake's solution may also not be quite right. Blake advocates mystical consciousness developed through marriage. In fact, freedom of sexual desire and mystical vision may still be possible in the context of celibacy.

Individual salvation is intertwined with direct mystical experience. Blake sees sexual feelings as an initial step and gateway to mystical consciousness as Eternity.³⁶ Even though all the *Zoas* must change and mature, regeneration starts with generation.³⁷ It is as if all the *Zoas* must experience the regenerative and transformative powers of sexual feelings originating in the place of seed. Directly experiencing pure sexual feelings triggers a deep

³⁶ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Europe* 3; 60. & S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 94.

³⁷ William Blake. *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 7.65-6; 150.

visceral memory of Eternity. This deeply moving experience of primordial pleasure is a pathway back to unity more powerful than intellectual argument or heart-led desire. Lincoln states, "...‘the place of seed’ the pleasures of sensation...urges the soul to consciousness. Here humanity will discover a sense of delight in the world that has eluded us through fallen history."³⁸ Consequently, in *The Four Zoas*, Blake advises *Luvah* the prince of Love (*Luvah* will be discussed in more detail in chapter two) that even he needs to return to the original state, which is the genitals, saying, "You shall forget your former state return O Love in peace / Into your place the place of seed not in the brain or heart".³⁹

As with Freud, Blake understood that repressed pure sexual feelings were locked in with other positive faculties of the psyche. Therefore, in releasing them, other positive feelings and aspects of being can be released to integrate and achieve holistic mystical vision. Lincoln explains that, 'the place of seed' not only includes pleasurable feelings, but also includes, "the joys of childhood, mutual trust and intimacy". The traits of the inner child were important to Blake in accessing Eternity.⁴⁰ Blake says to this point: "Little children always behold the Face of the Heavenly Father".⁴¹ Blake presumes that repressing one aspect (sexual drive) represses an entire complex of drives and personal traits. It seems for Blake that connecting to the inner child via releasing sexual feelings is important in the march to mystical consciousness.

³⁸ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake's Vala or The Four Zoas*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 201.

³⁹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 9-126.7-8; 395.

⁴⁰ Daniel Majdiak says Tharmas is connected to the body that a child senses in himself. Without *Tharmas* there can be no completion of the whole that requires equal contribution of the four *Zoas*. See: Daniel Majdiak and Brian Wilkie, "Blake and Freud: Poetry and Depth Psychology", *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 6:3 (July 1972), 91.

⁴¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Annotations to Berkeley's Siris* 212; 663.

Before an aspirant can move into the higher level of his sexualised vision, the reader must be convinced by Blake's doctrine to reject the seemingly orthodox Christian values on sexuality. For many this requires immense courage to shed a lifetime of indoctrination and the fear of social and religious excommunication. However, once accomplished, the aspirant can indulge in the pleasure of sexual feelings with the proviso that it is linked to an alchemical framework and mystical vision. Indulging in sexual feelings is not meant to be a goal in itself. Blake gives the adept freedom to release sexual feelings and fantasies within and also urges a sense of trust in them. As discussed below, there is no evidence that Blake indulged in promiscuousness or degenerate sexual behaviour.

Blake's indulgence in sexual feelings manifests itself in all modalities of his art. These include the written (doctrinal), visual and tactile modalities. At a doctrinal level he argues for the liberation and indulgence in sexual desire in his early works of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (dated 1793). Blake's indulgence and expression of sexuality as a pictorial art form is seen in his sexually explicit engravings of the Greco – Roman myths (dated 1796).⁴² Some good examples of these are shown in his Enochian illustrations.⁴³ Here Enoch achieves spiritual vision by featuring a plurality of women amidst phallic potency.

Beyond connecting sexual experience visually and in the written form, Blake indulges in sexual experience through the senses. It is interesting that he prioritises the tactile sense (through sex) as the main gateway to Eternity as shown in the *Fifth Window* (dated 1794):

⁴² Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 275.

⁴³ William Blake, *The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake*, Edited by Martin Butlin, (London: Yale University Press, 1981), Plates 1079-83, (dated 1824-7).

Five windows light the cavern'd Man; thro' one he breathes the air;
Thro' one, hears music of the spheres; thro' one, the eternal vine
Flourishes, that he may recieve the grapes; thro' one can look.
And see small portions of the eternal world that ever groweth;
Thro' one, himself pass out what time he please...⁴⁴

Blake's learning and experience of this sexualised tactile sense is documented by Schuchard, with his attendance at workshops by Franz Mesmer (1734–1815) in the late 1780's.⁴⁵ Without this groundbreaking research, this aspect of Blake's system might never be understood. This research reveals Blake's directed release of sexual feelings and semen retention practice.

Mesmer guided the participant(s) in a trance state into their own body, focusing an acute awareness on particular body parts. Furthermore, he conjured sensations ranging from terrible to delightful and termed this the transfer of 'exalted sensibility' from one organ to another. According to Schuchard, Blake learned these techniques and transformed them into poetry.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Europe a Prophecy* III; 60. For explanation see: S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 102.

⁴⁵ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 209.

⁴⁶ Blake says, "The First State is in the Head, the Second is in the Heart / The Third in the Loins & Seminal Vessels & the Fourth / In the Stomach & Intestines terrible, deadly, unutterable / And he whose Gates are open'd in those Regions of his Body / Can from those Gates view all these wondrous Imaginations". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 34.14-19; 134 & Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 209.

Blake termed the release of feelings and visions from this ‘exalted sensibility’ as “wondrous imaginations”.⁴⁷ It is as if the organs - once touched by the mind in the trance state - release sensations that are part of the mystical journey. It is this connection (as ‘exalted sensibility’) that is different from our normal conscious state. This gateway is further elaborated when Blake uses the term ‘energy’ with, “Energy is the only life and is from the Body...Energy is Eternal Delight.”⁴⁸ So somehow the terms, ‘exalted sensibility’, ‘wondrous imaginations’ and ‘energy’ are describing a facet of Blake’s consciousness important to achieving mystical experience. All these terms are likely to have a correlation with ‘energy’ as discussed in Chia’s system.

Urizen is the *Zoa* representing reason and the brain’s rational cognitive functions. In the following stanza *Urizen* leaves his usual resting place in the head and discovers the ‘exalted sensibility’ and delightful energies arising from the genitals:

Once how I walked from my palace in gardens of delight
 The sons of wisdom stood around the harpers followd with harps
 Nine virgins clothd in light composd the song to their immortal voices
 And at my banquets of new wine my head was crownd with joy
 Then in my ivory pavilions I slumberd in the noon
 And walked in the silent night among sweet smelling flowers
 Till on my silver bed I slept & sweet dreams round me hoverd⁴⁹

In this poem Blake refers again to the ‘wondrous imaginations’ of the genital organs as a beautiful garden and flowers. Sensations and visualisations arise, including female virgins, light, immortality, wine, rest and sweet dreams. Soft sexual feelings transform *Urizen*’s

⁴⁷ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 34.18; 134.

⁴⁸ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 4; 34

⁴⁹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 5-64.2-7; 343.

usual depressed state of being into beauty and repose. Again, Blake connects flowers with Eternity.

Blake believed that intense feelings were also necessary to access mystical vision. While soft sensuous and delicate feelings are important, the strong negative ones also play a role.⁵⁰ Mesmer facilitated the experience of intense and overwhelming feeling states via guided imagery and passing his hand (not touching the patient) over the recipient's genitals. Women were noted to display convulsive, whole body orgasms – known as 'Furor Uterinus'. Schuchard's research reveals that Blake refers to this technique in *Several Questions Answered*.⁵¹ His wife Catherine was scared of this orgasmic practice when he says, "The Look of love alarms / Because tis filld with fire".⁵² It seems that uncontrolled whole body shaking and seemingly painful spasms were shocking and frightening to Catherine. However, to Mesmer's other female participants it provided a glimpse of Eternity by releasing intense sexual feelings.

Schuchard claims that Blake mystical consciousness involved using sexual feelings and the practicing of semen retention. This can be traced to the Tantric teachings of Swedenborg and an Anglican clergyman called Maurice.⁵³ Schuchard explains how Blake used semen retention to enhance his mystical experience. In the following poem he uses the term

⁵⁰ Blake says of the importance of strong negative feelings: "The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword are portions of Eternity too great for the eye of man". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 8; 36.

⁵¹ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*. (London: Century, 2006), 210.

⁵² William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Several Questions Answered* 474.

⁵³ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*. (London: Century, 2006), 298–300.

‘inmost form’ to describe this facilitated vision.⁵⁴ Blake’s personal practice included failure and success. Here, Blake correlates failure with ejaculating within the vagina as represented by the phrase: “burst the Crystal Cabinet”.⁵⁵ Bursting is ejaculation and the crystal cabinet is the vagina. The theme of the *vagina dentata* is repeated here. The image of a crystal vagina is a dichotomous one as it is both the potential source of unified vision but also potentially dangerous. The poem goes:

I strove to seize the inmost form
With ardor fierce & hands of flame
But burst the Crystal Cabinet
And like a Weeping Babe became

A weeping Babe upon the wild
And Weeping Woman pale reclind
And in the outward air again
I filld with woes the passing Wind ⁵⁶

Here again the post ejaculatory state is negative, characterised by Blake remaining unfulfilled, mourning the loss of seed and a missed opportunity to experience Eternity.

Retaining semen, in co-operation with his wife Catherine, was vital to Blake’s path to enlightenment. With his system, he was able to awaken his own *Tharmas* - the first part of the tripartite model - within an active sexual relationship.⁵⁷ While Blake advocated sexual freedom, it was related to imagination rather than sexual behaviour. There is no evidence,

⁵⁴ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*. (London: Century, 2006), 267.

⁵⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Crystal Cabinet* 489.

⁵⁶ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Crystal Cabinet* 489.

⁵⁷ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 295.

according to Damon, that Blake was unfaithful to Catherine.⁵⁸ This latter point is paramount to the misunderstanding of Blake. Blake was a champion for freedom of the imagination, internal feelings and desires. However, the imaginative and energetic worlds are different from the external world. Blake did not lead a promiscuous life but did lead an inner one. He believed that inner freedom and vision provided a glimpse of Eternity, which in turn creates outward stability for the “Brotherhood”.⁵⁹ Blake was against suppressing inner worlds through religious doctrine or moral law. He saw this as creating the opposite result to what was intended. Many have misunderstood Blake because of their lack of understanding of meditation and inner worlds.⁶⁰ Damon reinforces this point and says, “They concern the world of Eternity, not the future of society.”⁶¹ The answer lies in the distinction between internal and external freedom. The distinction will be taken up again in the analytical comparison with Chia.

Awakening the body - along with Blake’s sexual practices and developing the senses - produces the merged identity of the *Zoa Tharmas*. This development towards mystical consciousness is not without difficulty; negativity needs to be expressed and transformed. As the four *Zoas* undergo healing and achieve higher function it is important that *Tharmas* vent and ultimately transform his negative feelings. *Urizen* states, “let Tharmas rage”⁶² as he realised that repression would lead to an inevitable death of *Tharmas* and allow no possibility of all four *Zoas* uniting. Without this union there can be no vision of Eternity.

⁵⁸ S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 100.

⁵⁹ Blake saw the Brotherhood as the unification of humanity. See: S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 60.

⁶⁰ S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 98.

⁶¹ S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 101.

⁶² William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 9-121.23; 390.

So far this analysis has highlighted why Blake places such a positive role on sexual feeling in his alchemical system. He sees sexual feeling as a pleasurable positive force that can transform and give life; ultimately, it is a step towards his final goal: mystical experience. Conversely, the hazards of repression lead to psychopathology and must be avoided.

This analysis of Blake will benefit from a comparison with Chia. Chia is very direct and concise in describing techniques used for sublimating sexual feelings. This may be an indicator of more liberal times or that Taoism has a history of being more open with sexuality.⁶³ Blake's system is shrouded in poetic language and metaphor. The 'shrouding' is in line with other radical internal alchemists and mystics that chose to avoid direct scrutiny and persecution by religious fundamentalists.⁶⁴ Making the comparison, therefore, may provide insights not apparent on first analysis.

Mantak Chia and sexual energy

Like Blake, Chia has an internal alchemical system oriented to mystical experience and using sexual feelings at multiple levels. This section will analyse how and why sexual feelings play such an important role in Chia's system. For Chia, sexual feelings are a suitable starting point for the adept to begin the mystical journey. The bliss of sexual feeling and intimacy is often the first exposure to the bliss that an adept can experience. Chia connects this bliss with the meditation process. His meditation requires the perception

⁶³ Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 30.

⁶⁴ Alexandra Lember, *The Heritage of Hermes: Alchemy in Contemporary British Literature*, (Berlin: Galda and Leuchter, 2004), 45.

⁶⁵ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 117-8.

of *chi*. Sexual feeling is called '*ching chi*' or 'sexual energy'. He has a range of practices that facilitate and progress *ching chi* through the levels of his system. *Ching chi* plays a vital role as both catalyst and an element and is essential in raising a spiritual body. At the end of this section, and before the critical comparison, a brief examination of why sexual energy is linked with the Taoist cosmological theory will be provided.

Chi is central to Chia's Taoist internal alchemy system because it is a new form of consciousness required to negotiate the system. The concept of *chi* is difficult to comprehend intellectually and is better understood experientially. *Chi* can be sensed by any of the five senses, such as inner vibration, light or sound.⁶⁵ The *chi* becomes the medium or fundamental unit to which the alchemist sets up his internal laboratory to convert negative experience states into positive ones. Chia uses the more easily comprehended phrase, "Transform Stress into Vitality" of which he has titled a book.⁶⁶ *Chi* becomes the symbol of all external and internal phenomena and is closely related to feelings and emotions; and is thus far removed from thought and intellectualisation. Similarly as hinted by Blake, it involves the body and the senses.

As a method to facilitate perceiving *chi* by the aspirant, Chia introduces sexual practices at beginner's level. This early introduction is somewhat controversial, as there is the potential to criticise him for taking advantage of a society already preoccupied with sex. The system is oriented to mystical consciousness and indulging in sex is not an endpoint. However,

⁶⁶ Mantak Chia, *Taoist Ways to Transform Stress into Vitality: The Inner Smile, Six Healing Sounds* (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1985).

perhaps like Blake, Chia believes that sexual feelings will eventually draw the adept to the Tao, exerting a positive change on the individual and society.⁶⁷

Sexual energy will amplify all energetic or experiential states within the body. To this point Chia says, “Ching Chi or sexual energy expands and intensifies our emotions and attitudes.”⁶⁸ Enhancement of inner awareness is useful for the novice to gain their first perception of *chi*. How it does this is not absolutely clear, but it is linked with sexual feelings having the ability to turn off thoughts and allow the mind to tune into that which is bodily and primordial (the dampening of intellectual thought will be discussed in chapter three). Along with the experience of *ching chi* there is tapping into the bliss of sexual pleasure, which is also intimately linked to the pleasure of the internal alchemical process and higher meditative states. Sexual pleasure is the first bliss that may be experienced by a person. This same bliss is then reproduced in internal alchemy and potentially amplified further. To this latter point Chia says, “...sexual pleasure is popularly considered the highest bliss known”.⁶⁹ Chia taps into this pleasure as a way of guiding the aspirant to the Tao.

Therefore, given the positives of sexual energy, Chia teaches a multitude of methods to further enhance these. Techniques include massage, tapping and stretching of the genitals by the practitioner or partner. With a partner, stimulation can be manual, oral or vaginal. Stretching the male sexual organs includes novel exercises such as lifting weights by tying a silk scarf around the base of the testicles and penis. For women this technique includes

⁶⁷ Mantak Chia, *Healing Love through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 1986), 58.

⁶⁸ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 378.

⁶⁹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 378.

inserting a stone egg into the vagina with weights connected by a string.⁷⁰ Stimulation is ideally done in a meditative state, with or without a partner.⁷¹ The practice is independent of celibacy or marriage. Celibacy does not guarantee mystical vision, unless the devotee commits to mystical practice. Marriage or having a sexual partner does not exclude a spiritual life. Needham highlights this point of celibacy and religious status being independent of mystical consciousness. He states that throughout Taoist history the status of adepts has changed. At times, Taoists were expected to marry while at others to remain celibate. Some had the status of priest, priestess, monk or nun. However, more important than their status is that they should be regarded as Taoist men and women focussed on internal alchemy and direct mystical experience.⁷²

In Chia's system the first type of sexual feeling to be awakened is unaroused sexual *chi* - known as '*Testicular or Ovarian breathing*' or the '*Cool Draw*'.⁷³ It involves drawing up sexual feelings into the body. Chia's second type of sexual practice is called the "Orgasmic Upward Draw", which involves experiencing orgasm in the genitals and taking this sensation to various parts of the body.⁷⁴ Orgasm is experienced as a spontaneous pulsation or vibration.⁷⁵ It can be experienced as an implosion or explosion of feeling states often

⁷⁰ Mantak Chia & Maneewan Chia, *Bone Marrow Nei Kung: Taoist Ways to Improve Your Health by Rejuvenating Your Bone Marrow and Blood*. (Huntington, New York: Healing Tao Books, 1988), Chapters 3-5.

