

SPACE, SUBJECTIVITY AND LANGUAGE IN
WILLIAM BLAKE'S *JERUSALEM* AND THOMAS DE
QUINCEY'S *CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH*
OPIUM EATER

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Romantic walk is often framed as a process of recovering an essential self, a self that, through this process, is re-aligned with a hierarchical order of nature. Both Jeffery C. Robinson, in his *The Walk*, and Anne D. Wallace, in *Walking, Literature, and English Culture*, explore how Wordsworth defines this model. The Wordsworthian model of walking, Wallace suggests, is an activity that allows one to feel both centered and expanded, connected to a past self, as well as with the nation's or "indeed with the human race's ideal past as he imagines and longs for it" (8). Robinson writes that the walk is "quintessentially a romantic image," an image whose history "tells of the struggle of the modern world to relocate the possibility for happiness irrespective of class, race, or gender, to relocate it in the will of the walker" (6). Robinson further suggests that,

Romanticism from Rousseau on...posits an ahistorical self, a life (buried or at least masked by social rituals) that needs to be recovered. For some the walk occasions this recovery of an essential innocence. Wounded or diseased by modern social life, we can walk our way into health: walking is a form of therapy—more extravagantly, self-realization. (6)

Robin Jarvis, in *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel* extends the Wordsworthian model to include other walkers, and argues that for Romantic pedestrians, "[w]alking affirmed a desired freedom from context, however partial, temporary or illusory that

freedom might be;” Jarvis argues that walkers “were intent upon clearing their own ideological space” (28). For Jarvis, Romantic walkers want to free themselves from the roles dictated by their social backgrounds and by the rules of a hierarchical society.

Both Jarvis and Celeste Langan, in *Romantic Vagrancy*, discuss walking as a way of encountering others; a walker seeks freedom from the constraints of the social order by willingly mixing with other classes. Still, as Langan points out, positing a common ground and a common language through which walkers of different classes might interact denies the importance of social and political systems which shape status, language, and perspectives. Therefore, for Langan, Wordsworth’s taking to the public road in search of Man—an abstracted and apolitical ideal—is an exercise through which Wordsworth seeks to re-define his own ideological position. Wordsworth’s representations of his encounters with others are a way of mapping others in accordance with an abstract system, rather than a representation of various socially and politically constructed epistemologies and ontogenies.

This thesis focuses on William’s Blake’s *Jerusalem* and Thomas De Quincey’s *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. And while many studies of Romantic walkers focus on the lyrical subject walking in the countryside, in this project, I follow two urban Romantic walkers, Blake’s Los and De Quincey’s opium eater, and explore ways in which their walks disrupt stable or idealized conceptions of space and subjectivity. Far from expressing or recovering an essential innocence or ahistorical self, both of these walkers demonstrate that subjectivity is deeply implicated in its social environment. In fact, both *Jerusalem* and *Confessions* illustrate the cycles of violence and addiction that the longing for a recoverable or ideal self perpetuates. Blake’s Los and De Quincey’s

walker do not clear “their own ideological space;” instead, they move within a space that is already determined—by others and through language— and in so moving, they seem to rupture authoritative ideologies even while making use of them.

Furthermore, in both of these texts, subjectivity arises in and through movement. This movement is constrained by others’ claims on language and on space; and in both texts, movement is always a kind of transgression against these claims. It is only through this transgression, however, that walking, and writing becomes a process, not of recovering an essential self, but of displacing dominant ideologies—and, I shall suggest, of disrupting and making use of the practices that re-inscribe these ideologies—so that previously unimagined subjectivities might appear.

As both Blake’s Los and De Quincey’s walker encounter others on their walks, I shall discuss how these encounters might, as Langan suggests, posit a common ground and re-inscribe positions, and, on the other hand, how encounters with others might be mutually transformative. In *Jerusalem*, for example, to encounter the other is a way of inspiring and being inspired; both subjects are transformed in an activity which disrupts clear boundaries between self and other and leaves both subjects radically displaced. And while in *Confessions*, De Quincey dubiously aligns himself—in Wordsworthian fashion—with society’s outcasts, his encounters with prostitutes, wanderers, and the crowd, I shall argue, do indeed re-orient and dis-orient De Quincey’s walk and his writing.

Theoretical Liftings

My reading of these texts uses the theories laid out in Michel de Certeau’s and Henri Lefebvre’s discussions of space and practice. In both theories, space is a

production, and subjectivity does not exist *a priori* but is measured by ways of practicing or making use of determining spatial frameworks.¹ Neither Certeau nor Lefebvre focuses specifically on the development of subjectivity, however; thus I shall also discuss Elizabeth Grosz's articulation of spatial production, as she further explores ways space and subjectivity might interact. Furthermore, Angela Esterhammer's theorization of language offers ways to think of language as an integral part of spatial production. Both Grosz and Esterhammer offer ways of thinking about how subjectivity and space arise together in movement; one term does not precede the other. While this thesis is not a faithful reproduction of any one of these theories, these theorists' discussions certainly help to shape my own reading—my own walk—through these texts. I shall first discuss these theories, followed by a description of how these theories shape my reading of *Jerusalem and Confessions of an English Opium Eater*.

In his *Practice of Everyday Life*, Certeau explores ways in which everyday activity makes use of systems. He argues that “everyday life invents itself in countless ways by *poaching* in countless ways on the property of others” (xii). His study is concerned with the art of everyday life, the ways in which users move within already-defined places, and manipulate and recombine the elements of determining social systems. Certeau articulates this art by distinguishing between proper place and space.

For Certeau, the proper place is one of strategy; strategy is,

¹ Certeau writes that “each individual is a locus in which an incoherent (and often contradictory) plurality of...relational determinants interact;” yet, the focus of his study “concerns modes of operation and schemata of action, and not directly the subjects (or persons) who are their authors and vehicles” (xi). For Lefebvre, the “subject,” (always in quotations), is both a body and a range of practices and experiences, which are possible within a society's space. Furthermore, Lefebvre usually speaks of the subject in terms of a social group to which he or she belongs.

the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a *place* that can be delimited as its *own* and serve as the base from which relations with an *exteriority* composed of targets or threats (customers and competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research, etc.) can be managed. (36)

Proper place is mappable (by its own cartographic rules), regulates the operations within its boundaries (and defines relations with and through an “outside”), and is “a mastery of time through the foundation of an autonomous place” (36) Furthermore, the law of the proper defines knowledge; the proper, for example, has the “ability to transform the uncertainties of history into readable spaces” (36). The proper already wields power, and has the ability to define knowledge; “*a certain power is the precondition of this knowledge* and not merely its effect or attribute. It makes this knowledge possible and at the same time determines its characteristics. It produces itself in and through this knowledge” (36). Moreover, the proper is a storehouse, it hoards information and assets for future plans and raids. Self-mastered, place re-inscribes its own stable position by defining itself in its difference from others, by defining and channeling knowledge, by planning, and through its powers of surveillance. The law of the proper transforms “foreign forces into objects that can be observed and measured, and thus [might] control and ‘include’ them within its scope of vision” (36). This mastery of sight allows proper place foresight, and transforms other forces into readable objects and into subjects of proper place’s law.

Within this place is the space of the tactic, or “practiced place” (117). For Certeau,

The space of the tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and within a terrain imposed on it by the law of a foreign power. It does not have the means to *keep to itself*, at a distance, in a position of withdrawal, foresight, and self-collection: it is a maneuver...within enemy territory...It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of proprietary powers. It poaches in them. It creates surprises in them...It is a guileful ruse. (37)

Lacking an established base, the space of the tactic is one in which movements are dependent upon time, and “cracks” in the systemized place, and the tactician must be on the lookout for “opportunities” which might be made use of. The tactic, for Certeau, is “an art of the weak” (37). The tactician is a trespasser; one whose quick movements elude the proper law’s surveillance and determining measures. Unrecognized, the tactician poaches on proper place, making use of and disrupting its systemized operations. As proper place channels movement, it also channels and defines knowledge and language. Thus, to poach on proper place is to use and re-appropriate knowledge and language. This use and re-appropriation, I shall suggest, ruptures and diffuses the power of place to delimit territories and to define subjects.

Certeau uses the example of walking in the city to articulate further the space of the tactic. Walkers are without a place; however, they make use of the proper, institutional topography of the city. That is, the institutional map, “like a proper name...provides a way of conceiving and constructing space on the basis of a finite

number of stable, isolatable, and interconnected properties” (94). The mapped city, like a proper name, orients, and makes walking possible, even while restricting it. According to the delimited spaces of the city, walkers’ movements might be channeled through paved streets, or around prohibited areas, and these walks might be traced on a map of the city: the walker went north to Highgate, west to Dukes Ave, and so on. Certeau points to what is missed in this re-tracing, “the act itself of passing by” (97). Certeau argues that mapping these walks, and assuming this “tracing” *is* the walk, “causes a way of being in the world to be forgotten” (97).² He also suggests, however, that when practices are unmappable, they are “without rational transparency, they are impossible to administer” (95). They are un-readable practices; thus, they are able to proliferate, invisible to disciplinary systems. These practices, these “indeterminable trajectories” resist the mapping of systematized place, without having recourse to another place or an “outside.”

Certeau further suggests that “space is like the word when it is spoken,” and he draws an analogy between walking in the city and the speech act. He writes that walking has a triple “enunciative” function: it is a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies relations among differentiated positions, that is among pragmatic “contracts” in the form of movements (just as the verbal enunciation is an “allocation,” “posits another

² This means that one reads only the tracings of Los’s and De Quincey’s walks. The experience itself is “forgotten,” in part, insofar as the walk is readable. While much must be forgotten so that experience might be framed into a mapped experience—the text—the text and the reader interact in such a way that the walker’s experience is not revived, but instead a new experience is produced. As both Los’s and De Quincey’s tracings disrupt a clear reading pattern or purpose, their walks disorient learned habits of readings, which orient a search and recovery, and instead enable a new experience. Much of this experience, too, is forgotten, in the mapping of this readerly walk.

opposite” the speaker and puts contracts between interlocutors into action). It thus seems possible to give a preliminary definition of walking as a space of enunciation. (97-8)

In his use of the city, the walker makes a selection; the city as walked is not the “clear text” of the city as planned (93). Similarly, the speaker’s language is a selection, the speaker makes use of, indeed, actualizes possibilities. As the walker or speaker moves, he or she

actualizes some of these possibilities. In that way, he makes them exist as well as emerge. But he also moves them about and invents others, since the crossing, drifting away, or improvisation of walking privilege, transform, or abandon spatial elements. (98)

Thus, the practice of place might reiterate and reinforce the operations of “proper place,” but also might traverse place and language to invent new spaces of enunciation, spaces that are temporary (as walkers are without the storehouses of place, but must best utilize time), but that might open radical possibilities. While spatial practices “secretly structure the determining conditions of social life,” they might also be movements that manipulate or elude the disciplinary practices that re-inscribe the “place” of a disciplinary society (96).

Certeau’s tactical space offers a way of thinking of both walking and writing as a tactical maneuver; it is a way of being in and re-appropriating place and language. Because, as I shall argue, neither De Quincey’s walker nor Blake’s Los stands apart from his surroundings, they are both, tacticians and transgressors through already-appropriated systems. Furthermore, the tactical use of place is an activity, as Certeau suggests, which

eludes the law of the proper; it is unreadable and therefore able to proliferate. Thus, making use of “cracks” in the systemized operations of place might produce deviant threads of activity that further rupture place; this use might, as I shall argue is the case in *Jerusalem*, perpetuate transgressive activities which opens possibilities for re-generation and revolutions.