⁷¹ Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), XIX.

⁷² Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 30.

⁷³ Mantak Chia & D. Abrams Arava, *The Multi Orgasmic Man*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 56.

⁷⁴ Mantak Chia, *Healing Love through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 1986), 161.

⁷⁵ Mantak Chia, *Healing Love through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 1986), 40.

followed by a release or merging called the “valley orgasm”.⁷⁶ Again, these practices can be performed solo or with a partner.

To further enhance sexual feelings, Chia teaches semen and menstrual retention. For men it includes pressure on the ‘million dollar point’⁷⁷ and the *power lock*⁷⁸ just prior to ejaculation. The women’s practices follow the same principles as occurs in the *power lock*; however, menstrual blood rather than semen is reabsorbed. Women of vibrant health and child bearing age can experience amenorrhea. In poetic Taoist language this is called “Slaying the Red Dragon”.⁷⁹

Semen retention and the corresponding female practices are more than just a mere technique to physically retain sperm or menses. They are associated with a cascade of inner changes and paradigm shifts within the adept. In some respects, the practices become a gate to a new way of being.⁸⁰ The adept now has to adjust to the increasing presence of sexual energy in the body. Certainly for the male, no longer does sexual feeling imply the need for sexual relations or ejaculation. Sexual feeling becomes a sensation or desire of everyday life. Sexual desire becomes a force that finds relief through inner connectedness and integration of the body and mind. To this point for men, Chia says, “The vital *chi*

⁷⁶ Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 204.

⁷⁷ The ‘million dollar point’ (*hui yin*) is located in the perineum, midway between the anus and the scrotum. It lies over the membranous urethra. Pressure on this point prevents outward loss of semen and retrograde movement into the urinary bladder. See: Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 120.

⁷⁸ The *power lock* or *big draw* involves the contraction of the pelvic floor. This seals off the urethra in men, and then there is dispersion of sexual feelings into the body – in particular the organs and musculoskeletal system. See: Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 129.

⁷⁹ Mantak Chia, *Healing Love through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 1986), 40.

⁸⁰ The *hui yin* or million dollar point described above is also known as the “Gate of Life and Death”. By using this gate, entry to the immortal worlds is allegedly facilitated. See: Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 167.

energy formerly used to create (sperm) power is now channelled directly to higher centres of energy.”⁸¹ This provides the force to fuse and develop the other two components of the tripartite model. These sexual feelings can also be channelled beyond the tripartite and lead to mystical experience. To this accomplishment Chia quotes some mythical powers but also those allegedly associated with mystical vision. He says, “The sages considered one drop of semen equal in vital power to one hundred drops of blood...Extraordinary powers, including healing and clairvoyance, may evolve by retaining semen and driving its power back into the body.”⁸²

Enhancing sexual energy and retaining semen is not without difficulty. Chia explains that sexual energy has no positive or negative polarity. Adding sexual energy to love creates more love, while adding it to negative emotions exaggerates negativity.⁸³ Therefore, the practitioner must reduce negative emotions,⁸⁴ which are identified and made conscious in a meditative state. These practices are called the *Healing Sounds*.⁸⁵ By spending time with these feelings and identifying roots and attachments, their destructive power is removed, and they are reduced and purified into their elemental origin. Hence, they are transformed and recycled into pure life force energy.⁸⁶

Even though sexual feelings do not necessarily create negative behaviour, suppressing them definitely does. Chia explains:

⁸¹ Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 177.

⁸² Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 3.

⁸³ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 378.

⁸⁴ Mantak Chia, *Healing Love through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 1986), 30-1.

⁸⁵ Mantak Chia & Maneewan Chia, *Bone Marrow Nei Kung: Taoist Ways to Improve Your Health by Rejuvenating Your Bone Marrow and Blood*, Huntington, New York: Healing Tao Books, 1988), 231-8.

⁸⁶ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 80.

Sex is like an inflatable ball floating on the surface of a pool – the deeper you try to push it down into the water, the more strongly it presses back up. If you lose control of the ball for even a split second, it will shoot up into the air out of control.⁸⁷

Losing control can begin with making perverse sexual jokes, watching pornographic movies or committing sexual harassment. Suppression may also result in pathological addiction through any of the five senses.⁸⁸ He states:

Sexual desire may affect the ear as a desire to hear dirty jokes or perverse sexual conversations. It may go out to the eye as a need to see pornographic movies. It can affect the mouth and manifest in foul language or sexual harassment. Suppressed sexual desire can also create other negative emotions such as hate, anger, cruelty and violence. All these things pollute our society.⁸⁹

Ching chi is closely related to kidney *chi* which belongs to the element of water.⁹⁰ Again through the line of reasoning above, members of our current society find it easier to experience sexual *chi* than say the esoteric concept of water *chi*. Furthermore, kidney *chi* is intimately linked with sexual *chi*. Excessive ejaculation is a common cause of depletion of kidney *chi* in our society. This excessive semen loss is also known as “unregulated affairs of the bedroom”.⁹¹ Like Blake’s internal alchemical system, the water element is vital to the alchemical structure. Chia’s system, however, includes five elements rather than the four with Blake.⁹²

⁸⁷ Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 51.

⁸⁸ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 83.

⁸⁹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 83.

⁹⁰ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 45.

⁹¹ Giovanni Maciocia, *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine: A Comprehensive Text for Acupuncturists and Herbalists*, (Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1989), 250.

⁹² Each of the five main solid organs (heart (fire); liver (wood); spleen (earth); lungs (metal) and kidneys (water)) corresponds to an element, which in turn corresponds to an aspect of the psyche, behaviour, weather, direction, senses, planets and cosmos; in other words all phenomena are divided via their correspondences to the five groups. See: Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 135.

In Chia's Cosmology, in order to find 'the One', the body's individual elements need to be identified and merged. Sexual energy belongs to one of the five elements and contributes special uniting power that can fuse these seemingly disparate energies. This will be examined again in chapter two. The *Ba Gua* is used in conjunction with this process. The *Ba Gua* is an eight-sided symbol that has representations of the five elements (two for water) with Heaven and Earth (making eight forces). The central symbol includes the *Tai Chi* symbol, which includes *yin* and *yang* entwining. The eight forces have connections to the 'eight immortals' having achieved and completed the alchemical process and realised mystical consciousness.⁹³ Once discovered, the five elements can be reduced to a duality of *yin* and *yang*. Finally, sexual energy is used to resolve the duality with one final fusion.⁹⁴ Sexual energy is a force that brings opposites together and creates something new. In internal alchemy, this is the fusion of different types of *chi* into one which is closer to the original *chi*. Sensing the original *chi* equates with sensing the unitive state of the Tao – the so called "Nameless One".⁹⁵ The process of reducing multiplicity to unity is essentially reversing of the creation or cosmological theory. It is a vital process by which mystical consciousness is achieved, and further emphasises why sexual energy is so important.

In the *Microcosmic Orbit Meditation* or *Fusion* practices, there is merging of the energies through sexual feeling to form the first tripartite.⁹⁶ The newly merged sensation is a

⁹³ Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China: Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part II, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Magisteries of Gold and Immortality*. (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1974), 121. They include: Lu Dong Pin, Chuang Guo Lao, Chung-Li Chuan, Han Hsiang-Tsu, Ho Hsien-Ku, Lan Tsai He, Li Tieh-Kuai and Ts'ao Kuo-Chiu.

⁹⁴ Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 1-5.

⁹⁵ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 309.

⁹⁶ The lower *tan tien* is the region of the lower abdomen midway between the second and third lumbar and the navel. This was discussed in the introduction. It represents the condensation of sexual energy with the

product of different energies to produce a new sensation and is called the “original force” or the “original *chi*”.⁹⁷ In Chia’s cosmological doctrine, as described in the above paragraph, it is a glimpse of the original state of the Nameless One. Since it has not completely enveloped all of awareness, it remains only a glimpse. Nevertheless it is an important achievement in the mystical journey. According to Chia, achieving this stage is associated with becoming more ‘childlike’. To this stage he says, “Through the Microcosmic Orbit meditation, we can give birth to a new self, restore our original force and return to a childlike energy.”⁹⁸ What ensues is a self-perpetuating cycle as the more childlike the aspirant becomes the more they will learn to receive and be sensitive to the subtle awareness required to achieve mystical consciousness.⁹⁹ The theme of rebirth will be continued in chapter three. The extra energy produced to generate the tripartite system can be used for taking the adept’s awareness beyond the body in the form of a ‘spiritual body’.¹⁰⁰ This esoteric concept will be taken up again at the end of chapter three.

Critical Comparison of Blake and Chia

Both mystics seem to have similar alchemical backgrounds that use sexual energy to reduce multiplicity. The ‘fallen man’ or novice practitioner has fragmented parts that need to be experienced as part of the elemental world through the vehicle of energy or ‘exalted sensibility’. Sexual energy then can unite seemingly disparate parts into a simpler experience. In both Blake and Chia’s system sexual energy belongs to the water element.

energy of the abdominal organs and corresponds to the first part of the tripartite model. See: Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 182.

⁹⁷ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 182.

⁹⁸ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 48.

⁹⁹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 453.

¹⁰⁰ Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 95-6. See also: Mantak Chia, *Greatest Kan and Li: Gathering the Cosmic Light*. (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 29-32.

In Blake's system sexual energy connects to Jesus Christ or Mercurius. The latter energy is able to magically catalyse the coupling. In Chia's system the *Ba Gua* symbol is used to facilitate union, which only has a minor connection to the accomplished eight immortals. Both rely on sexual energy reversing the cosmology theories from multiple elements to duality and then unity. Unity is associated with mystical experience.

Both quite clearly document pathological consequences of sexual repression, with the result being anything from perverted behaviour, illness and psychosis to war. However, both contextualise the liberation of sexual feelings in the setting of advancing towards mystical vision and not an endpoint in itself. Both highlight the positive nature of sexual desire. In its highest form, sexual desire becomes soft, inviting and joining as opposed to a rushed, violent and self terminating force that for men ends in premature ejaculation.

Blake makes a point that mystical vision can be found outside the Church of his time. He extends the new Church to his wife "Cathedron" (Catherine). The new Church has a new altar and doors, which are all parts of Catherine's genital anatomy. His poetry advocates sexual freedom yet it is documented that Blake never deviated from his own bedroom. For this, Blake is largely misunderstood. To many his system appears to give license to promiscuity. Yet this is not what he practiced. He in actual fact was promoting internal freedom for his internal energies. It is by juxtaposing Blake with Chia that we unravel the potentially positive benefits of his system within celibacy and marriage.

Chia highlights that his system can be practiced in either social construct. Analysing Chia's practice provides this thesis with the ability to view Blake's in a new light. It seems for

these two mystics, within the exclusive behaviour of celibacy, sexual feelings are to have their freedom. For both mystics, sexual feelings enter into their internal alchemical systems and allow fusion and transformation. Blake's criticism of imposed morality may also have error, because chastity in the setting of Chia's system is potentially very positive and provides an opportunity for cultivating sexual energy to directly experience 'unity'. However, in the setting of chastity, with forced suppression of sexual feelings, the results can only be disastrous. Morality can be negative if internal feelings and energies are suppressed to comply with rules of conduct. It seems these two mystics highlight the importance of separating the inner world and its rules from the outer world and moral conduct. For healing, the inner worlds must have freedom to be released and enjoyed.

Both thinkers explore a new mode of consciousness that is not experienced by most people in their normal mental state. For Blake, the terms 'exalted sensibility' or 'energy' or 'wondrous imaginations' depict this exclusive state of consciousness. Chia, however, uses terms such as '*chi*' or 'energy' to describe it. In terms of our analysis it is clearly evident that 'sexual energy' or '*ching chi*' is a basic requirement for developing mystical consciousness and this emphasises why sexual feeling is vital. It is also evident that for both, sexual energy is an important catalyst for uniting separate states. Sexual feeling is closely related to the 'unity' state – for Blake as visceral memory and for Chia a blissful sensation similar to the original *chi*.

Blake and Chia seem to awaken un-aroused and orgasmic sexual feelings. The 'exalted sensibility' of the genitals described by Blake can be correlated to *Testicular and Ovarian Breathing* with Chia. Both arouse pleasurable feelings from the genitals that soften the

body and provide a glimpse of eternity. The *Orgasmic Upward Draw* from Chia has marked similarities with *Furor Uterinus* phenomena described by Blake in *Several Questions Answered*. Both mystics reveal and describe the enhancing sexual feelings through semen retention practices. However, Chia alone discusses the corresponding sexual / menstrual practices for women.

For both mystics releasing sexual feelings is associated with releasing other aspects of the psyche. Both seem to associate the sexual awakening with becoming more childlike. Blake and Chia mention the spiritual body as a vehicle to mystical consciousness beyond the tripartite. Both seem to emphasise an initial increase in negative emotions, with Blake allowing *Tharmas* to rage while Chia prescribes a series of exercises to help vent undesirable emotions. Finally, both create an awakening of the lower part of the body that is the first part of our tripartite model.

Chapter 2

Making Love – Love and Sex combined!

*Almost every system of spiritual development recognizes the necessity of activating both the sexual energy and the heart. However, few systems explain how these two forces – compassion and sexual desire – can be harnessed together for spiritual development.*¹

Mantak Chia, 1993

For Blake and Chia, fusing love and sexual desire is essential to achieve mystical experience. In this chapter, there will be a critical analysis from the two perspectives of how and why this merging occurs within the respective alchemical frameworks. It will briefly examine the role of the heart, Jesus and the Taoist immortals in this merging. Furthermore, it will analyse the consequences of this merging on external sexual behaviour and self-determinism.

William Blake: *Luvah* joins with *Tharmas*

Blake articulates a healing journey for the fallen man to realise mystical vision and Eternity. The first half of this chapter analyses the journey from the how and why perspectives that links sexual desire (*Tharmas*) and love (*Luvah*) - the first two components of the tripartite model. Also examined are the consequences of this merging on the mystic's outward sexual relationship, as well as their relationship to external organisations. In the next two paragraphs, this thesis will summarise the story or stages of this journey and then proceed with the analysis.

¹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 381.

To Blake the journey of merging love with sexual feelings is an arduous though achievable one. It begins with recognising love as a refinement of the fiery emotions originating in the heart. Blake assigns this fiery, heart-based energy to the character *Luvah*. Blake's fallen man represses his heart-based emotions, resulting in the birth of the emanations *Vala* and *Orc*. *Vala* is symbolic of feminine love and nature.² *Orc* represents rebelliousness and a desire to war. However, despite the fall, Blake allows the lower forms of *Luvah*, *Vala* and *Orc* to be and run their course. Once *Vala* and *Orc* have ventilated their negativity they are then ready to reunite with *Luvah*. Cultivating love necessitates reuniting with those emanations with sexual feeling resulting from suppression.

Blake then articulates the maturation of love. Immature love sees itself as a God, separate and superior to other energies. It does not trust a higher force and hence urges itself to control. Even love, seemingly the most beautiful energy of all the elements, must sacrifice itself to the whole. Part of this sacrifice is the uniting and merging with sexual energies. This merging is a process fraught with difficulties. Initially there is a disdain of sex. Then there is the trap of falling in love with sex. The result being 'love of sex' rather than 'love and sex combined'. The catalyst, Jesus, facilitates this equal union, bringing it to a harmonious union of 'sexual grace'.

Blake's *Luvah* is an allegorical portrayal (*Luvah* was a pun on Lover)³ of the heart's fiery energies. Lincoln describes him in his immature form as hot, passionate and arrogant with

² S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 428.

³ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 255.

his self-importance, with a fierce appetite for power and pleasure.⁴ *Urizen* (the rational mind) sees *Luvah* as uncontrollable and therefore suppresses him under moral law.

Consistent with Blake's alchemical theories, this fire will not disappear; instead, it reappears in a different character with the same essence. Blake calls this new character an emanation. Damon describes the principles of the emanations as predicting split personality theory where, "They seek for domination, can be dangerously destructive, and fight reintegration (which seems to them like annihilation); but the moment they are reabsorbed, their voices cease at once."⁵ The source of Blake's emanation theory is largely based on the writings of Milton and Plato.⁶

Luvah gives off the emanations *Orc* and *Vala*. *Orc* is a fiery rebellious energy defined through revolution and war.⁷ In *Milton*, *Orc* degenerates further, taking on the selfish shadow form (Blake termed this the *spectre*): "And Satan is the Spectre of Orc & Orc is the generate Luvah."⁸ So from repressing *Luvah* as potential love, the result is the opposite, manifesting Satan and war.