Henri Lefebvre in his *The Production of Space*, also explores ways in which social space is practiced; his comments elucidate the practice of space theorized by Certeau. Lefebvre argues that space is not an abstract and absolute container, nor is it a transcendental structure, “an a priori realm of consciousness (i.e. of the subject)” (2). He offers a conceptual triad for articulating the production of space: (1) “representations of space”; this is “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers...all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived;” (2) “spatial practice,” which “secretes a society’s space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it;” and (3) “representational space”, which is “space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’... [It is] space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (38-9). For Lefebvre, spatial practice reproduces the conceptualizations of representational space. Spatial practice is similar to, in Certeau’s terms, the “proper” use of “proper space.” Thus, in spatial practice, perceptions and subjects are determined and channeled by conceptualizations that these practices reproduce. Lefebvre’s spatial practice is the “correct” reading of a text; it is the “appropriate” use of language is a

given situation. Lefebvre suggests that spatial practice demonstrates competency; that is, one has learned the rules of the game (has, for example, learned to define the perimeters of a situation), and can take on, to some extent, one's own position within this system. Thus, in spatial practice, the subject's position is already determined by the rules he or she has learned; the subject re-inscribes this position, and these rules, through regulated practice.

Representational space is conceptualized space put "through the bath of madness" (232). While this space, for Lefebvre, tends to be non-verbal, both *Jerusalem* and *Confessions* might be considered representational spaces insofar as they re-appropriate spatial practices, expose the limitations of conceived space, and interrupt the reader's habits of reading. Indeed, Blake demonstrates the limitations of spatial practices which re-produce conceived space, by showing that Albion's channels for proper activity have become so narrowed that any movement is impossible; Albion's conceptualized or proper place tends towards stagnation and death. *Confessions* illustrates an undermining of De Quincey's command of language, or competency at spatial practices, thus complicating the writer's position as a self-possessed commander of linguistic and spatial practices.

Lefebvre's analysis highlights space as a complex building process that cannot be imposed by an outside agent, but that arises through the practices, perceptions, and conceptualizations of a society. Indeed, for Lefebvre, space is a process, a product, and a range of possibilities. Space is produced through the process of the inter-workings and movement of representational spaces, representations of space, and spatial practices, and

it is the range of possible spatial practices and experiences within this process and production.

Neither Blake's Los, nor De Quincey's opium eater walk outside this production; they are interwoven in the patterns of spatial practices. Their building displaces regulated spatial practices, even while depending on them. Furthermore, both walkers reproduce and expose the constructedness of space through which they move, and therefore, expose the limitations and constructedness of concepts and subjects that might define themselves through an abstract and absolute space.

By examining practices of space, Certeau and Lefebvre allow questions about subjectivity to surface: how, for example, does the practice, production, or re-appropriation of space define the boundaries of the practitioner? Elizabeth Grosz, in *Space, Time, and Perversion* writes that,

It is our positioning within space, both perspectival access to space, and also as an object for others in space, that gives the subject a coherent identity and an ability to manipulate things, including its own body parts, in space. However, space does not become comprehensible to the subject by its being the space of movement; rather, it becomes space through movement, and as such, it acquires specific properties from the subject's constitutive functioning within it. (92)

Space exists only as practiced; and space and subjectivities (indeed, for Grosz, bodies) are mutually defining. Grosz suggests that "[h]istorically, it can be argued . . . that as representations of subjectivity changed, so too did representations of space and time. If space is the exteriority of the subject and time its interiority, then the ways this exteriority are theorized will effect notions of space and time" (*S, T, and P* 99). These notions, or

conceptions, of space and time, as formally practiced (Lefebvre's regulated spatial practice) reproduce subjectivities that are, in fact, predetermined by the rules and codes these spatial practices re-inscribe. On the other hand, unregulated practices of space—the “poaching” on and re-appropriation of these conceptions—are activities that continually transform space, so that subjectivities which are not preconceived might appear. Indeed, Lefebvre describes representational space as “directly lived.” That is, representational space is a space of experience without pre-conceptions, in which a subject might appear anew in spaces continually transformed through movement.

Language is an important practice in producing space. That is, one might practice a language that re-inscribes the ordering of Certeau's proper place or Lefebvre's conceptions of space, but one might also poach on language, re-appropriating the system, so that the foundations of place and language are disrupted, making way for further unregulated movements and the appearance of un-preconceived subjectivities. In her work, *The Romantic Performative*, Angela Esterhammer articulates a distinction between two ways of conceiving the speech-act. J.L. Austin's and John R. Searle's theories represent one model. Esterhammer argues that both Austin and Searle distinguish between language that represents and language that communicates. Esterhammer stresses that these theories operate under the assumption that there is a “privileged, indeed idealized” speaker, who is a “fully formed independent responsible agent” who might communicate, from this stable position, clearly formed intentions to a listener (11). The listener's role, then, is to understand the speaker's intentions by discerning what type of speech act the speaker is making, and by being aware of the conventions or rules that

govern this type of speech act. In discerning the proper course, the listener demonstrates, in Lefebvre's terms, a competency in spatial practices.

On the other hand, a Romantic philosophy of language, for Esterhammer, does not distinguish between representation and communication; these things happen together in an utterance. That is, the speaker is not stable and pre-defined with set intentions; instead, the speaker, and, in fact, the world in which the speaker operates, only come into being in the act of utterance. Esterhammer suggests that “a Romantic speech-act theory considers utterance as an event that before all else shapes the subject's consciousness, determines the subject's relationship to the world and the hearer, and changes the environment that surrounds, and includes, the one who speaks” (13). The formation of the speaking subject, then, “takes place through utterances and responses to utterances, generating a continual re-adjustment of the speaker's relation to other speakers, to objects, and to language itself” (20). The subject is shaped—acquires a kind of meaning—within this dialogue, which is an activity of “continual re-adjustment.” When this dialogue ends, however, the subject too passes away. In this way, the space which activity ushers into existence is what Hannah Arendt calls a “space of appearance.” Arendt suggests that the peculiarity of this space is that

It does not survive the actuality of the movement which brought it into being, but disappears not only with the dispersal of men...but with the disappearance or arrest of the activities themselves. Wherever people gather together, it is potentially there, but only potentially, not necessarily, and not forever.

(The Human Condition 199)

If space is always a production, a production that involves subject-formation, then the fully-formed independent speaker does not exist before speaking. Yet a way of practicing language might posit and re-affirm an independent speaker, one who takes up a position as a competent user of language. Esterhammer's first model of language restricts movement and change, as speakers and listeners take up positions and re-iterate the pre-established laws of discourse. On the other hand, to practice dialogue is to be continually re-shaped, and shifted. Dialogue is a movement which re-creates spaces, so that subjects might appear anew in various *spaces* of appearance.

The walkers in *Jerusalem* and *Confessions* are trespassers and poachers; that is, they make use of proper places and positions—Los, of Albion, and De Quincey, of the gentleman's position and of proper "authoritative" writing—to make spaces of appearance possible. Poaching is the art of lifting, misreading, and making use of place; it is also, of course, trespassing on private property. Indeed, in the eighteenth century, poaching in the countryside threatened propertied interest; and while crime in cities was often interpreted as the inevitable outcome of overcrowding and the mixing of different classes, poaching was a rural crime, one that caused great anxiety, as it was not a result of the relatively new arrangement of the city, but a crime perpetrated in the established (and, to some, the supposedly harmonious) social order of the countryside. Furthermore, as a member of the House of the Lords remarked, in 1828, "there could be no doubt that poaching was the initiation for other crime—that it accustomed the lower orders of the people to midnight adventures, and to habits the most remote from regular, and wholesome industry" (qtd. in Payne, par. 2). Like poaching in the countryside, poaching

on place and language is not easily curtailed, and fuels much anxiety.³ Moreover, I shall suggest, poaching on place and on language does incite further activity, further transgressions and digressions, as “foundational” concepts are destabilized, making way for new movements and practices. And, as private property defines boundaries and limits rights of access, the regulation of language and of spatial practices limits one’s range of experience, channeling one’s movements and experiences into readable paths. Both Los’s and De Quincey’s walks are, in a sense, “midnight adventures.” That is, instead of being the readable paths of “wholesome industry,” *Jerusalem* and *Confessions* poach on regulated spatial and linguistic practices to wander into the deviant spatial and linguistic practices of disruptions and digressions, initiating practices that multiply the possible range of experiences.

Plan of this Study

In my reading of *Jerusalem*, I shall explore ways in which Los, Blake’s walker and builder, uses tactics to rupture the proper—and oppressive—place of Albion. Albion is both a place and a subject. As a proper place, Albion is clearly delimited and his operations are strictly regulated; it is a territorialized place that must defend its boundaries and re-inscribe its law. Likewise, as a subject, Albion conceives of himself as clearly defined and inviolable. Throughout *Jerusalem*, Albion and his children re-produce this territorialized place, and re-inscribe the conception of the autonomous subject, or “First Speaker.” This conception is a production, but one that limits severely possibilities for movement, change, and re-generation. Thus, in *Jerusalem*, place and

³ Edmund Burke, for example, argues that the unregulated use of language means that “every thing is to be discussed,” including society’s timeless law, which, for Burke, protects the right to property and sanctions hierarchical authority (*Reflections* 91).

subjects are productions, but Albion and his children reproduce a place, and a subjectivity that is restricted and restrictive, and in Blake's words, petrified.

Los, as a walker, does not have a proper place; he trespasses on Albion. Los poaches on Albion's systematized place, making subversive use of the spatial practices that define the place through which he moves. This disruption of the re-production of Albion's place, I shall suggest, opens new spaces of appearance, spaces in which new subjectivities appear and new storylines unfold. To articulate further Los's movement and Albion's stagnation, I shall also discuss the use of language within *Jerusalem*. Albion utters the pronouncements and mandates of his law, re-iterating his position as sovereign speaker, and re-inscribing the boundaries between himself and others. On the other hand, Los does not posit a stable self; he moves and is moved through dialogue, a dialogue that produces further possibilities for the re-adjustment of spaces and the regeneration of subjectivities.

In *Confessions*, De Quincey is both an Albionic and Losian figure; that is, his practices re-inscribe an authoritative figure, even while problematizing this very authority. In the production of the space of *Confessions*, De Quincey appears as a subject within a digressive—and I shall suggest, transgressive—practice of writing. These appearances do not constitute or suggest the recovery of a self-determined, stable, or essential self; instead, they demonstrate multiple performances and entanglements. I shall argue that while *Confessions* might be fueled by a hopeless longing for an ideal—authoritative, pre-opiate, and pre-textual—self, this ideal self is displaced, indeed dissipated into, a process of multivariate negotiations, performances and appearances.

One important entanglement I shall consider is De Quincey's relationship with language. Insofar as De Quincey writes to re-inscribe his authority, this authority is revealed as a production; it is not apparent. And De Quincey, I shall argue, posits another ideal, inspired by his opium use; this is an ideal harmony, between the mind and the body. As De Quincey asserts direction over his body, and the body of the text, De Quincey falls from this ideal even as he writes. Furthermore, while De Quincey claims a mastery of language, a power of adapting language to his needs, De Quincey, I shall argue, is also adapted by language, as marks on the page further orient writing and disorient a "proper" or causally connected narrative. Yet, it is in these re-orientations, or narrative digressions, in which De Quincey appears as an enmeshed subject. The chapter on *Confessions* is a series of interlocking sections, as it follows De Quincey's interlocking steps in and out of perplexities, which both bind him and allow him to move, which both complicate his authority and further the narrative.

CHAPTER II

TERRITORY AND TRESPASS: REGULATED PRACTICES AND DISRUPTIVE TACTICS IN BLAKE'S *JERUSALEM*

Critics have long found Blake's *Jerusalem* a difficult work to grasp. Robert Southey called it "a perfectly mad poem,"⁴ and Swinburne admitted that "externals of this poem are too incredibly grotesque—the mythological plan too incomparably tortuous—to be fit for any detailed coherence of remark."⁵ Not surprisingly, Blake did not find a wide readership for the poem among his contemporaries. More recent critics have attempted to map *Jerusalem*'s structure, uncovering meanings in its patterns and symbols.⁶ And several contemporary critics, rather than seeking a structural unity or clear authorial intent in the poem, instead focus on some of the productive questions that surface in readings of a poem that so often disrupts linear reading. The reader of *Jerusalem* is confronted with the spectre of one's own reading habits, and is invited to interrogate and re-imagine the foundational frameworks on which such practices are constructed.⁷

⁴ Quoted in Damon, 209

⁵ Quoted in Kiralis, 127

⁶ See, for example, S. Foster Damon's reading of the poem as a "sequence of ideas" (210), Northrup Frye's discussion of Blake's Christian "archetypal vision" (*Fearful Symmetry* 356), Stuart Curran's reading of the poem as seven interconnected structures ("The Structures of *Jerusalem*"), and Karl Kiralis's discussion of the poem's "structure of growth" ("The Theme and Structure of William Blake's *Jerusalem*" 143).