However, even from this extreme position redemption is still possible. Blake proposes that *Orc* must be allowed to 'burn out', for "... now fierce Orc had quite consumd himself in

⁴ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake's Vala or The Four Zoas*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 159.

⁵ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 121

⁶ Rachel Billigheimer, "Conflict and Conquest: Creation, Emanation and the Female in William Blake's Mythology", *Modern Language Studies* 30/1 (Spring, 2000), 94-5.

⁷ *Orc* becomes the French (in *Europe a Prophecy*) and American (*America a Prophecy*) revolutionary. Blake describes *Los* in *The Four Zoas* with, "Loud sounds the war song round red Orc in his triumphant fury". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 7b- 91(2nd).21; 364.

⁸ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 29.34; 127.

Mental flames / Expending all his energy against the fuel of fire.”⁹ In a similar vein to suppressing *Orc*, *Albion* (England) realises that repressing *Luvah* is counterproductive. *Urizen* is ordered to “Let Luvah rage in the dark deep, even to Consummation; for if thou feedest not his rage, it will subside in peace”.¹⁰

Once negative energy is consumed then the emanations can reunite in sexual bliss with their original forms and return to mystical unity. The process of unification is shown by the following excerpt from *Jerusalem*:

When in Eternity Man converses with Man they enter
Into each others Bosom (which are Universes of delight)
In mutual interchange. and first their Emanations meet
Surrounded by their Children. if they embrace & commingle
But if the Emanations mingle not; with storms & agitations
Of earthquakes & consuming fires they roll apart in fear
For Man cannot unite with Man but by their Emanations
Which stand both Male & Female at the Gates of each Humanity
How then can I ever again be united as Man with Man
While thou my Emanation refusest my Fibres of dominion.
When Souls mingle & join thro all the Fibres of Brotherhood
Can there be any secret joy on Earth greater than this?¹¹

There are some key words in this passage that highlight the sexual basis of the reunion of the emanative portions, and some terms that require further analysis. The phrases ‘embrace &, commingle’ and the ‘bosom...of delight’ requires little explanation. However, ‘male fibres’ requires further investigation. Hilton and Hagstrum interpret ‘fibres’ as the

⁹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 9-126.1-2; 395.

¹⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 9-120.32; 389.

¹¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 88.3-15; 246.

male semen power.¹² Hilton bases this interpretation on other lines found in *Jerusalem*. In the poem's characters there is an encounter between *Los* and *Enitharmon*,¹³ where *Los* is, "Filling with Fibres from his loins which reddened with desire"¹⁴ and *Conwenna* with *Benjamin*¹⁵ as, "she drew Fibres of Life out from the Bones into her Golden Loom".¹⁶ Hilton explains that the 'bones' are slang for an erect penis.¹⁷ The Golden Loom is another of Blake's metaphors for the vagina.

Further analysis could raise suspicions of licentious behaviour because here we have children, men and women coming together in orgiastic bliss heralding the unification of humanity. Again, this requires careful interpretation because Blake is referring to the inner imaginative worlds. It seems he implies that the spirit of incest and homosexuality is vital to restore unity, but only in the imaginative world of the mind. As said previously, Damon remarked on Blake's position on sexual freedom as only concerning the Eternal realm.¹⁸ This inward sexual freedom is an important concept. Blake is emphasising freedom of sexual fantasies in the context of a healing, holistic mystical system. This would have significant implications on an aspiring adept; giving permission to use sexual fantasies as an adjunct rather than feeling guilt and shame. Robert Gleckner explains that in Blake's

¹² Nelson Hilton, "Some Sexual Connotations", *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 167 & Jean Hagstrum, *The Romantic Body: Love Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 126.

¹³ *Enitharmon* represents spiritual beauty and is the consort of *Los*.

¹⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 86.51; 245.

¹⁵ *Conwenna* is a daughter Of *Albion*. *Benjamin* is the son of Jacob (descendant of Abraham and Isaac). See: S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 92 & 41.

¹⁶ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 90.22; 249.

¹⁷ Nelson Hilton, "Some Sexual Connotations", *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 167.

¹⁸ S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 101.

system, guilt is a part of 'experience' in the fallen world that negates the vision of Eternity.¹⁹

Furthermore, *Urizen* (the mind) is the orchestrator and director of the *Zoas* and must allow even the immature forms of love to begin a relationship with sexuality, despite making its own mistakes. According to Blake, immature love sees itself as all-powerful and above sexual desire. Love's first relationship with the desires of the flesh (sexual)²⁰ shows *Luvah* lamenting when *Urizen* imprisons him. In this passage, the Earthworm is signifier of sexuality and hence *Tharmas*.²¹

When I calld forth the Earth-worm from the cold & dark obscure
I nurturd her I fed her with my rains & dews, she grew
A scaled Serpent, yet I fed her tho' she hated me
Day after day she fed upon the mountains in Luvahs sight
I brought her thro' the Wilderness, a dry & thirsty land
And I commanded springs to rise for her in the black desert
Till she became a Dragon winged bright & poisonous
I opend all the floodgates of the heavens to quench her thirst

And I commanded the Great deep to hide her in his hand
Till she became a little weeping Infant a span long
I carried her in my bosom as a man carries a lamb
I loved her I gave her all my soul & my delight
I hid her in soft gardens & in secret bowers of Summer
Weaving mazes of delight along the sunny Paradise
Inextricable labyrinths, She bore me sons & daughters
And they have taken her away & hid her from my sight
They have surrounded me with walls of iron & brass, O Lamb²²

¹⁹ 'Innocence' is childlike and associated with mystical vision while 'experience' is restrictive. See: Robert F Gleckner, "William Blake and the Human Abstract", *Modern Language Association* 76/4 (September 1961), 377.

²⁰ Damon states that the worm represents the sexual desires of the flesh. See: S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 371.

²¹ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake's Vala or The Four Zoas*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 57.

²² William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 2-26.7 – 27.9; 317-8.

Luvah's speech shows his first attempt at reconciliation between love and sexuality. Lincoln interprets this as love trying to control a desire that cannot be controlled. *Luvah's* response to *Tharmas* ranges from fascination, horror and bondage through to possession.²³ It is not an equal relationship, with Love treating sexuality as subordinate. Love also remains separate to retain control; this is love of sex as an object and play thing. To move forward love needs to let go, surrendering to a higher power.

Unfortunately, to begin a relationship with Jesus *Luvah* can only move beyond himself at a point of despair – hence the words “O Lamb” in the stanza above. In Blake’s analysis, Jesus is the great benefactor, willing to wear *Luvah's* robes of blood such that *Luvah* may be born again.²⁴ Once rejuvenated, he is willing to submit to the divine will of Jesus. Love, though a powerful force, must integrate with the other *Zoas*. *Luvah* needs to merge with *Tharmas*, but this is difficult.

At the next stage there is a heart-led desire to be consumed by sex. The heart becomes subservient to sex, now reflecting the other side of domination – that of subordination. Sex devours love, and love goes willingly. Lincoln highlights the overpowering nature of sexual drive which is alluded to in Blake’s drawings.²⁵ The best example is the bat winged phallus²⁶ that rises from the earth in the dark of night, devouring us and drinking our blood.

²³ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake's Vala or The Four Zoas*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 57.

²⁴ “And the Divine Vision appeared in Luvahs robes of blood.” See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 2-32.14; 321.

²⁵ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake's Vala or The Four Zoas*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 58.

²⁶ Sketch taken from page 26 of *The Four Zoas* from the British Library and reproduced in: Peter Otto, “A Pompous High Priest: Urizen’s Ancient Phallic Religion in the Four Zoas”, *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 35/1 (Summer 2001), 13.

Rodney Baine states that Blake uses this animal as a symbol for “visionless passions”.²⁷ Love in its juvenile form includes misguided worship and surrender to sexuality. This doctrine is revealed pictorially in *The Four Zoas*, with three persons worshipping a gigantic penis in a state of genuflexion.²⁸ It is a statement of immature ‘love’ in a moment within a long story of growth and redemption. It is the position of this thesis, that this stage should not be interpreted as an endpoint in itself. Blake takes us through a phase of “Phallic Religion”²⁹ or Vaginal Worship³⁰ as a step towards mystical consciousness.

A better understanding of love’s development through union with sexuality is provided by the writings of Swedenborg. As mentioned in the introduction, Swedenborg had an immense influence on Blake’s philosophy. Robert Rix explains the positive stage of the first “love of the sex” and trusts that eventually the spiritual urge will balance the union. Rix says:

Rather than the traditional mystic’s solitary forgetting of the body and cultivation of a passivity of mind, the mystical experience for Swedenborg could come about through the physical activity of sex. In *conjugal love*, he maintains that a healthy sexual libido is what sustains holiness in life. Carnal love can be holy because it is the first step on the ladder to the true love of God. The “love of the Sex” may first be “corporeal,” but “as man was born to become spiritual” it also becomes spiritual...Access to the divine state of the human through *conjugal love* lies not only in the unification of minds but also “in the organs consecrated to generation.”³¹

Rix is emphasising trust and that the spiritual aspects of being will arrive in its own time. It is much like faithfully allowing an adolescent to work through their new found heart and

²⁷ Rodney M. Baine and Mary R. Baine, “Blake’s Other Tigers, and ‘The Tyger’,” *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 15/4, Nineteenth Century, (Autumn, 1975), 576.

²⁸ Picture from page 88 of *The Four Zoas*, displayed in Peter Otto, “A Pompous High Priest: Urizen’s Ancient Phallic Religion in the Four Zoas”, *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 35/1 (Summer 2001), 15.

²⁹ Peter Otto, “A Pompous High Priest: Urizen’s Ancient Phallic Religion in the Four Zoas”, *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 35/1 (Summer 2001), 22.

³⁰ See chapter one, where Blake equates his wife’s vagina to an altar in the church.

³¹ Robert Rix, “William Blake and the Radical Swedenborgians”, *Esoterica, Art and Imagination* V (2003), 117.

sexuality. It's scary and potentially scarring! Yet Blake is urging us to trust. Using Blake's allegorical model, this would imply that the fourth component, *Urthona*, the mystical heavenly aspects - will join the fusion with *Luvah* at a later time. For the moment, without feelings from the generative organs, love cannot deliver us to the divine state. Love and sex will eventually marry in a healthy fusion but require help.

For Blake, the catalyst finally allowing the fusion is Jesus as Mercurius. In *Milton*, the poet as adept transforms through this exact process. For this, Hagstrum explains, "Christ expectedly materialises in order to bless the new Milton to loving tenderness and sexual grace".³² From here Milton can enter *Beulah*, which is a state of mind just below Eternity. In Milton we find the lines:

These are the Sexual Garments, the Abomination of Desolation
Hiding the Human lineaments as with an Ark & Curtains
Which Jesus rent: & now shall wholly purge away with Fire
Till Generation is swallowd up in Regeneration.³³

Blake's Christ now directs sexual desire and love towards healing and regeneration. Love and sex combined is a new kind of force – a new kind of love. The fused energies are less intense than before; and certainly, his love in its new form is cooler. This point is shown in *William Bond*, where, "I thought Love livd in the hot sun shine / But O he lives in the Moony light"³⁴ Perhaps this can be understood from Blake's alchemical perspective as sexual desire (*Tharmas*) comes from water and love (*Luvah*) from fire. Yet, strangely, the water does not completely put the fire out; instead, making it more manageable and

³² Jean Hagstrum, *The Romantic Body: Love Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 126.

³³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 41.25-28; 143.

³⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *William Bond* 45 & 46; 497.

directed towards Blake's mystical experience of Eternity. In this fusion, it seems that Blake has returned to a more tactile and hence energetic paradigm, better described in the next chapter as 'psychophysical energies'. Now that *Tharmas* has merged with *Luvah*, *Tharmas* is ready to merge with the mind of *Urizen*.³⁵

So why does Blake want to integrate love with sexual feeling? Blake wants the aspirant to move towards mystical vision through integrating all the *Zoas*, rather than love as an ideal in itself. Blake does not want *Luvah* alone to have supreme authority. Love must join with the other *Zoas* before the aspirant's authority and entry to Blake's 'Brotherhood' is achieved. Love alone makes mistakes. Love can be besotted by a feeling, person or organisation. The Church of Blake's time is likely to have prioritised love. Nicholas Hudson says of that time that there was a "...conviction in the importance of love as the foundation of Christian virtue."³⁶ Blake wants us to acquire mystical vision, which obligates integrating all the *Zoas*. This mystical vision then creates true authority. To this point and in support of Blake, Damon says mysticism, "...must have authority over theory. More than that, Mysticism is the source itself of every creed."³⁷

Mantak Chia defines a pathway for love and sex in the mystical journey

Chia articulates the stages of the heart and its merging with sexuality with clear internal alchemical formulas. To introduce this section, the author will provide an overview of the

³⁵ "When Urizen gave the horses of Light into the hands of Luvah." See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 4.50.30; 334.

³⁶ Nicholas Hudson, *Samuel Johnson and Eighteenth-Century Thought*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 214.

³⁷ Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 2.

areas to be examined before proceeding with the analysis on how and why sexual feelings are used in this merging. The implications on outward sexual behaviour and self-reliance will also again be determined.

In Chia's basic practices, his first objective is to purify the heart of negativity. Then he brings sexual feelings, both un-aroused and orgasmic, into the heart. This amplifies love and allegedly helps release the spirit. In the next level of *Fusion of the Five Elements*,³⁸ Chia purifies the heart further. All the fire energies gather from the body and collect in the heart. After that there is a heart and sexualised connection made to the 'inner child'. In the second *Fusion* practice, love and sexual feelings combine to create 'compassion'. In a higher practice called *Kan and Li* (fire from the heart and water from the kidneys couple with sexual desire) the sexualised methodology is taken further with an 'ongoing coupling' or "self intercourse" process.³⁹

Chia aligns his theories on combining love and sex to Traditional Chinese Medicine and Taoism. For all, the heart seats the element fire, and includes varied emotions classified *yin* and *yang*. *Yin* is positive, female, soft and usually pleasant. *Yang* is negative, male, hard and often unpleasant. The negative emotions include hate, cruelty, impatience and arrogance while the positive ones are love, joy, happiness and respect. The *shen* or spirit also resides in the heart⁴⁰ and, according to Chia, is the component of mind that can leave the body through meditation to explore the phenomenal world.⁴¹ The heart is the centre and

³⁸ Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 38.

³⁹ Mantak Chia, *Greater Kan and Li: Gathering the Cosmic Light*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 21.

⁴⁰ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 399.

⁴¹ Mantak Chia, *Iron Shirt Chi Kung I*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1986), 21

collection point of the thorax, the location of the middle *tan tien* and second component of the tripartite model.⁴²

Before combining love and sexual feelings, Chia asks his students to clear the heart of negativity, because sexual feelings amplify all emotions of the heart, not just the positive ones.⁴³ In Chia's *Healing Sounds*, breath and movement techniques identify and dispel negative emotions as a sensation or energy. The technique for the heart is the *Heart Healing Sound*, and once it is cleared of negativity, combining sexual and heart feelings begins via Chia's basic sexual practices of *Testicular* (including *Ovarian*) *Breathing* and *Orgasmic Upward Draw*. In the *Testicular* and *Ovarian Breathing*, cool un-aroused sexual feelings soak the heart and mix with love feelings. The sexual *chi* is *yin* or cool, originating from the water element. Chia explains why he combines love with sex, saying to the former, "... it will stay in you longer."⁴⁴ He implies that love is fleeting in its isolated state. He wants the adept to have the essence of love more often. The second consequence is the combination creates something new. Chia says, "When you combine opening your heart and activating sexual energy... You will notice the change in both the quality and quantity and will have a sense of peacefulness, delight, security and comfort."⁴⁵ Here Chia is showing that combining the two energies creates a new energy that has similarities to the original energy but is somehow different. His words are hinting that this new energy creates a quiet self-containing and self-pleasing inwardness. Chia comments further on this

⁴² A collection point is the place where all the energies of that particular element are collected and purified. See: Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 38.

⁴³ See chapter one of this thesis & Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 378 & Mantak Chia & D. Abrams Arava, *The Multi Orgasmic Man*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 46.

⁴⁴ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 109.

⁴⁵ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 381.

practice, stating that the aspirant appreciates a higher form of self-love – certainly beyond egotism and narcissism.⁴⁶ Previewing the next level of *Fusion* practice, this merging may be the early awakening of ‘compassion’, which will be discussed in the ensuing pages.