⁷ Andrew M. Cooper's "Blake and Madness: The World Turned Inside Out", Karen Shabetai's "Blake's Antifoundationalist Poetics," and Molly Ann Rothenburg's "Blake Reads 'The Bard': Contextual Displacement and Conditions of Readability in *Jerusalem*," are each works which note how *Jerusalem* disrupts the reading process, and thus challenges the stability of such "foundational" ideas as subjectivity, space, and power.

One contemporary critic, Paul Youngquist, in “Reading the Apocalypse” suggests that *Jerusalem* is a “field of reading, an active process that configures an array of possible relationships” so that “its narrativity does not require a prior structure to legitimate it” (607).⁸ Youngquist contrasts *Jerusalem* as “field of reading” with Aristotle’s notion of a well-ordered plot, in which episodes are causally linked; “Blake gives his poem over to the very vagaries of accident that Aristotle condemns,” and this opens “an array of possible narrative trajectories” for—and produced by—the reader (614). Indeed, *Jerusalem* might be read, to some extent, as a Choose Your Own Adventure novel; even while the conscientious—and tireless—reader might begin with Plate 1 and read through to Plate 100, such a variety of stories, characters, and contexts appear, disappear, and seem to re-appear slightly (or radically) altered, that in one reading, a certain “narrative trajectory” is followed, even while other possible paths are left temporarily unexplored.

My own reading of *Jerusalem* is of course, but one trajectory. I shall explore some ways in which *Jerusalem* highlights the making of space; in this text, space does not exist a priori, but is only created through arduous effort. This exertion is apparent for both the reader and in the labors of Los, Blake’s builder, poet, and walker within *Jerusalem*. Specifically, I shall examine how Los’s movement contrasts with and helps to displace the stable positioning of Albion. Albion is both a place and a subject, and *Jerusalem* is partly a story of Los’s trespass on the increasingly territorialized—or proper place of—Albion. This chapter focuses on ways in which the spatial practices, in Lefebvre’s terms, of Albion and his children, narrow possibilities for speech, subjectivity and movement, and how, by disrupting these practices, Los opens places for discourse,

⁸ For Youngquist, both the poem and the reader are “constructs [that] emerge with reading itself,” so that the text as a “field of reading” differs from the prior subject inherent in reader-response criticism (608).

plurality, and resistance. Because Los's Jerusalem is a city built over and within the chartered city of London, I shall also explore how Los's transgression opens the city of London to new futures, un-prescribed possibilities.

It is appropriate, then, to discuss briefly what freedoms of speech and movement are at stake in Blake's *Jerusalem*, or for Los, as a trespasser or disrupter of proper place. Indeed, *Jerusalem* was written in an England of increasingly prescribed speech and increasingly parceled lands. For example, The London Corresponding Society (LCS), whose lecturers and publications "spread the message of liberty and equality to many thousands of Londoners" was heavily monitored by the government, several of its leaders were charged with high treason, and the Society was eventually prohibited in 1799 (Inwood 405). William Pitt believed that the LCS was a movement "to overturn government, law, property, security, religion, order, and every thing valuable in this country" (quoted in Inwood, 405). In 1795, Pitt passed the "Two Acts," which forbade unlicensed gatherings of over fifty people, and criminalized criticism of the Crown. Furthermore, Edmund Burke's bestseller, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), warns against the dangerous turbulence concocted by untrustworthy writers, who would speak of the "natural rights" of man. Instead, Burke insists, "it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an entailed inheritance derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity" (33). For Burke, inherited privileges and rights belong to a virtuous order that has made England, and to stray from these principles is to invite disorder and political and social illness to England's borders. And yet, in *Jerusalem*, Albion's illness stems, in part, from the killing of "the Angel of the Tongue" (63:5, E 214), or this stifling of open discourse.

Moreover, Burke's privileged inheritance was entrusted to a decreasing proportion of society. That is, as the population of England increased, its number of propertied individuals decreased. Raymond Williams writes that before the period of parliamentary enclosures which spans from "the second quarter of the eighteenth century to the first quarter of the nineteenth century...[t]he number of landless...was in any event high: in 1690, five landless labourers to every three occupiers, as compared with a proportion of five to two in 1831" (*The Country and the City*, 96-7). That is, the enclosure Acts continued to entrust lands—and the political rights inherent in that ownership—to a minority. Furthermore, the Black Act, enacted in 1723, made it a capital offense to blacken one's face or carry arms while appearing in any enclosed area where animals might be kept. Poaching, trespass, and disguise—for the lower classes, ways of "making do"—thus became capital offenses because they were crimes against property and propertied rights; as E.P. Thompson writes, "[t]he British state, all eighteenth-century legislators agreed, existed to preserve the property and, incidentally, the lives and liberties, of the propertied" (*Whigs and Hunters* 21).

Los's walk through Albion is a transgression against the law of proper—parceled—place. Walking, in *Jerusalem*, is a continual displacement of the ground, and any subjectivity or language that is built on the premise of stable ground is left adrift in this continual movement. This "stable ground," might be read as both physical and ideological. For instance, the propertied individual achieves a standing through his birthright or his acquisition of land. This affords a position of political and public authority; and as Miles Ogborn suggests, it is this "propertied interest" which shapes London's—indeed, England's—improvements and increasing regulations throughout the

eighteenth century (*Spaces of Modernity* 103). The stabilizing, or ownership, of places to define a political subject, when there are so many other subjects to be recognized and heard, is certainly called into question through Blake's art, his re-presentations of the ways in which places and subjectivities unfold.

Albion's Sickness and Subjectivity

Throughout *Jerusalem*, Los, the "Vehicular form of strong Urthona" (53: 1, E 202) walks, while Albion remains stagnant, his feet bound by "black shoes of death" (35(39): 21, E 181). Los's task is "To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal Eyes/ of man" (5: 18-19, E 147). Los wants to restore divine vision, access to ever-present yet shifting possibilities, to the Sons and Daughters of Albion, whose senses have withered under the force of Albion's imperialist vision. This imperialist vision is one that imposes laws that make Los's walks—indeed, any movement across determined borders—a trespass, and denies divine vision's opportunities for re-creation.

Albion's perspective is one of self-interest and accumulation, and his power seeks control through regulatory mapping that designates territory and authority. He claims "My mountains are my own, and I will keep them to myself/...the Wolds Plinlimmon & Snowdon/ Are mine. Here I will build my Laws of moral Virtue!/ Humanity shall be no more: but war & pryncedom & victory" (4: 29-32, E 147). Albion's authority is, in fact, force, a weapon to be used against others, as Albion posits Man as "the enemy of man" (4:26, E 147).

For Albion, "the human footstep is a terror" (35 (39): 23, E 181), and an encounter with another threatens his idea of a clearly regulated, stable, and unified

identity. Los's walk through Albion—a gesture of friendship—signals a trespass against the lands and the self to which Albion stakes a claim. Albion refuses Los's gesture; yet

Fearing that Albion should turn his back against the Divine Vision

Los took his globe of fire to search the interiors of Albions

Bosom, in all the terrors of friendship, entering the caves

Of despair & death, to search the tempters out, walking among

Albion's rocks and precipices! caves of solitude and dark despair,

And saw every Minute Particular of Albion degraded and murdered

(45 [31]: 2-7, E 194)

Los's search is not to locate and define Albion as an isolated self; instead, it is a walk to enable the expression of Minute Particulars, which are “running down/ The kennels of the streets & lanes as if they were abhorred” (45 [31]: 17-18, E 194). S. Foster Damon defines minute particulars as “the outward expression in this world of the eternal individualities of all things...they are not negligible aberrations from a Platonic norm, but are highly organized and direct expressions of their eternal and individual existences” (*Blake Dictionary* 280-81). And yet this definition is troubling, as it is Los's movement that frees minute particulars from petrifying into determined contexts. That is, minute particulars seem to be eternal possibilities that might be experienced—and indeed, exist—differently in shifting frames.

Indeed, Albion's tyranny, his stabilizing framework, hardens minute particulars. Thus, Albion's Sons and Daughters, bound by the laws of his fallen vision, are not re-creative, but are bloodthirsty warriors and leaders of sacrificial rights. And while this appetite for violence can be satiated neither by (temporary) victory, nor by the bloodshed

of victims, this perpetual warlike state and these rituals define Albion and his children, as a nation against others. David Erdman claims that, “Albion and his league of robbers deny the legitimacy of revolutionary government, in France and elsewhere,” and “perpetuate war” (*Prophet Against Empire* 467). The expression of minute particulars, and access to divine vision is possible only in movement, and this mobilization might threaten the stability of Albion’s ground. Albion, if he is to be a self-contained identity, and if Albion-as-England is to be an anchored nation, standing against the drift of revolution, then minute particulars must be suppressed.

Albion is covered with “petrific hardness” (33 [37]:1, E 179). He has become “the punisher and judge” speaking from “his secret seat” (28: 4-5, E 174). From his heel grows “a deadly Tree, he nam’d it Moral Virtue, and the Law/ Of God who dwells in Chaos hidden from the human sight” (28: 15-16, E 174). A secret seat defines a private space in contrast to a public space, a chartered place which cannot be transgressed upon. This secrecy affords Albion the authority of a hidden god, whose powers might be felt, but not examined, and whose privileges are certainly not open to question or discussion. Furthermore, Albion’s fallen and petrified vision sees all human forms and even “hills & valleys” as “accursed witnesses of Sin,” as corruptions of a nostalgic ideal (28: 9, E 174). His condemnations extend to his children. Indeed, Albion’s precept that “Man [is] the enemy of man,” reaches even into his own interiors; his body has turned against itself and he “is sick to death” (36 [40]: 12, E 182). His sickness is inevitable, as his regulative mapping of subjectivities and spaces constricts his very blood-flow, the circulation that is the movement of his sons and daughters, and the expression of minute particulars, which might rejuvenate his ailing body and nation. And while Albion’s sons and daughters

might form alliances, each individual's state, for Albion, is defined by its fall from an Edenic ideal, and through its distinction from others.

Territorial Language

As Albion's standing, his understanding of his subjectivity, claims a stable position, so too does his speech. His language—and the language of his sons and daughters—implies a pre-formed subject and world, and these pre-determined elements, when offered no new directions, harden into a cycle of violence. In his assertion that the mountains are his own, and through the laws he issues from his secret seat, Albion demonstrates force, that which “one man alone can exert against his fellow men,” as opposed to power, which is generated through human speech and interaction (Arendt, *Human* 202). Albion assumes the position of an idealized and stable speaker who might utter pronouncements and mandates that need only to be decoded by the listener. This force produces only two options for the listener, to obey or to transgress, and precludes the possibility of dialogue. Dialogue, as a mutual interchange, offers a way for subjects to be re-positioned within the shifting contexts of discussion. Indeed, if subjects only come into being in dialogue, Albion's unilateral force prohibits being.

Within this circumscribed range, Albion's sons' and daughters' movements are both complicitous and transgressive. Albion sees his children as fallen, and he is ashamed. His daughters trespass against his law of chastity; “Their secret gardens were made paths to the traveller,” and their every thought is “Sin and secret appetite” (21: 25, 27, E 166). Albion envisions all of his children “distant from my bosom scourged along the roads” (21: 40, E 166). Albion's paths and roads are defined by his territorializing

law, but these paths cannot be traversed, as movement is prohibited. To obey Albion's law would mean that the sons and daughters must stagnate, must, in fact, become identical to Albion, an exact replication, which is impossible, as Albion's own identity is defined as a self against others.