The next level of practice takes orgasm to the heart and is called the *Orgasmic Upward Draw*. It can be practiced either solo or with a partner and, in men, is separate from ejaculation.⁴⁷ In chapter one, ‘orgasm’ was described as a spontaneous pulsation or vibration⁴⁸ Orgasm energy originates in the genitals and the pleasurable sexual feelings arising with orgasm open the heart and release subtle tension blocking its optimum energetic function. Chia says adding sexual energy to the heart “dissolves knots inside.”⁴⁹ Knots and tension in meditation pulls the mind back to the perceived discomfort in the body. By dissolving them, the body, from a phenomenological or experiential perspective, can disappear, letting the mind be free and have awareness outside the body. Sandra Stahlman supports this perspective in her commentary on William James’ work on mysticism and states:

As awareness increases to include more external and internal information, a sense of self, a boundary between self and environment, expands, and seems to dissipate. The experience is one of unity with information formerly defined as non-self. This expansion of the self, often referred to as loss of self...⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Mantak Chia & D. Abrams Arava, *The Multi Orgasmic Man*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 47.

⁴⁷ The *Orgasmic Upward Draw* is also known as the *Big Draw*. See: Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 129.

⁴⁸ Mantak Chia, *Healing Love through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 1986), 40.

⁴⁹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 357.

⁵⁰ Sandra Stahlman, “Commentary on William James’ ‘The Varieties of Religious Experience’ & ‘A Suggestion about Mysticism’,” 1992, Viewed on line July 2008, <http://sandra.stahlman.com/james.html>.

By analysing the practical methods this thesis is able to provide a better understanding of what mystical consciousness involves. However, when analysing Chia the term ‘spirit’ confronts us. It has been the modern trend highlighted by Paul McDonald to debunk terms such as ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’ because of the obscurity of meaning, and move towards the term ‘mind’ to separate them from religious terminology.⁵¹ Nevertheless, some understanding of the term is important to understand Chia’s perspective on the heart and mystical consciousness. From Chia’s texts, the mind’s ability to go beyond the body correlates to awakening the spirit.⁵² Since he postulates that the spirit resides in the heart, for the self to go beyond the body to mystical consciousness, it must happen through the heart.

Chia’s next level of alchemical practice is *the Fusion of the Five Elements*. As stated in the first chapter, the Fusion practice is intimately associated with the *Ba Gua* symbol. Here, all the elemental energies gather to form one elemental and purified feeling. Thus, all the range of heart emotions gathers into one purified sensation. This also applies to the water element where sexual feelings and water sensations merge and purify. Consequently, the large range of heart emotions cited at the start of this section are reduced to one energy or feeling. Chia then supposes this will reduce outward negative behaviour because the energetic alchemical system is the best medium for change. Here I believe Chia is implying that negative inward energies create negative external behaviour and not the other way around. To this point Chia says, “If someone or something triggers in us a response of anger, frustration, sadness or depression, it is simply because we have not prepared

⁵¹ Contemporary psychologists refrain from using the term soul because of its religious connotations replace it with the term ‘mind’. Paul McDonald in his research, states that the soul was replaced with the term ‘mind’ in Descartes attempt to unravel the mind/body problem. This occurred in his book *Meditations*, published in 1641, and can be regarded as a pivotal point in the modern speculation of mind. See: Paul MacDonald, *History of the Concept of Mind, Speculations about Soul, Mind and Spirit from Homer to Hume*, (Ashgate, Aldershot England, 2003), 279.

⁵² Mantak Chia, *Iron Shirt Chi Kung I*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1986), Figure 1.3; 21.

ourselves by transforming our negative energies into positive life force.”⁵³ As stated in the first chapter, this practice only has a remote connection with the accomplished immortals.

In other aspects of the *Fusion* practice, there is a heart and sexualised connection with the inner child dressed in the various colours of the elements.⁵⁴ Chia is not alone in this practice, as Wong translates a similar practice allegedly taught by the immortal Chung Li Chuan.⁵⁵ The *Fusion* practice also connects the five totem animals representing the five elements. Again, this is a radical practice potentially fraught with misinterpretation. *Prima facie*, this inner practice would have outward implications of paedophilia and bestiality. Franco Demasi describes the inner world of the paedophile with, “The paedophile wants to be a boy and to mix with other boys in the world of playfulness and imagination. Just like Peter Pan, he wants to stop time and to realise the myth of eternal youth.”⁵⁶ The mystic it seems, successfully unites to the child within while the paedophile attempts to connect externally. As discussed briefly in chapter one, Chia explains that the successful Taoist can be described as “becoming like a child”⁵⁷ – playful, imaginative and participating in the eternal worlds. Perhaps this practice implies that after the internal mystical union, there is no desire to manifest this in the external world. The mystic’s practice of connecting to the child within may have the potential to contribute to the understanding and healing of paedophilia currently facing many religious and non-religious organisations.

⁵³ Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 84.

⁵⁴ Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), 103-11.

⁵⁵ The meditation includes the nine immortal kings, the queen mother, an old woman, a boy dressed in red and a girl dressed in white. Chung says to, “Feel their bliss and pleasure as they lie with their sexual companion.” See: Eva Wong, (Translator), *The Teachings of Immortals Chung and Lu: The Tao of Health and Longevity and Immortality*, (Boston: Shambala, 2000), 128

⁵⁶ Franco Demasi, “The Paedophile and his Inner World: Theoretical and clinical considerations on the analysis of a patient”, *International Journal Psychoanalysis* 88, (2007), 151.

⁵⁷ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 3.

The next *Fusion* technique is *Creation of Compassion*.⁵⁸ It begins with intermingling heart fire with sexual *chi* and other kidney emotions. Then, the kidney's positive feelings, including sexual *chi* and gentleness, mix with the heart's virtues - along with the virtues of the other positive emotions of the liver, spleen and lungs - to create a new emotion of 'compassion'. Compassion in the Taoist system is a different quality from love as it involves fusing all the virtues from all the major solid organs with sexual orgasmic energy.⁵⁹ Compassion is cooler, less fiery, less possessive and more distant than original love. Sexual desire becomes softer and easier to control.⁶⁰ This process of 'return to the pure as it was in the beginning' is a recurring theme in the practice and Chia's cosmological doctrine. It deviates from prioritising one organ, one element or one emotion and replacing it with a fused energy that approaches mystical consciousness. This position is opposite to a purely love or heart-centred approach to mystical consciousness. Of interest is that Chia articulates this as a body experience, not just a story.

Chia continues the sexualised process of ongoing coupling in the journey towards reducing duality and returning to the purity of the One. The coupling of the heart with sexual *chi* goes further with the practices known as *Kan and Li*.⁶¹ A similar practice in other schools of Taoism appears to have the same sexualised method and is called "Copulation of the

⁵⁸ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 111.

⁵⁹ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 111.

⁶⁰ In dual cultivation or sex with a partner, semen retention practices can become difficult with an aroused female partner. Chia states that by opening the heart and mixing this with love, semen retention practices are easier. See: Mantak Chia & Michael Winn, *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*, (New York: Aurora Press, 1984), 102.

⁶¹ Mantak Chia, *Greater Kan and Li: Gathering the Cosmic Light*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 21.

Tiger and the Dragon.”⁶² In the *Kan and Li* practice, two varied experiences couple. The *Kan* includes any smooth, pleasant *yin* feelings, while *Li* represents intense *yang* and unpleasant feelings such as agitation in the heart. These couple with sexual desire and orgasm and the resultant intense bliss releases and purifies the body and mind, removing even more subtle tension. The coupling occurs at various levels corresponding to the three *tan tiens* or each component of the proposed tripartite model.

Chia continues to describe the alchemical processes with sexual metaphors and calls this coupling “self intercourse”.⁶³ Needham is more technical but still acknowledges the sexual imagery used. He says, “The biochemical reaction between the essential enchymoma components was thought of as *conjunctio oppisotorum* and expressed in sexual imagery without reserve.”⁶⁴ If self intercourse is possible at some level, then the outward desires of the flesh and the heart are potentially redundant. To this point, Gulik, a reputable sinologist, quotes a male mystic with, “What need have I of any outer woman? I have an inner woman inside myself.”⁶⁵ Indeed, this could be profoundly revealing; the sexual desires of the flesh and needs of the heart could now be self-fulfilled. A natural drift towards freely chosen chastity is possible yet maintaining sexual and the heart’s desires.

Furthermore, by combining the heart with sex, the ability for negative outside influences to control the individual lessens. According to Chia, the heart is stabilised within the mystic

⁶² Eva Wong, (Translator), *The Teachings of Immortals Chung and Lu: The Tao of Health and Longevity and Immortality*, (Boston: Shambala, 2000), 128

⁶³ See explanation in the introduction and Mantak Chia, *Greater Kan and Li: Gathering the Cosmic Light*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 21.

⁶⁴ The enchymoma is the *chi* or essence that results from the merging. See: Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 66.

⁶⁵ Gulik, R H Van., “*Erotic Colour Prints of the Ming period with an Essay on Sex Life from the Han to the Ching Dynasty BC 206 –AD 1644*,” (Privately Published: Tokyo, 1951), 83.

when it connects to the earth and sexuality. Chia says, “Some religions use this centre (the heart) to enforce the concept of surrender, which they encourage their followers to translate into donations and charity.”⁶⁶ By fusing the heart with other centres, the ability to move the individual off their centre is minimised. The fusion of multiple centres assists with “rooting”⁶⁷, and according to Chia, the adept becomes “more difficult to topple”.⁶⁸ Now Chia offers a further insight into self-determination and independence of the mystic beyond manipulating others. If it is possible to generalise, mystics often create their own authority. Fanning, to this point, says that mystics often challenge non-mystical factions that subscribe to surface interpretation of the scriptures or those emphasising hierarchical authority.⁶⁹

Critical Comparison on ‘Love and Sex Combined’

Both Blake and Chia ascribe the element of fire to the heart. In Blake’s system the emotions of *Luvah* range from love, arrogance and impatience to hatred and rebelliousness. These negative emotions of the heart are very similar to Chia’s system. Both advocate acknowledging and releasing negative feelings. *Orc* and *Tharmas* must rage, with *Orc* specifically focused on war. Negativity in Chia’s system is vented via meditation through the *Healing Sounds*. Both acknowledge the vital role of love from the heart in the journey to mystical consciousness but downgrade it as a priority in itself.

⁶⁶ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 240.

⁶⁷ ‘Rooting’ is a term that Mantak Chia uses to describe the resistance of the adept to being pushed over both physically and emotionally. See: Mantak Chia, *Iron Shirt Chi Kung I*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1986), 157

⁶⁸ Mantak Chia, *Iron Shirt Chi Kung I*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1986), 157.

⁶⁹ Steven Fanning, *Mystics of the Christian Tradition*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 219-20.

Both mystics emphasise the importance of purifying the emotions and energies of the heart. For Blake this includes the phenomena of re-absorbing the emanations (*Luvah* re-absorbing *Orc* and *Vala*), which is similar to the initial stages of *Fusion* where the varied fire emotions and water energies are assimilated, forming a pure elemental force. In this stage, both systems release some sexual feelings. The external correlation of these processes would be the reduced display of negative emotions in outward behaviour. This could be a reason in itself to follow the practices of Blake and Chia.

For both mystics, combining love with sex modifies the overwhelming sexual urge and the hot passionate heart. This is another possible reason for merging the two forces, however, it is not an end in itself. The sexual urge, seemingly uncontrollable, reduces to sexual grace in Blake's system. Chia states that the fusion of love and sex results in a new energy: an energy that is more compassionate, more lasting and much closer to mystical consciousness. Love (as this new energy) is no longer so hot according to Blake – it is more *yin* or cool. For Chia, the theme of love and sex or fire and water carries all the way to direct mystical experience as 'internal coupling' or 'self intercourse'.

Blake and Chia advocate fusing love with sex. Blake is better at describing in behavioural terms the stages of the development of love and love with sex. Chia's alchemical system stays away from allegory and sees the *Fusion* as a part of a series of 'chemical reaction-like' formulas, which involve purifying energies and preparing for mystical experience. Nevertheless, the two different systems carry out the same methods but provide varying perspectives for the same process. In the next chapter, the thesis will look at merging the allegorical (archetypal) with the energetic in analysis of mind. Both practitioners comment

on the mystic's independence from external organisations and people. This is in part due to attaining the desires of the flesh and heart internally. Love and sex are within the aspirant rather than without.

Blake relies on Jesus to allow the difficult merging of love and sex to occur. The reliance on Jesus for transformation is a recurring theme in Blake's alchemical system. In the first chapter, sexuality upgrades from a potentially base function to one where regeneration equates with sexual feelings and Jesus Christ. Now at a heart level, Christ provides sexual grace, facilitating the fusion of sexuality with love. In Chia's system, the *Ba Gua* symbol facilitates the fusing of love with sex. The *Ba Gua* symbol has a connection, albeit minor, to accomplished Taoist immortals.⁷⁰

Internal sexual freedom is a theme for both mystics which transgress boundaries normally set for external society. For Blake the sexual reunion of offspring (emanations) and same sex characters is paramount to mystical union. For Chia, there is exactly the same process, including mystical reunion of the inner child and beasts of the elementals. Yet perhaps Chia's territory is less shocking as the majority of the alchemical work involves non-personalised elemental energies where our societal mind does not make the same association to moral laws. A recurring theme raised by this thesis is that both mystics allow internal sexual freedom and fantasies in their march to mystical consciousness. This implies that by allowing internal sexual freedom in a setting of achieving mystical consciousness, there may be a consequent reduction in aberrant external sexual behaviour.

⁷⁰ Writers such as Stephen Chang equate the accomplishments of Jesus as being equivalent to the Taoist immortals "According to the Bible Jesus retained his physical body after resurrection. He continued to eat, preach, and travel until he was finally lifted. He is the quintessential Taoist adept because he had a *spiritualized* (a Taoist term meaning immortalized), or transformed body." See: Stephen T Chang, *The Great Tao*, (San Francisco: Tao Publishing, 1985), 17.

A further point raised by this comparison is that by fusing the heart with sex there is a grounding of the heart. Mystics have been generalised as being critical of their bureaucratic counterparts. It seems, according to Blake and Chia, that the mystic has more control of their own heart if it merges with their sexual desire than if the heart stood on its own. These mystics are oriented towards self-determination and their own direct experience of the “One”. An external system, they say, which may have an agenda diverging from their goals of direct experience of unity, does not lead their heart. Unraveling similarities and breaking the journey down into the tripartite model has provided this thesis with important insights into the outward consequences of their systems.

Both systems have a pathway to expanded consciousness beyond the physical body through the heart. In his system, Chia calls expanding consciousness ‘the spirit’. In this chapter with Blake, the concept of consciousness leaving the body was only introduced as a possibility. It was mentioned that once *Luvah* is developed, he could then merge with *Urthona* as the heavens later. Both however, rely on sexual feelings impregnating the heart for this to occur. This area will be examined at the end of chapter three.

Blake and Chia find one positive solution to sublimating the sexual urge in the mystical journey. They no longer see the sexual urge and passions of the heart as destructive forces – sexual desire enhances love and love provides sexual grace. They see that there is no need for repression. Love and sex are reconcilable. This reconciliation is the combination of the first two components of the tripartite model.

Chapter 3

Sex and Mind Combined -The final merging of the tripartite and beyond.

Let us start then from an acceptance of Professor Leuba's¹ overwhelming case that the ecstatic unions of St Theresa, Mme Guyon, the Blessed Marguerite Marie and such like can be completely explained in the secular terms of sex hysteria or of narrowed consciousness combined with semi sexual satisfaction or causes of that kind.²

John Butler, 1933

For Blake and Chia combining sexual feelings (first component of the tripartite) with the mind (third component of the tripartite) is vital in realising mystical consciousness. This chapter will analyse how these two mystics understand mind. It will also analyse how and why sexual feelings and the mind merge, along with the stages involved in this process. It will briefly surmise the process beyond forming the tripartite to complete the journey to mystical consciousness. The role of Jesus and the Taoist immortals will be examined in relation to these two thinkers. Brief analysis will be made on the consequences and effects of this merging on external behaviour for the aspirants.

William Blake defines the imagination

The first half of this chapter begins with an overview of Blake's approach to mind, with citing of sources. The focus of this section is to analyse *Urizen* and his stages of integration with sexual feelings in completing the merged tripartite. The analysis will include the merging of the senses and the creative portion of the psyche (*Los*). It will briefly examine the role of sexual desire beyond the tripartite to achieve Blake's Eternity.

¹ James Henry Leuba (1867-1946) was a renowned American psychologist who made major contributions to the psychology of religion. See: Katharine E. McBride, "James Henry Leuba: 1867-1946", *The American Journal of Psychology*, 60/4 (October 1947), 645-646.

² John Francis Butler, "Psychology and the 'Numinous'," *Journal of Religion* 13/4 (October 1933), 400.