The limited possibilities for movement under Albion's regime curtail his children's possibilities for speech. Albion's sons, for example,

Take the Two Contraries which are calld Qualities, with which
Every Substance is clothed, they name them Good & Evil
From them they make an Abstract, which is Negation
Not only of the Substance from which it derived
A murderer of its own Body; but also a murderer
Of every Divine Member: it is the Reasoning Power
An abstract objecting power, that Negatives every thing

(10: 8-14, E 152-3)

This appropriation of all things to categories of good and evil makes language into an abstracting force. This stops the circulation of language, in which Minute Particulars surface. The sons' authority to name things as such derives from the privileging of the rational faculties of the subject; this reasoning power seizes control of matter and language. And, as Albion claims certainty of his isolated and pre-established subjectivity, so too, do his sons. And, unlike the dangerous education, which Burke warns against, which threatens stability and unhinges possibilities, the sons' have learned from their father the moral law of territoriality and judgment. Thus, their voices are merely

In contradictory council brooding incessantly.

Neither daring to put in act its council, fearing each-other,
Therefore rejecting Ideas as nothing and holding All Wisdom
To consist in the agreements & disagree[me]nts of Ideas
Plotting to devour Albions Body of Humanity & Love

(70:5-9. E 224)

Rather than a dialogue, the sons' council is a stagnation. The sons do not recognize productive difference, but only the rigid opposition of abstracted Ideas. And although they position themselves against Albion's despotism, they cannot act together, as their court only re-inscribes fear and isolation. The sons themselves are mutual enemies; their attempts to attack Albion's control might only manifest themselves as scattered scabs, bruises, and lacerations.

Albion's daughters likewise speak a static language. Sharing Albion's vision of an idyllic past, the daughters mourn an age "lost for ever" (56: 26, E 206). This mourning both produces an abstract past, and fixates on the distance between this unrecoverable vision and the present. The Daughters chant in "mild melodies" to "rock the Cradle" (56: 22,33, E 206) of the (fallen) present. These songs perpetuate what Blake calls a "vegetative existence," a life bounded by life and death, and they deny the real possibilities of the present. Ronald L. Grimes suggests that "Blake's 'sacred' time is the imaginatively informed present which has pressed upon it the imaginatively appropriated past and the imaginatively envisioned future" ("Time and Space" 65). However, because the daughters' vision of the past is what Mikhail Bakhtin calls the absolute past, a past that is "distanced, finished, and closed like a circle" (*Dialogic* 19), it cannot be imaginatively re-appropriated by the daughters to reform the present.

In fact, this fixation on distance and loss perpetuates violence. The daughters “frown and delight in cruelty, refusing all other joy” (68: 29, E 222). They perform bloody sacrifices “In cruelties of holiness” (68: 59, E 222). While these sacrifices cannot resurrect the holy past, nor bridge the gap of distance, the daughters’ songs do feed and intoxicate vegetative existence; they perpetuate a kind of existence that is measured by loss and craves sacrifice to attenuate this lack. Indeed, the daughters’ unified song or vision itself demands a kind of sacrifice, as any language that claims to speak with absolute authority requires the destruction—or at least suppression—of other languages, songs, and perspectives.

Because Albion positions himself as a distinct and permanent identity, his speech recognizes others under this same conceptualization. For example, he calls out, in mournful anguish, to the character Jerusalem, who is, to Albion, a fallen ideal, a harlot, and a vagrant; “Jerusalem! dissembler Jerusalem! I look into thy bosom:/ I discover thy secret places” (21: 18-19, E 166). By naming Jerusalem a dissembler, Albion voices his belief that Jerusalem is other than what she seems to be. But his address is not a way to make space for Jerusalem’s appearance; instead he positions her as a separate and transgressive being. Moreover, Albion implies that Jerusalem is withholding her essential self, a “real self” that might never again appear. Thus, like the daughter’s chanting, Albion’s call is nostalgic, voicing only his dissatisfaction with the present. Indeed, Albion’s nostalgic call is a retroactive assertion of his own existence in the past, and this assertion solidifies his force and identity in the present.

However, it is important to note that even Albion’s language reaches outside of his jurisdiction. Albion curses Manhood; “May God who dwells in this dark Ulro &

Voidness, vengeance take,/ And draw thee down into this Abyss of sorrow and torture,/ Like me thy Victim. O that Death and Annihilation were the same!” (23: 38-40, E 169). However, he immediately retracts this curse; “What have I said? What have I done? O all-powerful Human Words!” (24: 1, E 169). Albion’s retraction, his fear that words have significance outside the boundaries that he has defined (and that have defined him), suggests that even Albion’s limited practice of language might produce unintentional effects. That is, the subject, even in his prescribed use of speech, cannot always command language. Albion’s panic highlights the power that he fears language might have when not properly constrained.

Making Place

Through their speech and actions, Albion and his children forcefully re-inscribe their positions, including their relations to one another, to the past, and to space. In this section, it is the problem of space I want to follow, as any discussion of “positions’ taken—the positions from which, for example, Albion and his children speak—seems to posit an occupiable space.

If social space might be thought of as, as Lefebvre argues, neither a Cartesian container for thinking things and extended things, nor an abstract and stable system, which a subject might impose on an object, but is instead a process, a production, and a range of possibilities, then it is useful to examine what kinds of possibilities are actualized in Albion’s production of space.

Lefebvre’s “conceptual triad,” of representations of space, spatial practice, and representational spaces, highlights the construction of space and suggests a way to read

Albion's and his children's operations within this dynamic. That is, although they might seem to be immobile, Albion and his sons and daughters are, in fact, practitioners—producers—of space. For Lefebvre, spatial practice is a regulated way of perceiving space; these perceptions are already partly defined by conceived space, as spatial practice is a “correct,” channeled, and pre-defined mode of perception. The ways in which Albion's children practice space, for example, is already informed by their conceptualizations of the past and present; because their perceptions are partly defined by the conception of a nostalgic ideal, the children's spatial practices reproduce a world defined by its distance from this ideal. Furthermore, if conceived space is the regulated mapping of space—the law—then spatial practice “secretes” these laws. These regulated practices carry and re-enforce the law of regulated space. In this way, regulated practices—Albion's sons' language, his daughters' songs—re-inscribe Albion's law and his nostalgia; conceived space is saturated with these practices, and the range of perceived space narrows.