Blake's understanding of the mind is chiefly influenced by Plato and Paracelsus.³ Plato devised an alchemical system that included the elements and solar system, prioritised the hard sciences and was oriented to immortality.⁴ Likewise, Paracelsus had his own alchemical system that began with the *Mysterium Magnum* and was reliant on Jesus, the imagination and the spiritual (astral) body.⁵ Blake's approach to mind is an amalgam of concepts from Plato and Paracelsus. Blake believed that mystical consciousness (Eternity) was the ideal state of mind and indicative of a fully developed imagination. The hierarchy of mind states is correlated to Blake's Cosmology. Eternity is equivalent to Paracelsus' *Mysterium Magnum* and is Blake's fourfold vision where all the *Zoas* have merged. It is the origin of Plato's eternal forms. Below this state of eternal forms is Blake's threefold vision, which is *Beulah*.⁶ In *Beulah*, contrary states and sexes exist but are continually uniting in sexual bliss. Twofold vision is where the mind is merging with the other perspectives of the tripartite and includes the heart-held values of *Luvah* and the sexual feelings of *Tharmas*. During this stage, there is merging of the five senses and integrating the creative portion of the psyche called *Los*. *Los* is an emanation of the *Zoa Urthona*, who represents the heavens. Single vision belongs to the brain in its isolated fragmented state.

³ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 322 & 327.

⁴ Plato portrayed the first, the highest and most powerful of the Gods as Jupiter. Jupiter was the 'royal soul' that arose as the first event from the eternal forms. Jupiter (Zeus) is the 'intellect' and master of geometry and science. The soul housed the mind and was illuminated by the Sun but is separate from the inanimate body. Plato claimed the mind should be dominated by intellect and geometry. Plato's alchemical system, if followed could assist the student to experience God and immortality. See: *Introduction to the Philosophy and Writings of Plato*, Translated by William Whiston, Ebook viewed on line September 2008: (Project Gutenberg: 22 November, 2003), 6-22, <http://infomotions.com/etexts/gutenberg/dirs/1/0/2/1/10214/10214-8.htm>

⁵ Paracelsus believed that *Mysterium Magnum* (first matter) or Eternity is understood through the spiritual (astral) body. The soul is the connection between the astral and the physical. The imagination is the expanded aspect of mind that results from the impact of the astral on the soul. Jesus represented the perfect condensation and balance of God, the astral, the worldly soul and the individual physical body into the philosopher's stone. The imagination gathers information from both the intelligence and spiritual worlds. See: Walter Pagel, "Jung's Views on Alchemy", *Isis* 39/1 (May 1948), 47.

⁶ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 41-5.

The latter is the state of *Ulro*, which is the fallen mind and held by the lower form of *Urizen*. Jesus through his unlimited imagination is required at every stage to advance from single to fourfold vision.

Urizen is the *Zoa* representing reason and the scientific mind. *Urizen* owns the chief sense – sight. To Damon, *Urizen* is a pun on “You Reason”.⁷ However, Kathleen Raine postulates another interpretation – that of “Horizon”.⁸ This explains another aspect of *Urizen*, which is to limit humanity’s vision. In this vein, and as shall be discussed in the ensuing pages, *Urizen* maintains a restriction on perceiving the inner voice of conscience. Limitation can be positive in the sense that it needs to occur until all the *Zoas* are ready to realise Eternity, because to glimpse it too soon could lead to madness. In his lower form, he uses thought, intellect and Newtonian science to shape the world. He feels so threatened by alternative perspectives that he sets himself up both as separate and as a God over the other *Zoas*.⁹ Here, Blake’s perspective of the fallen mind is dualistic or fragmented. The fallen mind is separate and attempts to dominate the body, its organs and emotions.

Urizen in his higher form is able to create Eternity through knowledge, laws and boundaries. His transition to his higher self is due to the delight that *Tharmas* brings through sexual feeling. In his highest form he sacrifices himself along with the other *Zoas*, such as *Luvah* and *Tharmas* (our first and second parts of our tripartite model), to the

⁷ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 419.

⁸ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 419.

⁹ “Obey my voice young Demon I am a God from Eternity to Eternity”. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 1- 12.23; 307.

supreme authority of Jesus.¹⁰ According to Myra Glazer, *Urizen* in his higher self helps organise a monistic perspective on existence and realising mystical consciousness.¹¹

The origin of *Urizen* is in part traced to Plato's Jupiter. Jupiter is the strongest of the planetary Gods, whom held the throne and ruled as a tyrant. Like *Urizen* his chief tool is the compass.¹² Further tracing of this character by Damon reveals that Blake also connects *Urizen* to the God of the Old Testament. At times Blake refers to this dark portrayal of the Old Testament God¹³ as *Nobodaddy*.¹⁴ *Nobodaddy* is an internalised, logical, angry, jealous lawmaker who enforces morality. However, Blake, the insightful mystic, uncovers the one who is hidden.

Why art thou silent & invisible
Father of jealousy
Why dost thou hide thyself in clouds
From every searching Eye

Why darkness & obscurity
In all thy words & laws
That none dare eat the fruit but from
The wily serpents jaws¹⁵

In this poem Blake makes loud this silent voice within. He makes conscious this force that initiated the fall from Eden. Majdiak concludes that Blake has pre-empted thinkers such as

¹⁰ "And Urizen arose up...To meet the Lord coming to Judgement". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 9-124.2-3; 393.

¹¹ Myra Glazer, "Why the Sons of God Want Daughters for Men: On William Blake and D. H. Lawrence", in Robert Bertholf and Annette Levitt, *William Blake and the Modern*, (Albany, New York: SUNY, 1982), 171.

¹² S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 226-7 and illustration to *il Penseroso*.

¹³ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 160.

¹⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *To Nobodaddy* 471.

¹⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *To Nobodaddy* 471.

Freud whereby the phenomena of labelling a hidden unconscious force negates its negative power.¹⁶ Furthermore, George and Majdiak interpret the character of *Urizen* as predating Freud's understanding of the superego. Here the hidden part of mind creates moral judgment and negative self dialogue symbolising the darker aspects of the Old Testament Christian God.¹⁷

Urizen in his fallen state attempts to construct a world that does not have the pain and suffering of the organs. The heart, or Blake's *Luvah*, is either passionately in love or full of hate. *Tharmas* is at him too – battling and threatening. Even *Los*, the creative poet, conspires against him.¹⁸ Both the forces against him and potential lack of control frighten *Urizen*. According to Wilkie, *Urizen* creates laws that control the other *Zoas* through oppression.¹⁹ Science is used as the paradigm to negate the authority of the other *Zoas* and their emanations.

According to Blake, however, the fallen world now exists as mere "ratio".²⁰ There is negation of the holiness of the heavens from *Urthona* and the beauty of the earth from

¹⁶ Burying a drive in the unconscious is known as 'repression'.

¹⁷ Diana Hume George, *Blake and Freud*, (London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 156 & Daniel Majdiak and Brian Wilkie, "Blake and Freud: Poetry and Depth Psychology", *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 6/3 (July 1972), 94.

¹⁸ "Thus dividing the powers of Every Warrior / Startled was Los he found his Enemy Urizen now / In his hands. he wonderd that he felt love & not hate". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 90.63-65; 371.

¹⁹ Brian Wilkie and Mary Johnson, *Blake's Four Zoas: The Design of a Dream*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 48.

²⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *There is No Natural Religion (b)* VII; 3.

Tharmas. Life is “the same dull round over again”.²¹ Lincoln also adds there is no eternal source and there is no urge to generate.²²

In this sterile yet controlled world, *Urizen* becomes depressed. Although initially he rejoices in his elevated status as ruler, he has a moment of truth and sees death all around him.²³ *Urizen*’s battle is both within and without. George explains that this is a battle within the psyche of each individual, between the superego as *Urizen* and the passions of *Luvah* and *Tharmas* as the id.²⁴ *Urizen*, as shall be discussed later, could represent the collective of an English society dominated by a conscience representing *Nobodaddy*.

From the abyss he rises – at least for a moment. From a near-death experience he is willing to start anew. This begins with his first taste of sexual feeling. *Urizen*, like *Luvah* in chapter two, is quite besotted by the delightful feelings that come from the “place of seed”.²⁵ *Urizen* says, “Once how I walked from my palace in gardens of delight hovered ... But now my land is darkend & my wise men are departed”.²⁶ But Lincoln explains that this delight quickly turns into fear and guilt, because he knows how easy it is to be

²¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *There is No Natural Religion (b)* VII; 3.

²² Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake’s Vala or The Four Zoas*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 41.

²³ *Urizen*’s depression is shown in the following stanza: “Urizen rose from the bright Feast like a star thro’ the evening sky / Exulting at the voice that call’d him from the Feast of envy / First he beheld the body of Man pale, cold, the horrors of death / Beneath his feet shot thro’ him as he stood in the Human Brain / And all its golden porches grew pale with his sickening light / No more Exulting for he saw Eternal Death beneath / Pale he beheld futurity; pale he beheld the Abyss”. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 2-23.9-15; 313.

²⁴ Diana Hume George, *Blake and Freud*, (London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 156.

²⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 7(a), 84.21; 359.

²⁶ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 5-64.1-8; 343.

overwhelmed by these lovely feelings and lose his dominance of them.²⁷ The reader will remember of this in chapter two where the mind sees sex everywhere. This sexualised vision was of creatures with huge testicles and vaginas. Panic triggers *Urizen* to embark on an even stronger path of tyranny and again he resorts to moral law, separation and the scientific paradigm.

Urizen's tyranny reaches another endpoint, where he and Tharmas are seemingly irreconcilable. *Tharmas* sees mutual death as the only choice.²⁸ From this point of potential death, there is now movement towards Eternal vision and is prompted again by the recurring catalyst and facilitator – Jesus Christ. *Urizen* subverts his authority to the divine will of Jesus as the “Son of Man”.²⁹ *Urizen* begins to see the essence of mysticism as “the infinite and unbounded”, via the mystery of the celestial orbs in *Urthona's* realm.³⁰ He sees the beauty of the Earth through the power of *Tharmas*. He says, “over the joyful Earth and Sea and ascended into the Heavens”.³¹

Ostricker explains that beauty is perceived by the observer as the rising and combining of pleasurable erotic feelings with the brain and the sensed object. A seemingly neutral object with no compulsory associations triggers the pleasurable sexual feelings in the body that make us sense the world as beautiful. In conclusion Ostricker says, “...beauty is an erotic

²⁷ Andrew Lincoln, *Spiritual History: A Reading of William Blake's Vala or The Four Zoas*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 124-5.

²⁸ “And thou O Urizen art falln never to be deliverd / Withhold thy light from me for ever & I will withhold / From thee thy food so shall we cease to be & all our sorrows / End & the Eternal Man no more renew beneath our power”. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 6-69.14-17; 346.

²⁹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 9-122.27; 393.

³⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 9-122.24; 391.

³¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 1-13.21; 308.

activity in which the eye and object join in ‘happy copulation’.”³² Sexual feelings mixing with the mind creates a new vision. Blake emphasises this point with, “Beauty all blushing with desire a Self enjoying wonder”.³³ This is *Urizen* merging with *Tharmas*’ perspective. Now it seems *Urizen* heals with a “lap full of seed, with hand full of generous fire... the seed of Eternal science”. In this latter quote, the first component of the tripartite model is the seed, the second component is the fire and the third is science. It is now ‘Eternal’ science because the scientific approach has merged with sexual feeling and is well on its way to constructing mystical vision.

Why Blake sublimates sexual desire and directs it towards the senses is now clear. It is because it results in realising beauty. With this beauty comes a sense of fulfillment and gratification of sexual desire. Blake is critical of orthodox religion as he supposes that it really should be the Church offering this fulfillment to its followers.³⁴ According to Rix, Blake believed that the Churches of his time were avoiding teaching this important doctrine – that of how to access beauty, happiness and mystical vision.³⁵ Instead, he maintained the Church of his time enforced morality on the people and celibacy on its priests. Consequently, he believed that mystical vision and direct realisation of God is denied. Ostricker summarises Blake’s position succinctly: “Blake is not only attacking the powers of repression, particularly institutionalised religion, which the name of reason and

³² Alicia Ostricker, “Desire Gratified and Ungratified: William Blake and Sexuality,” *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 158.

³³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* (Text Note)1; 823.

³⁴ Blake when he realises that his system can offer mystical vision, celebrates the defeat of the intellect and institutionalised religions depicted in the phrase, “For intellectual War The war of swords departed now / The dark Religions are departed & sweet Science reigns”.³⁴ Here the word ‘sweet’ is used because science has married sexual desire and has now become integrated. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Four Zoas* 9-139.9-10; 407.

³⁵ Robert Rix, *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity*, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 100.

holiness attempt to subdue desire. He is also asserting that gratified desire does what religion *pretends* to do: gives access to vision, the discovery of the infinite.”³⁶

Blake would have us realise that sexual feeling and desire are now being met within. The potential mystic is experiencing ‘gratified desire’ and does not need to meet desire externally. Again, this may have implications to a naturally found celibacy rather than an imposed one. Happiness with recognising beauty and the infinite may do more to encourage moral behaviour than the fear of retribution through the Church or legal system.

Upon analysis Blake has created several stages in the healing and integrating of the mind as *Urizen*. This first included identifying *Urizen* in his fallen world - a world of seeing through science and separation from the body, its organs and desire. However, in this environment *Urizen* becomes depressed but finds some initial relief and delight through sexual feelings. However, these feelings threaten his control so he separates from *Tharmas* and *Luvah*, which are the first two segments of the tripartite. This reaches an extreme or near-death experience. Only from this place is he willing to be reborn, which he does this with the help of Christ. Following this stage there is a balanced integration and perception of beauty.

Urizen is now ready to merge more deeply with the creative portion of the psyche, which is represented by *Los*. *Los* holds the power of *Urthona* as his emanation. The processes that have assisted with the initial integrating of *Urizen* with the creative faculty have previously been alluded to. To reiterate, this section has already shown how *Urizen*, through sexual

³⁶ Alicia Ostricker, “Desire Gratified and Ungratified: William Blake and Sexuality,” *Blake an Illustrated Quarterly* 16/3 (Winter 1982-3): 157.

feelings, has realised the pleasures and beauty of the Earth and began to poetically interpret them. *Urizen* has already been besotted by the mysterious side of *Urthona* in the encircling universe and has submitted to the imaginative power of Jesus. All these facets enable *Urizen* to see the importance of the creative imagination and this merging is marked with the elevation in status (contrary to Plato) of William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Milton and Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400).³⁷ However, the complete merging with *Los* requires the doctrine of the five senses to be completed first, Blake says, “Till a Philosophy of Five Senses was complete / *Urizen* wept & gave it into the hands of Newton & Locke”.³⁸

There are a several more points that need clarifying regarding Blake’s theory of the senses. Like Plato, Blake saw the soul housing the mind. Blake claims that the chief inlets for the soul are the senses.³⁹ He ascribed *Urizen* the sense of sight, *Luvah* smell,⁴⁰ *Tharmas* taste, *Urthona* with hearing, and a later addition, touch as the fifth. First, all the senses need to be enlarged rather than just remain “narrow chinks in his cavern”.⁴¹ Secondly, they need to be turned towards the imagination.⁴² Finally, all the senses need to fuse or merge through sexual feeling in realising Eternity.⁴³ Damon explains this last point by highlighting that the tactile sense is spread all over the body and has the ability to arouse the other senses in

³⁷ *Los*’ purpose is to balance the genius of Bacon, Newton, Locke (*Urizenic* mind) and with the creative poets, Shakespeare, Milton and Chaucer. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 98.9; 257.

³⁸ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Song of Los* 4.16-17; 68.

³⁹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 4, 34.

⁴⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 98:17; 257.

⁴¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 14, 39.

⁴² William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Book of Urizen* 25: 46; 83.

⁴³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Europe a Prophecy* iii 1-5; 60.

the deepest sexual ecstasy.⁴⁴ The doctrine of the five senses is now complete and *Urizen* can merge with the creative faculty (*Los*).

According to Raine, Blake's closest thinker would be Carl Jung (1875-1961).⁴⁵ Jung was interested in alchemy as it provided a holistic, alchemical and archetypal approach to consciousness. Both believed that the purpose of life is to achieve mystical consciousness. For Jung mystical experience was a direct experience of God.⁴⁶ Jung's approach is alchemical as there are components of the psyche that must all be integrated into a whole. Both defined the components through archetypes and stories.⁴⁷ In this chapter it was suggested that Blake's allegories could be applied to the collective. To this point June Singer would agree.⁴⁸ Both mystics acknowledge the energetic aspects but with less of an emphasis. Blake, as discussed in chapter one, acknowledges the energetic aspect to the body and psyche in the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. In chapter two, Blake largely reverted to the allegorical. In this chapter, Blake emphasises the importance of the fifth sense, which is the physico-sexual energy that animates the body and is vital in the march towards mystical consciousness. Jung fused the two aspects and liked to portray the mind

⁴⁴ Blake asks us to release inhibition (the cherub) and to partake in "sensual enjoyment". Then he advises us to cleanse our senses ("doors of perception") and then "everything will appear as infinite". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 14, 39.

⁴⁵ Both thinkers mapped the internal worlds, used symbols and alchemy. See: Kathleen Raine, "C. G. Jung A Debt Acknowledged", in Richard Sugg (Editor), *Jungian Literary Criticism*, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University press, 1992), 167-9.

⁴⁶ Carl Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, Translated by R. F. C. Hull, (Bollingen, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 14.

⁴⁷ Blake stresses the importance of allegory: "Allegory address'd to the Intellectual powers, while it is altogether hidden from the Corporeal Understanding is My Definition of the Most Sublime Poetry". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *To Thomas Butts*: 6 July 1803; 730 & Carl Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, Translated by R. F. C. Hull, (Bollingen, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 14.

⁴⁸ June Singer, *The Unholy Bible: Blake, Jung and the Collective Unconscious*, (Boston: Sigo Press, 1986), xi.

or the psyche as being composed of “psychic energies”.⁴⁹ He also kept it holistic by using the term ‘psychophysical energies’.⁵⁰

Blake describes a path of transforming the destructive archetypes, such as *Urizen* (*Nobodaddy* or the Old testament God), from a tyrannical, moral intellect to one that is self sacrificing and passionate. *Urizen* becomes a ‘team player’ working towards the divine vision. Blake moves us from a fragmented, dualistic existence to an integrated holistic one. From a Freudian perspective, Blake integrates the ego, superego and id. *Urizen* was the destructive superego as the Old Testament God and *Tharmas* was the self-serving materialistic id. The ego moves from *Urizen* as the centre of existence to one which integrates all the *Zoas*. Now, *Urizen* merges with *Los* as *Urthona* in the head, *Luvah* the heart and *Tharmas* the body and sexual drive, all becoming one in a fused tripartite.

Now that the tripartite has been fully formed and fused with sexual energy, entry to *Beulah* is allowed. Damon says, “But for Generated Man to enter Beulah, special gates are required”.⁵¹ The special gates required, as Hagstrum has investigated, are the tripartite fused and sexualised. Hagstrum quotes Blake’s sexualised gates as the, “...‘white brain’, the ‘red hot heart’ and the loins divided into ‘two lovely Heavens’ of milky seed – the testes of course”.⁵² Blake seems clear that now each is sexualised, entry to *Beulah* can

⁴⁹ Walter Shellburne, *Mythos and Logos in the Thought of Carl Jung: The Theory of the Collective Unconscious in Scientific Perspective*, (Albany, New York: SUNY, 1988), 16.

⁵⁰ Walter Shellburne, *Mythos and Logos in the Thought of Carl Jung: The Theory of the Collective Unconscious in Scientific Perspective*, (Albany, New York: SUNY, 1988), 17.

⁵¹ S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 43.

⁵² Jean Hagstrum, *The Romantic Body: Love Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 129. The sexualised tripartite includes the: “Red hot heart”, “white brain” and “ the knot of milky seed into two lovely Heavens”. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton*, 19.56 & 19.55 & 19.60; 113.

occur via any of these gates.⁵³ Yet given Blake's cosmology with the return of the *Zoas* to unity, I also suspect this tripartite would be experienced at times as one gate in progressing to mystical consciousness. Nevertheless, and despite this ambiguity, the tripartite is sexualised as one unit.

Beulah is where vision becomes threefold. It is one step down from a vision of Eternity. *Beulah* is a state of sexual pleasure. Blake uses the metaphor of flowers as described in chapter one to signify this.⁵⁴ As an example of the sexual pleasure in *Beulah*, Blake says, "My golden lips nor took the bar from Enitharmons breast / Among the Flowers of Beulah walkd the Eternal Man & Saw".⁵⁵ Here an immortal partakes in the pleasure of *Los*' emanation. In *Milton*, a river originating in Eden flows down through *Beulah* and is described as "...mild and liquid pearl".⁵⁶ Hagstrum interprets these as sexual juices, which are seminal discharge and maternal lactation.⁵⁷

Beulah is where opposite states can co-exist but still unite in sexual bliss. It is the power of Jesus that creates this state of mind through unlimited imagination allowing contrary states to coexist and then unite.⁵⁸ As Hagstrum explains, it becomes the joyous "sacred rites of

⁵³ This statement is supported by, "Every one is threefold in Head & Heart & Reins, & everyone / Has three Gates into the Three Heavens of Beulah which shine / Translucent in their Foreheads & their Bosoms & their Loins". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 5:7; 98.

⁵⁴ Blake says, "Round Beulah There he reveld in delight among the Flowers". See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 7a-83.11; 358.

⁵⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 7a-83.6 -7; 358.

⁵⁶ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 21:15; 115.

⁵⁷ Jean Hagstrum, *The Romantic Body: Love Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 126.

⁵⁸ Blake describes *Beulah* as: "Beulah a Soft Moony Universe feminine lovely... Eternally. Created by the Lamb of God around". Jesus is the bridge between heaven and earth or the grounded *Zoas* and *Urthona*. It is possible to have the sexual impulse and a body, and at the same time be part of the ever expanding spacious

sexual religion” that Jesus has created in opposition to an Eden founded on guilt.⁵⁹ Lovemaking occurs in this altered state of mind and to this point Blake says, “In Beulah the Female lets down her beautiful tabernacle; Which the Male enters magnificent between her cherubim And becomes one with her.”⁶⁰

The lovemaking goes on to the transforming powers of orgasm. Hagstrum explains that Milton and his contrary emanation can unite after Milton raises his sexual potency by “condensing all his Fibres” so his emanation can orgasm, transform and descend, “as a Moony Ark”⁶¹ – a signifier of *Beulah*.⁶²

In *Beulah*, sexual activity extends to contrary states such as humans and spirits.⁶³ Schuchard says, Blake viewed the “...copulation between angels and humans positively”.⁶⁴ The mind can venture into the heavenly realms of *Urthona* via the spiritual body, such that the spirit and earthly realms as contrary states can also come together. Another way to explain *Beulah* would be to use a cooking or alchemical metaphor over Blake’s sexualised one. In *Beulah* there is a moon-brewed pot of orgiastic bliss as opposites are cooked and

universe. Jesus represents the fully developed imagination and is the antidote to Satan, which in Blake’s system is the opacity to mystical consciousness. See: William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Four Zoas* 1-5:29; 303 & 4:56.19; 338.

⁵⁹ Jean Hagstrum, *The Romantic Body: Love Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 133.

⁶⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 44:34-36; 193.

⁶¹ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Milton* 42:7; 143.

⁶² Jean Hagstrum, *The Romantic Body: Love Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 126.

⁶³ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 69:14-25; 223.

⁶⁴ Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs. Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 276.

eventually transformed. Blake says of this moony broth: “When Souls mingle & join thro all the Fibres of Brotherhood / Can there be any secret joy on Earth greater than this?”⁶⁵

Blake’s system, although complex, begins to simplify the closer we get to mystical consciousness. It becomes easier to understand why he constructs this sexualised process, because according to Damon, it can make each individual’s salvation possible - with the divided parts, “seeking the original Unity of Eternity”.⁶⁶ Thus different contrary states of existence or juxtaposed experiences can unite through an imaginary internalised sexual intercourse, achieved with the poetic imagination and all parts of the human person through the fused tripartite. Eventually the opposites coalesce and the mind enters Blake’s Eternity. This state of mind is the fourfold vision that corresponds to the ‘unity’. Once achieved, Blake’s Eden is experienced on earth as the ‘Brotherhood’.⁶⁷

Blake has entered into a unified state of mind via sexual feelings. He marks his triumph with an illustration of Milton showing a fire charred erect penis with a flaming star of spiritual illumination plunging towards the sole of his foot.⁶⁸ There is also a beautiful picture in Jerusalem of a full sexual embrace of *Albion* (character representing England) with God.⁶⁹ Blake concludes this journey with the following statement from the *Last*

⁶⁵ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Jerusalem* 88.14-15; 246.

⁶⁶ S. Foster Damon, *William Blake His Philosophy and His Symbols*, (Massachusetts, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 151.

⁶⁷ Because Eternity is experienced while alive on this earth, he called this state of mind Eden. Entry to Eden allows the successful mystic to join the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood concerns itself with the welfare of humanity. See: S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 60.

⁶⁸ David Erdman, *The Illuminated Blake: William Blake’s Complete Illuminated Works with a Plate by Plate Commentary*, (New York: Dover, 1992), 248 & Marsha Schuchard, *Why Mrs. Blake Cried: William Blake and The Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision*, (London: Century, 2006), 115.

⁶⁹ David Erdman, *The Illuminated Blake: William Blake’s Complete Illuminated Works with a Plate by Plate Commentary*, (New York: Dover, 1992), *Jerusalem* 99; 378.

Judgment: “Men are admitted to Heaven not because they have curbed and governd their Passions or have No Passions but because they have Cultivated their Understandings. The Treasures of Heaven are not Negations of Passion but Realities of the Intellect from which the Passions Emanate in their Eternal Glory”.⁷⁰ Passion as sexual desire stands hand in hand with the heart and intellect amidst the glory of the universe.

Mantak Chia introduces the monkey and the three minds to Taoist thought

Chia’s concept of the mystic’s mind is complex. By way of introduction Chia establishes his own unique synthesis that is conducive to mystical consciousness. It is a mystical perspective largely based on Taoist alchemical practice and the classic teachings of Traditional Chinese Medicine; however, there are some modifications. Chia introduces the concepts of the ‘monkey mind’ and the ‘three minds’, the latter corresponding to the tripartite model. The former shall be discussed in the ensuing pages; but briefly, the monkey mind is a distracted and unsettled state of the mind. After establishing the three minds, Chia then merges both minds and the senses with the aid of sexual feelings. At the end of this section there will be a brief examination of the role of sexual desire, beyond completing the tripartite, up to forming mystical consciousness.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine consciousness is based on equal contributions from the five solid organs.⁷¹ Right from the start, Chia says, “Mind is too broad a term, as all the organs participate as part of the mind.”⁷² In Traditional Chinese Medicine the heart is the

⁷⁰ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, Edited by David Erdman, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), *Visions of the Last Judgement* 87; 564.

⁷¹ The solid (*zhang*) organs refer to lung, kidney, liver, heart and spleen.

⁷² Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 401-2.

lord and supervises consciousness; the spleen carries the intellect; and the earthly soul (*po*) resides in the lungs. The Taoist understanding of the concept of the soul is different from Plato, and perhaps is more like Aristotle (384 – 322 BCE) and Aquinas.⁷³ The earthly soul is the part of our being that arises from and is given form from the earth.⁷⁴ The kidneys generate willpower and the sexual drive, while the liver holds the ‘ethereal soul’ (*hun*) and controls the unconscious.⁷⁵ All of these components are necessary to develop the spiritual body, which is produced in meditation by allowing the positive organ *chi* to rise up through the crown. The essences from all the organs are then reconstituted to form a spiritual body.⁷⁶ In Chia’s system the spiritual body is the primary vehicle for expanding beyond self and realising a state of unity.

Richard Wilhelm, in his groundbreaking translation of the *Secrets of the Golden Flower*, also attempted to understand why the Taoists use *ching chi* and how it connects with matters of the soul and spiritual body. He explains that with the aid of semen retention and sexual *chi*, the earthly soul would rise and send the intellect into service. The ethereal soul would withdraw its entanglement from worldly life and enhance the cultivation of internal *chi* and development of the spiritual body. The adept’s ego can then withdraw its entanglement from the world, find mystical consciousness, abstain from generative external acts and find “sainthood”.⁷⁷

⁷³ Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 27.

⁷⁴ Leon Hammer, *Dragon Rises Red Bird Flies: Psychology and Chinese Medicine*, (Wellingborough, England: Crucible, 1990), 7.

⁷⁵ Leon Hammer, *Dragon Rises Red Bird Flies: Psychology and Chinese Medicine*, (Wellingborough, England: Crucible, 1990), 7.

⁷⁶ Mantak Chia, *Iron Shirt Chi Kung I*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1986), 22.

⁷⁷ Richard Wilhelm, (Translator), *The Secrets of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 14-6.

The connection between parts of mind and the organs is interdependent and supportive. Leon Hammer, in alignment with Chia, explains that each organ adds its own particular perspective on consciousness to produce a well-balanced interpretation of the phenomenal world via the senses.⁷⁸ Each of the organs produces its own type of *chi* to affect mind. The link between the organs, mind and *chi* is paramount to creating mystical consciousness. To this point Chia explains, “*Chi*, the life-force energy, permeates and activates the body and mind; in fact, it is the bridge between the body and our consciousness.” He goes further to explain, “The mind leads and the Chi follows; the Chi leads and the body follows. Because Chi is at the midpoint between body and mind, directing the Chi enables us to make changes in both body and mind.”⁷⁹

To further complicate understanding of mind, Chia introduces the novel concept of ‘three minds’, a variant of classic Taoist thinking. Certainly the term three *tan tiens* is used but not ‘three minds’. Here Chia is bridging the gap between East and West and attempting to better explain the basis of mystical consciousness. Chia and Taoism are not alone, as other traditions also use a tripartite approach to mind. However, from my investigation - please refer to the introduction - none are similar to Blake’s and Chia’s model. These three minds correspond to the three parts of our tripartite model. The first he calls the lower mind or the ‘awareness mind’. The second he calls the ‘consciousness mind’, while the upper mind,

⁷⁸ Hammer says, “As for the mind, Kidney Yin is the substance, and Kidney Yang the drive for its development. Heart Yin brings that substance into awareness, and Heart Yang gives form to the creative idea. The Pericardium gives a protection and appropriateness, the Small Intestine the clarity, and Metal (lungs) the refreshing and cleansing spirit for renewal inspiration. Wood (liver) gives it the direction and the Spleen feeds it. Water (kidney) delivers the spirit, the racial and individual unconscious from generation to generation. Wood (liver) is the soul spirit which encounters the world during the day and grows through living while at night it ‘stores’ the spirit which comes to us in dreams. Fire (heart) stores and distributes the spirit by day and brings it into awareness. The Earth (spleen) nourishes the incarnate ‘being’ that stores the spirit, and Metal (lungs) renews and refines the spirit with meditation on and through the breath.” Note parentheses in this quote belong to the author. See: Leon Hammer, *Dragon Rises Red Bird Flies: Psychology and Chinese Medicine*, (Wellingborough, England: Crucible, 1990), 90.

⁷⁹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 338-9.

in its more developed state, he calls the ‘observation mind’.⁸⁰ Each of these minds need to be identified, acknowledged and fused to develop the mystic’s mind. Chia calls this *Yi* power and enables the practitioner to take “correct action or non-action”.⁸¹ Needham calls this fusion the “numinous triune natural life endowment”.⁸² All these terms are pointing towards a state of being closer to the mystic’s unity.

In chapter one, it was stated that Chia’s practice fused sexual feeling and each organ’s aspect (emotion or energy) into one essence in the lower *tan tien*. Each organ has something positive to contribute towards an integrated mystical consciousness. At a simple level we can understand the emotional mind as a sort of primordial or visceral awareness of the world. In regards to mystical practice, the lower mind is both the primary site for fusing sexual energy and developing original *chi*. Original *chi* is what needs to become the entirety of consciousness as an experience of the One.

The heart as the second part of the tripartite model and relationship with the heart and spirit was examined in chapter two. In this chapter, it was stated that by opening the region of the heart with the aid of sexual feelings, that the mind with the release of distracting tension, had the potential to go beyond the body. The notion of the mind leaving the body was correlated to the understanding of the term spirit. However, Chia wants to give the heart an even larger role than merely being associated with spirit. This larger role includes the primary position in relating to the world and meditation experience. To this point Chia

⁸⁰ Mantak Chia & Dirk Oellibrandt, *Cosmic Healing II: Taoist Cosmology and Universal Healing Connections*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2001), 199.

⁸¹ Mantak Chia & Dirk Oellibrandt, *Cosmic Healing II: Taoist Cosmology and Universal Healing Connections*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2001), 202.

⁸² Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 26.

says, “The heart is considered the coordinator or ruler of all the various aspects of mind, consciousness and spirit.”⁸³ In this elevated status, Chia calls the middle tripartite the “consciousness mind”.⁸⁴ Traditional Chinese Medicine supports this position of the heart, as it states that the ‘*shen*’ resides in the heart and is translated to both mind and spirit.⁸⁵ Chia cites further evidence from Paul Pearsall’s text, *The Heart’s Code* as evidence for this primary position.⁸⁶ In this text, Pearsall shows that neurotransmitters are found in the heart. He also presents anecdotal case reports of heart transplant patients having accurate memories of the donor’s life independent of any prior knowledge.⁸⁷ There is little doubt that in the mystic’s integrated state, the upper mind is down graded to a lesser role. Wong and Chia are both of the opinion that in mystical consciousness, the thrust of all basic practices is to still or suppress the upper mind.⁸⁸ It is important for the reader to understand that the assignment of this increased function of the heart comes from a perspective of mystic consciousness and an integrated tripartite and not the everyday thinking (intellectual) mind.

The upper mind is located in the head. In its higher form it takes on a quiet observatory role, thus allowing the heart to direct mystical consciousness. It observes and marries the patterns and play of *chi* in the energetic worlds. In its underdeveloped form it is what Chia

⁸³ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 402.

⁸⁴ Mantak Chia & Dirk Oellibrandt, *Cosmic Healing II: Taoist Cosmology and Universal Healing Connections*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2001), 199.

⁸⁵ Giovanni, Maciocia, *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine: A Comprehensive Text for Acupuncturists and Herbalists*, (Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1989), 72-3.

⁸⁶ Mantak Chia & Matt Gluck, “Three Minds into One”, viewed on line August 2008, http://www.universal-tao.com/article/three_minds.html

⁸⁷ Paul Pearsall, *The Heart’s Code: Tapping the Wisdom and Power of Our Heart Energy*, (New York: Broadway Books, 1998), 68 & chapter 4.

⁸⁸ Eva Wong summarises this process as, “Refining the mind, includes stilling the mind, cultivating quietude, minimizing desire, living in simplicity, and becoming uninterested in excitement and sensual stimulation.” See: Eva Wong, *Taoism: A Complete Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Practice of an Ancient Spiritual Tradition*. (Boston: Shambala 1997), 179.

and other Taoists calls the “monkey mind”.⁸⁹ The monkey mind is preoccupied by thoughts and jumps from here to there. Thoughts seem to arise in the head yet they are distracted by objects, emotions, sexual feelings and even its own thought.⁹⁰

Managing the senses is a foundation aspect of training the mind towards achieving mystical consciousness in Taoism and Chia’s system. In chapter twelve of the *Tao de Ching*, Lao Tsu (lived in the fourth century BCE) encourages adepts to refrain from sense stimulation externally and to rely on feelings generated by the lower mind (gut). In the lowest form the senses seek union externally rather than internally. As discussed in chapter one, Chia states that the senses may seek pornographic material, addiction to food, television and gambling. However, the senses in their higher function turn inwards and gain satisfaction from the pleasant *yin* sensations that arise within the mind as *chi* - these *chi* sensations range from sexual feelings, to inner pleasant sounds, tactile sensations and lights. Even taste is included, with the Taoists reveling in the simple taste of saliva being equivalent to the “jade nectar or the water of life”.⁹¹ However, the ultimate sensation is the nothingness of the *Wu Wei* or the Nameless One.

At this point of analysis, Chia’s concept of mind has been broken down into its psychic components. The next course of analysis requires exploring the role of sexual feelings in

⁸⁹ Chia is not original in the use of the term ‘monkey mind’. In Wong’s translation of the teachings of Lu Dong Pin, she says, “The scheming mind is like a monkey”. See Eva Wong, *Taoism: A Complete Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Practice of an Ancient Spiritual Tradition*. (Boston: Shambala 1997), 125.

⁹⁰ From a broader philosophical perspective, it is the stage for a Cartesian theatre, where in its fragmented or dualistic existence it sees itself as the only self. It’s a paradox that in this theatre, in an attempt to find stability, it becomes distracted and the awareness of *chi* in the body stops. Chia says, “...this incessant thinking is called the ‘Monkey Mind’. If we can stop the mind and empty the energy from the brain there will be tremendous energy stored in the body.” The body can then paradoxically disappear in meditation and go beyond self towards mystical consciousness. See: Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 7.

⁹¹ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 160.

developing mystical consciousness. It is apparent in this that Chia articulates a hierarchy of mind states. This section has shown that the least developed state is the monkey mind – located in the head. The next stage involves raising sexual feelings to the head. Next there is the merging and refining of the three minds, with sealing of the senses as the final stage before merging with the universe and consequent achievement of mystical consciousness.

The first stage is taking sexual feelings up to the head and brain. This was discussed in chapter one. The names of the basic practices are *Testicular* and *Ovarian Breathing* and the *Orgasmic Upward Draw*. To still the monkey mind both un-aroused and aroused *ching chi* are directed by the mind up into the brain. At this stage the monkey mind or everyday chatter is reduced to quiet pleasure. Stillness of thought seems to be at a higher level than intellectual thought. In Chia's system the developed mystical brain takes an observing role. The perceptions, pleasurable quiet feelings, are merely observed. Something pleasurable from the body is required to capture the attention of the inner monkey.⁹²

Special mention should be made of the consequences of combining sexual energy with the brain or the monkey mind because this was such a key focus with analysing Blake. Certainly Chia makes little comment on poetry but there is plenty of literature stating that poetry may be a more useful medium to express mystical thought than philosophical writings.⁹³ However, there is little written about how the Taoist practices may produce poetic thought in an adept who undertakes the practices. Since the mystic has now discovered beauty, there will be moments to rejoice. With beauty, rejoice and direct experience of the Nameless One, there may be times when the adept wishes to

⁹² Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 479.

⁹³ John C. H. Wu, "Reviewed work(s): Creativity and Taoism: A Study of Chinese Philosophy, Art, and Poetry by Chang Chung-yuan", *Philosophy East and West*, 13/1 (April 1963), 75.

communicate this through poetry. To this point, Elizabeth Reninger says that despite the Tao being ineffable, "...poetry has always been an important aspect of Taoist practice."⁹⁴

In merging the three minds or the tripartite, the monkey mind submits to the contributions from the organs. Initially the monkey mind was scared of the emotions but now realises how much they can contribute in developing integrated consciousness. The merged mind now perceives the pleasure of sexual feelings and may start to perceive the phenomenal world more poetically. The heart, as the 'lord of consciousness', and sexual *chi* have already merged to create compassion, a sense of spirit and a state closer to the original *chi*. Sexual feelings and *ching chi* enable the merging of the monkey mind and likewise the heart with the first tripartite. As mentioned previously, the fused tripartite is called by Needham the "numinous triune natural life endowment".⁹⁵ Chia says of this fused tripartite: "When the three merge into one they become the 'Yi' power."⁹⁶ The mind as a whole unit (*yi* power) is more powerful than the sum of its parts as in this integrated state it can step up to its higher function of observing and directing the *chi*. Entanglements of parts of the mind are withdrawn momentarily from the material world to focus on mystical experience. Later, Chia will ask the adept to integrate the mind a further time, to merge with the 'universal will' or 'universal mind'.

Before going beyond the tripartite Chia wants the aspirant to refine it a little further. He does this in the higher practice of *Kan and Li* and *Sealing of the Five Senses*. In these

⁹⁴ Elizabeth Reninger, "Taoist Poetry: Simplicity, Paradox, Inspiration", viewed on line August 2008: <http://taoism.about.com/od/poetry/a/poetry.htm>

⁹⁵ Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 26.

⁹⁶ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Healing I: Cosmic Chi Kung*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2001), 31.

practices the lower, middle and upper *tan tiens* (three minds or the tripartite) are refined with orgasmic energy. In other schools on inner alchemy, as outlined by Wong, the accomplished immortals are more involved in this internalised sexual process.⁹⁷ However, Chia keeps the stories of the immortals away from the practice. Chia makes a connection between the ‘heavenly soul’ of the liver and the lower mind, following an intense experience of self intercourse that climaxes as an imagined seeding from the liver (or spleen) into the lower mind (or middle) cauldron.⁹⁸ This internal ‘seeding’, sounding like a strange practice and somewhat difficult to understand, is likely to only be comprehended by actual physical practice. The seeding facilitates a rebirth, which is often experienced as an inner foetus with an ongoing light and vibration within the abdomen in the region of the first tripartite. In this practice there is the birth of the higher self as a result of union from the fragments of our previous divided self. In Chia’s system this inner foetus is an imagined collection of integrated *chi* that gives rise to the spiritual body. The spiritual body is used to explore and merge with the eternal and heavenly states of mind associated with mystical consciousness.⁹⁹ Chia says to this point of rebirth, that there is an,

⁹⁷ In the Taoist system it is the likes of Lu Dong Pin and Chung Li Chuan that have transmitted the teachings which in large part form the basis for many of the Taoist internal alchemical schools. Eva Wong in her translation of their works cites, “the nine immortal kings rising up...feel their bliss and pleasure as they lie with their sexual companion.” Chia does not worship, invoke or pray to these immortals as may occur in other religious systems either within or external to Taoism. See: Eva Wong, *Taoism: A Complete Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Practice of an Ancient Spiritual Tradition*, (Boston: Shambala, 1997), 145 & Eva Wong, (Translator), *The Teachings of Immortals Chung and Lu: The Tao of Health and Longevity and Immortality*, (Boston: Shambala, 2000), 128.

⁹⁸ Mantak Chia, *Greater Kan and Li: Gathering the Cosmic Light*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 21.

⁹⁹ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 13.

“...awakening to what is eternal and enduring”.¹⁰⁰ Needham comments, with a Buddhist perspective, that this inner foetus gives rise to an awakening of the Buddha within.¹⁰¹

In the *Sealing of the Five Senses* there is refining of the upper mind (third part of the tripartite) using orgasmic energy. Here there is sexual coupling inside the head. Furthermore, as in the *Fusion* practice, the senses are turned inward and then sealed.¹⁰² Light, sound, taste, smell and touch are condensed into one sensation. The three *tan tiens* or three minds are also condensed into one sensation. Chia says this practice, “...leads to a connection with our center, where the mind becomes still, and the thoughts rest.”¹⁰³ Chia here is referring to the centre of stillness and rest as an experience of the mystic’s unity.

Once the tripartite is fully refined, the merging with an imagined universe can occur. It is beyond scope of this thesis to outline this stage in detail. However, the reader will see there is ongoing sublimation of sexual desire with repeated couplings of the meditator’s experience of a duality until mystical consciousness is achieved. The tripartite can form a spiritual body and the universe is able to be imagined via astral travel.¹⁰⁴ A duality is set up between the tripartite and the imagined universe. The accumulated sum of the known universe is reduced to one sensation and one space. This duality of the universe and the

¹⁰⁰ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 15.

¹⁰¹ Joseph Needham and Lu Gwei Dien, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part V, Spagyric Discovery and Invention - Physiological Alchemy*, (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1983), 252.

¹⁰² Senses are turned inwardly and collected into the lower mind. See: Mantak Chia, *Fusion of the Five Elements I: Basic and Advanced Meditation for Transforming Negative Emotions*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1989), chapter 3; 67.

¹⁰³ Mantak Chia, *Sealing of the Five Senses: Opening of the Crystal Room*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2005), 3.

¹⁰⁴ Mantak Chia, *Greater Kan and Li: Gathering the Cosmic Light*. (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 8-12.

aspirant is then coupled with the aid of sexual desire.¹⁰⁵ The names of the practices reflect this coupling of the duality, as *Reunion of Heaven and Man*, and *Congress of Heaven and Earth*.¹⁰⁶ Conscious awareness, now, is perceived as infinite and the observer merges with the imagined universe. In some respects death - as death of bodily self and mind and replacement with a universal mind and identity - is experienced and enjoyed.¹⁰⁷ Other perceptions of time (past and future) and the observer and observed can also be coupled until total unity is experienced.

It is apparent to this point of analysis that Chia uses a sexualised process throughout his march to mystical consciousness which includes the entire cycle of sexuality, starting from arousal to intercourse, orgasm and pregnancy. The possible positive outcomes of his system in this section include an integrated mind, a release from the outward yearning of the senses, rebirth and an experience of the unitive state. These could all be seen as valid reasons why Chia uses this sexualised method.

Blake and Chia critically compared

In this section we will compare the two mystic's understanding of mind and how they merge the brain with sexual feeling in forming a merged tripartite. A brief comparison of the processes beyond the tripartite will also be included.

¹⁰⁵ Mantak Chia, *Sealing of the Five Senses: Opening of the Crystal Room*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2005), 38.

¹⁰⁶ Mantak Chia, *Cosmic Fusion: Fusion of the Eight Forces*, (Chiang Mai: Universal Tao Publications, 2002), 16.

¹⁰⁷ Mantak Chia, *Awakening Healing Light of the Tao*, (New York: Healing Tao Books, 1993), 404.

Blake assigns the *Zoa Urizen* to the region of the head and brain. *Urizen* is that faculty of the psyche that manifests thought, deductive reasoning, boundaries and rules. This collection of traits he gathers into an archetype rather than any materialistic brain paradigm. *Urizen* he associates with God of the Old Testament. Subsequent analysts have claimed that Blake, through the character of *Urizen*, has pre-empted Freud's superego. For Chia we have another character – the 'monkey mind', the fallen mind that resides in the head. It is unsettled in nature, has poor concentration and is easily distracted.

How does a monkey compare with *Urizen* in his fallen state? In some respects, *Urizen* is like a monkey – he is continually distracted by the rebellious emotions of *Tharmas*, *Luvah* and their emanations. He is distracted by both their wrath and their beauty. *Urizen* oscillates from wrath to adulation, from tyranny to subversion and is particularly relevant to his interaction with *Tharmas*. *Urizen's* state oscillates from a point of mutual death to sexual delight that is so visceral it sends him into a frenzy.

Perhaps there is a cultural and geographical basis to these mind characters. The *Urizenic* archetype of morality has plagued the western world in the last few centuries. The East, it could be postulated, is hampered by primordial instincts and immediate gratification – the lower beast desires. Susan Langdon, in her tracing of sculptural symbols, claims the monkey is "...to symbolise eroticism, fertility, and regeneration".¹⁰⁸ Other religions in the East have also used the monkey to represent the "inquisitive, restless, and changeable nature of the mind."¹⁰⁹ Using Freud's analysis, one represents the superego while the other

¹⁰⁸ Susan Langdon, "From Monkey to Man: The Evolution of a Geometric Sculptural Type", *American Journal of Archaeology* 94/3 (July 1990), 416.

¹⁰⁹ Gerda Hartmann, "Symbols of the *nidānas* in Tibetan Drawings of the 'Wheel of Life'", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 60/3 (September 1940), 359.

the id. Both are fragments of self and both are limiters of mystical vision. They both represent parts of Freud's divisions of the mind. Nevertheless, despite whatever framework of analysis is used to dissect the fragments, it seems that all parts need to be first identified and then merged in order to access mystical experience. For both mystics the first aspect of mystical experience to be noted may be appreciating beauty and a tendency towards poetic thought.

Both postulate that the senses need to be fused and modified to reach mystical consciousness. In Blake's state of unity all the *Zoas* are fused through the tactile sense of sexual feeling. Chia fuses the senses initially in the lower *tan tien* (first component of the tripartite) in the *Fusion* practice and then in the head in the *Sealing of the Five Senses*. Both practices involve sexual feelings.

Blake and Chia offer similar solutions for the fallen mind. Given both mystic's orientation to mysticism, the highest level of mind for both is a unity. Like their cosmographies, unity tracks backwards to a fragmented state. In regards to mind the everyday fragmented mind has to undergo multiple fusions for this to occur.

For Blake the merging of the archetypal fragments involves *Urizen* and the other three *Zoas* with the aid of Jesus. Each offers a different perspective or awareness of the world. Importantly, *Tharmas* represents the first part of the tripartite model and brings back the perception of 'beauty' through sexual feelings. Creativity and the mystery of the heavens (*Urthona*) are returned via *Los*. *Luvah* represents the second part of the tripartite and brings back love and heart-felt wisdom. Likewise for Chia, the energetic fragments of mind to be

gathered are described in two ways. The first is the five aspects of mind related to the five organs. These all need to fuse to develop mystical consciousness. The other approach of Chia to mind is the tripartite model. In the process of merging the three minds must become one mind. For Blake he fuses the tripartite with sexual feelings. Chia requires merging of the tripartite to develop the spiritual bodies required for the final stages of achieving mystical consciousness. The connection between the tripartite and the spiritual body is not mentioned by Blake. Blake and Chia continue the coupling of contrary states as psychophysical energies, using sexual desire within the imagination beyond forming the tripartite until no duality is experienced. Blake does this via the state of *Beulah*, while Chia does this through the alchemical cauldron.

Chia offers a definable process for an experience of rebirth, with an imagined process of sexualised coupling and seeding. Blake is not so explicit about such a process. However, as discussed in chapter one, through the alchemical process Jesus is able to inject new life to the coupling of opposite states and give rise to a new being.

Our supplementary research question asks why these two mystics sublimate sexual feelings in achieving mystical consciousness. For Blake the fusion of mind and sexual feeling was integral to perceiving beauty and initiating mystical consciousness. For Chia, the process of unifying the mind involves sexual feelings with every stage. For separate phenomenon to unite, sexual feelings must drive the fusion. The 'place of seed', it seems for both mystics, is important for allowing the mind to partake in mystical consciousness. Beyond forming the tripartite, sexual desire continues to fuel the process of ongoing coupling of contrary experience until unity is achieved.

The consequence of this sexualised mystical process for these two mystics is the mind and senses seek delight within. There becomes less need to engage the world to gratify inner desires, and an inner sense of pleasure, beauty and consequent fulfillment is obtained. The process of rebirth creates a new sense of being that arises from an integrated self. Taken further in the processes beyond forming the tripartite, identity is taken to include all. Self concern is no longer limited to the prior personal identity.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to articulate how sexual energies are involved in the mystical experience of these two notable thinkers. It hopes to make a small contribution to the field of mysticism as the essence of major religions by focusing on an essentialism of method. This involves sexual feelings being part of a person's whole make up (sex, heart and brain) in the approach to the higher reality of mystical experience.

In order to achieve this purpose, while remaining within the confines of this thesis, two acknowledged mystics that use sexual feelings in their method were chosen. It was preferable they were of different religions and had an alchemical approach that provided the possibility of comparative analysis.

To move forward on this analysis research questions were proposed. The primary research question addressed by this thesis is how do these mystics sublimate their sexual feelings in their practice in order to achieve mystical consciousness? A supplementary question asked: what are the consequences of the sublimation of sexual feelings. Finally, this thesis addresses a further supplementary question: why do they use sexual feelings?

In answer to the primary research question this thesis shows that for both mystics sexual feelings are a vital ingredient, starting point and catalyst in their constructed alchemical systems. In fact, for these two mystics the stages of sexuality seem to be intertwined with their meditation and journey towards mystical consciousness, giving their alchemical framework its very structure. Chia is certainly the more explicit with this and uses terms

such as *Orgasmic Upward Draw*, self intercourse, seeding and pregnancy to define key stages; whereas Blake seems to have shrouded them in his poetry, and uses terms such as ‘bones’, ‘fibres’, ‘flowers’, ‘commingle’ and ‘*Beulah*’ to represent the sexualised aspects of his system.

For these two mystics the consequence of sublimating sexual feelings is that sexual desire is gratified within the tripartite model. This means that their followers may be less reliant to explore the outside world to meet this desire. To begin with, it is highlighted by both systems that the mystical path was not restricted to celibates alone but exists for couples as well; however, the practice for both mystics has the potential to create a naturally found celibacy. Yet Blake particularly was critical of the Church for imposing this externally. In part, the naturally found celibacy involves separating their internal and external realities. The internal reality had complete sexual freedom within the constraints of the alchemical framework. All feelings and desires of the human person are deemed to have a purpose and are oriented toward mystical experience. Both mystics found a degree of independence from external persons and organisations and instead aligned themselves to something greater. For Chia this was the ‘universal mind’ while for Blake it was the divine will of Jesus or aligning oneself to the ‘Brotherhood’.

The answer to the question as to ‘why’ these mystics use sexual feelings in forming mystical consciousness is evident by analysing their methodology. Throughout this thesis notable achievements of the aspirant have been documented. All of which could be valid reasons for partaking in either Blake’s or Chia’s sexualised methods. Such possible achievements include controlling sexual desire with the avoidance of meeting this desire

externally and in a destructive manner. There is discovery and connection to the inner child and love is both matured and amplified. The mind becomes integrated and connected to something beyond the former self. But beyond this, and more important to Blake, was the achievement of mystical experience. Direct experience is the central truth resulting in the force that would enact healing change in the individual and then cascade through the collective. Direct mystical experience gives the mystic a newly found authority. Perhaps this may have more influence on healing humanity than moral codes alone. According to Blake, enforced morality has the potential to suppress the individual and create fragmentation. He felt that restricting sexual desire negated 'fourfold' vision. Likewise, Chia uses sexual feelings because they are vital at every stage of the alchemical process and are necessary to realise the ultimate goal, which is the unitive state of the Nameless One. Chia provides less comment on society but is focused on the individual as the central unit. If the individual can integrate their fragmented parts and let go of their self identity, then that is enough.

The answers are based on a critical analysis of both mystics work. Sexual feelings were traced through their practices and poetic renderings. Their complex alchemical framework was analysed so as to best articulate how they use sexual feelings. For Blake this was more difficult as this involved analysing and interpreting poetry and relied in part on the work of Blake specialists. With Chia, the major difficulty was in understanding esoteric meditation concepts that are largely understood by experience rather than intellectual comprehension. Furthermore, this is accentuated by little or no secondary sources analysing Chia's works. Many of his processes are described as an actuality rather than an imagined experience

during meditation. This thesis provides an analytical framework through the tripartite structure.

In chapter one an alternative mode of consciousness was introduced by both mystics as important in the march to mystical consciousness. This mode of consciousness is known as energy, chi or 'exalted sensibility'. The important component of sexual feelings from an alchemical perspective is the sexual energy or *ching chi*. For Blake sexual energy creates a 'starting point' with the pleasure that awakens a deep visceral memory of Eternity. Similarly for Chia, sexual energy is closely aligned to the original *chi* that is associated with the unitive state. We see in Blake that sexual energy is the generative force. Blake creates the adage that regeneration must begin with generation. For the fallen man, sexual feeling is what rejuvenates and awakens and thus was associated with Jesus. It provides pleasure, stills the mind and opens the heart. Likewise with Chia, he also introduces the sexual practices at beginner's level. He claims, as discussed in chapter one, to provide the student with a glimpse of the bliss associated with sexual feeling in the meditation practices and consequently motivate them to engage the system. In both mystics, sexual energy is a vital ingredient, catalyst and part of the major elements contributing to the alchemical framework. For Blake, sexual desire was an important part of *Tharmas* which helps set up the first part of the tripartite, nominally designated the loins. Likewise for Chia, sexual energy was important to the formation of the lower *tan tien*.

In the first stage of sexual awakening, Blake was adamant that sexuality needed to be transformed into a positive framework. Sexuality is meant to be soft, joyous and inviting, like a flower, and not self disgusted, rushed and violent. Chia likewise teaches the adept

that sexual feelings are positive and healing. Both mystics engaged in semen retention so as to cultivate sexual feelings.

The stage of merging the heart with sexual feelings was discussed in chapter two. For both mystics the merging with sexual feeling obligated a purified heart in order to allow the merging. Chia comments that sexual feelings, if added to another emotion, will amplify it no matter whether it is positive or negative. Therefore, in order to purify the heart both systems need to vent such feelings as rage and hatred. It was also discussed that to purify the heart, all the fiery emotions had to be gathered and collected. For Blake this was re-absorbing emanations and for Chia this was via *Fusion of the Five Elements*. Both mystics had release of sexual feelings in this process. Both required adding sexual feelings to the heart to awaken the second part of the tripartite model.

The product of a merged pure heart and sexual feeling was something new. For Chia this was a sensation of compassion, which in turn is a closer step to the original *chi* of the unity state and results in a sense of softening and control of the sexual urge. For Blake this was a new and ‘cooler’ type of love. For Chia this merging is vital to forming compassion. Blake also elaborated on taming sexual desire by merging love and sex but it required the magic of Jesus. Jesus as shown here acts as a catalyst for the union of different states.

Chia highlights that sexual energy added to the heart, enables the removal of tension in and around it and the release of the ‘spirit’. As discussed in chapter two and three, the spirit (body) is equated with the mind experiencing leaving the body. Blake also uses the heart to

expand consciousness beyond self, with *Luvah* seeing beyond himself through Jesus and being able to wear the cloak of God.

In chapter three, with the merging of the mind and sexual feelings, the mind has to both broaden and retreat to an equal status with the other components of the tripartite model. From its fragmented state, as either a 'superego' (*Nobodaddy*) or 'id' (monkey) driven mind, there is integration with the other components of the body. This includes creativity (*Urthona* via *Los*), beauty via *Tharmas* and passion and love through *Luvah*. For Chia, this merging includes the energies and mind functions of the other two minds that correspond to the first and second components of the tripartite. It also includes parts of mind attributed to the organs, such as kidneys (will power), lungs (courage and the earthly soul) and liver (kindness and the floating soul).

Both systems are very similar in turning the senses inwards towards the imagination. Interestingly, Blake assigns sexual feeling the tactile sense as it pertains to arousing the whole body. For Chia, the *Sealing of the Five Senses* merged the senses into one with sexual feeling. For both mystics, the pleasures of sexual feelings fuse the fragmented mind and assist in unifying the tripartite model. Thus again sexual feeling acts as a 'catalyst' for fusing different psychophysical energies of the person.

At the end of chapter three, both mystics go beyond the fused tripartite to mystical consciousness by coupling contrary states of experience. For Blake this occurs in *Beulah*, while with Chia this occurs in the alchemical cauldron. In both systems sexual feelings act as a catalyst or glue to allow union of opposite states of existence. Sexual feelings

contribute to coupling, which is the central theme of all of Chia's higher alchemical practices. In this process sexual desire creates an orgasmic feeling that is projected inwardly during meditation. Using an imagined cauldron, opposite states are cooked until they dissolve into one. This coupling seems equivalent to Blake's state of *Beulah*.

The thesis discusses the lack of warrant in making generalisations from this research for all mystics and the use of sexual feelings. The author acknowledges an immediate bias in the selection of the two mystics, as well as in the process of a retrospective comparison.

To conclude, both mystics seem in large part to use sexual feelings as part of an initial tripartite access to mystical consciousness. Both begin with sexual feelings and end with mystical consciousness. They begin from the place of seed and end in Eternity. Chia takes the coupling role of sexual feeling further than Blake, with imagined internal seeding as part of the process of initiating rebirth. Blake is similar in principle here, but perhaps not so explicit in describing this stage. Blake, as discussed in chapter one, does equate the life giving properties of sexual feeling in combination with the power of Jesus in the alchemical process.

The fundamental stages for both mystics use sexual feelings to form a framework to direct the march to mystical consciousness. From sexual feeling, they move to involve the whole person (head, heart and loins) then move to orgasm, to union with the heavenly realm and rebirth. It is as if the process of sexuality is laid over the chaotic process of meditation to give it form and direction. The question remains as to whether this method is applicable to all mystics or just merely a construct in this juxtaposition of the sexual metaphor for these

two. This thesis avoids the argument against constructivism and only concerns itself with two mystics from two varying religions, which are analysed and compared largely for similarities in a retrospective manner. Therefore, no genuine generalisations can be constructed for the mandatory use of sexual feelings in mystical experience. While some implications and ideas arose from the analysis of these thinkers for sexual healing in the context of religious or lay organisations, these ideas have not been critiqued or evaluated in any formal way. In the same way, any generalisation that mystical experience is the essence of the major religions has not been formally addressed. Nevertheless, this thesis hopes it has contributed in some albeit minor way to the ongoing research into the problematic issues of sexuality, in relation to mysticism and religion.

Glossary

Albion (Blake): is the father or ancestor of all mankind which is largely represented by England.

Astral travel (Chia): is an experience during meditation of movement while receiving perceptions of the Universe beyond the physical body. The vehicle through which these perceptions occur is the spiritual body.

Ba Gua (Chia): A Taoist symbol represented as an octagon. It includes the eight different forces which involve the energies of the five elements. It summarises these as the *Tai Chi* (yin and yang intertwining) symbol centrally.

Beulah (Blake): is a state of mind just below Eternity. It is supposedly cool like the moonlight and includes sexual bliss. It is the state where contraries exist but come together in sexual union to prepare a path to Eternity.

Brotherhood (Blake): This is the sense of 'humanity' that arises from an experience of Eternity. Blake saw the Brotherhood as the solution to the problems of the world.

Chi (Chia): *Chi* can be sensed by any of the five senses; it may include inner vibration, light or sound. There are various types of *chi* and those used in this thesis include: original, *ching* (sexual), and elemental.

Ching Chi: see *chi*.

Coupling (Chia): During meditation opposite feeling states are juxtaposed using an internal vibratory, sexual and loving feeling to establish union. It is symbolic of sexual intercourse.

Eden (Blake): is a state of consciousness that exists after experiencing Eternity on earth.

Energy (Blake): For Blake this is 'exalted sensibility' or 'wondrous imaginations'. It is better understood from the quotation: "Energy is the only life and is from the Body and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of energy. Energy is eternal delight".

Energy (Chia): see *chi*.

Emanation (Blake): is the feminine division of the unisexual individual. An emanation exists only in the fallen and divided world. On return to Eternity the emanation will be reabsorbed.

Enitharmon (Blake): is an emanation of *Los*.

Eternity (Blake): is the highest of mental states and equivalent to mystical consciousness. All forms are created from here and yet duality and sexes have become one. It is the Bosom of God.

Exalted sensibility (Blake): see Energy.

Fourfold vision (two fold, three fold and single) (Blake): Blake created a hierarchy of vision (mystical): single vision sees only ratio, twofold sees beauty, threefold is the union of opposites in *Beulah* and fourfold is mystical vision in Eternity.

Golgonooza (Blake): is a state of mind that offers an intermediate place of redemption for the fallen man. This occurs upon union of tripartite, namely head, heart and loins. A pathway involving sexual feelings exists from *Golgonooza* to *Beulah*.

Heart (Chia): is the lord of consciousness and houses the *shen* (see *shen*). It houses the positive emotions of love joy and happiness and the negative emotions of cruelty frustration, impatience and arrogance.

Hun (Chia): This is the heavenly soul that descends from the heavens and resides in the liver.

Immortality (Chia): In Taoist mysticism, it is an experience of the ineffable unity called the 'Nameless One' or the Tao. In myths and legends, immortality exists as a physical or spirit state where consciousness of an individual exists beyond bodily death.

Los (Blake): is 'Sol' spelt backwards and symbolic of the illumination of the sun. He is an emanation of *Urthona*. He represents creativity and imagination. In his highest form he is the prophet of eternity and creator of *Golgonooza*.

Luvah (Blake): is a pun on 'lover'. He is the *Zoa* that embodies hate as well as love and originates from the heart.

Nameless One (Chia): This represents the unitive state of mind corresponding to mystical consciousness.

Mundane Shell (Blake): Is Blake's poetic description of the sky as seen by the fallen mind.

Orc (Blake): Is the lower form of *Luvah* and is an urge to war. *Orc* is the consequence of repressed love.

Orgasm (Chia): In meditation, it is a blissful spontaneous vibration and release. It is sensed in part or whole of the body. The vibration has a sexual feeling by maintaining a connection to the sexual organs.

Po (Chia): The earthly soul that arises from the earth and resides in the lungs.

Seed (Blake): refers to semen.

Shen (Chia): This is a confusing term in Taoism and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). It primarily refers to the spirit that animates the body and mind. The spirit is that part of mind which can leave the body during dreams or meditation. However at rest it resides in the heart. In TCM, it is also translated as mind. In Taoist thought, mind in its highest form is an integration of the three *tan tiens*.

Spectre (Blake): is the destructive aspect of an emanation that sees it self as separate and superior. This occurs primarily through rational thought which has become separated from love and positive sexual feelings.

Spiritual Body (Blake and Chia): For both mystics it has a similar meaning. The spiritual body is a condensation of psychophysical energies from the fused tripartite that can leave the body.

Tan tien (Chia): One of the three power centres or minds located in the body at the level of the head, heart and lower abdomen.

Tao (Chia): In Taoist cosmology, the Tao is closely related to the state of unity.

Tharmas (Blake): is one of Blake's four *Zoas* and represents the body, sexual urge, energy and originates in the loins.

Urthona (Blake): is a pun on 'earth owner'. He is the deepest and mysterious of the *Zoas*. He is the keeper of the gates of heaven and often referred to as 'dark'. *Urthona* bears the capability of creativity through his emanation *Los*.

Ulro (Blake): is the fallen and fragmented mind trapped in the material world. It is characterised with the domination by *Urizen* and caused by the terrors of chastity.

Urizen (Blake): is a pun on 'You Reason' or 'Horizon'. He is a *Zoa* that symbolises reason, creates boundaries and enforces law. Blake also portrays him as an avenging conscience.

Vala (Blake): is the emanation of *Luvah* and represents feminine love and nature.

Wu Wei (Chia): is the vast realm of nothingness that is experienced in high level meditation. It is a closely related state to a state of unity and immortality.

Yi power. (Chia): is the elevated mind power or higher reality of awareness associated with the fused tripartite.

Yin and ***Yang***: (Chia): All phenomena can be described by the duality of *yin* and *yang*. *Yin* is the positive and feminine aspect. *Yang* is the opposite and includes the male and negative aspect.

Zoa (**Blake**): Blake uses this term to describe the four fundamental aspects of the psyche. These include *Urthona*, *Urizen*, *Tharmas* and *Luvah*.

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