Albion and his sons and daughters reproduce conceptualized space, if representations of space might be thought of as their pre-conceived ideas of identity, the past, and speech. As these practices are “mastered,” perceptions become rigid, and possibilities for the practice of space shrink. This practice perpetuates Blake's vegetative existence, or generative world, in which “[t]he Visions of Eternity, by reason of narrowed perceptions,/ Are become weak Visions of Time and Space, fix'd into furrows of death” (49: 21-22, E 198) and “the gate of the tongue...is closed” (14: 26, E 158).

Albion's territory is Certeau's proper place, in which “the elements taken into consideration are beside one another, each situated in its own “proper” and distinct

location, a location it defines” (117). Albion’s sons and daughters might be read as “elements” of this place, each with an assigned position. However, in this regulated place—the place of shrunken possibilities—the very existence of pathways between these elements becomes problematic. Any movement might destabilize the fixed boundaries of the elements that define proper place. As Albion demonstrates, even the prescribed use of speech might produce something volatile, so that even prescribed movements between elements might force a rupture in assigned positions.

And while the sons and daughters might be, insofar as they re-produce themselves as distinct identities, elements within the proper, they have also been exiled from Albion’s place. Thus, the sons build “Castles in desolated places, and strong Fortifications” (18: 38, E 163). In these secluded places, the sons might construct other proper places, places that are miniatures of and within Albion’s place. However, because the law of proper place prohibits this overlapping, the sons’ replications will not be recognized; they are, indeed, transgressions. Even if the sons build enough fortifications to overtake their father’s place, their transgressions would not signify a revolution; instead, an eviction would only re-inscribe territorialized law.

The Art of Trespass

The law of place does not allow Los to enter into Albion. This law does not allow for the continual conflation and interchange of characters that occurs throughout *Jerusalem*, or for Albion’s organized subjects to be “Mutual each within each others bosoms in Visions of Regeneration” (24: 45, E 170). Territorialized place, in other words, outlaws the movement, inter-animation and dialogue through which divine vision,

or the Minute Particulars, might be experienced. Los is without a proper place, yet he is enmeshed in Albion's territorial world. Therefore, since Los is a walker, he is a trespasser, making use of the systemized operations of place—or regulated spatial practices—to open spaces.

Los's movements crucially depend upon timing and opportunities that arise; he makes use of "cracks" in Albion's system. For example, at the beginning of Jerusalem, Los argues that "Pity must join together those whom wrath has torn in sunder,/ And the Religion of Generation which was meant for the destruction/ Of Jerusalem, become her covering, till the time of the end" (7: 63-65, E 150). That is, Los makes use of the religion of vegetative existence, which yearns for ideals and generates wrath toward the "fallen" world, as a protection against this very wrath. While Los performs his labors, opening spaces for movement, he calls for Jerusalem to take temporary refuge in the acceptable clothing of religion so that she might pass—or rather wait—unharmful.

Los further demonstrates this re-directing of the religion/law of proper place, or spatial practice, when in the midst of his labors, he calls on Albion's daughters to sing their mild melodies that mourn a lost past. Los demands, "Chaunt! revoice!...reecho/ And rock the Cradle while" (56: 29, 32-33, E 206). The daughters' song seems to take on a new context; instead of just operating as a mournful cry, it provides Los cover. The song soothes "Albions Watchman" (56: 32, E 206), and, perhaps, affords Los easier movement; it acts as the covering of night, through which the poacher might move undetected. Furthermore, if each of the daughters' re-echoings is a performance, each re-creation might produce deviant threads. Even regulated spatial practice is a movement, and a possible displacement, which in turn opens new paths for Los's exercise.

Opening spaces jeopardizes Albion's place; this movement destabilizes the alignment of elements and subjects and arouses activity, activity that threatens mass disobedience to Albion's laws, and powerful mobilizations, which might overthrow Albion's claims. Indeed, as Los walks, he invites others to join him; his movements seem to call out others. He builds "in great contendings/ Till his Sons and Daughters came forth from the Furnaces...Then Erin came forth from the Furnaces, & all the Daughters of Beulah/ Came from the Furnaces, by Los's mighty power" (10: 63-64, 11: 8-10, E 154).

Los continually opens spaces throughout *Jerusalem*, yet his actions do not always seem to be Certeau's tactics, insofar as tactics are "tools of the weak." Los is tyrannical; he commands his Spectre to obey his "great will" (10: 36, E 153), and, as the "sole, uncontrolled Lord of the Furnaces...pursued his speech in threatenings loud and fierce" (8: 26, 29, E 151). As Hugh Blumenfeld suggests, Los uses "the rhetoric of domination and power that marks all images of creating space" ("Thunder" 159). Indeed, at times, it seems as if Los operates with the univocal law of proper place. However, the repetition of Los's exertions—his inability to rest—indicates that spaces must be continually recreated; they do not have the fixedness of proper place, nor does Los's work take place in a fixed location. Los's trespass is a confrontation with the laws of place, a confrontation which must recur—must, perhaps, most directly be forced by readers of *Jerusalem*—as even Los's building, and Blake's text might otherwise harden into place.

Opening Spaces and Dialogue

If Los's art is one of violence and transgression, it is also an art of displacement; his movements displace fixed subjectivities, practices, and places to open spaces for regeneration. Two specific instances from the poem demonstrate how the disruption of place opens spaces: through Los's walk through Albion, and in the interaction of Jerusalem and Jesus.

Los himself is displaced; he claims "I am inspired: I act not for myself: for Albion's sake/ I now am what I am: a horror and an astonishment" (8: 17-18, E 151). Los is animated, inspired, set in motion, and he perpetuates this motion. In this way, Los's walk through Albion breathes life into—inspires and displaces—the ailing Albion. Los sees "blue death in Albions feet" (33[37]: 10, E 179), whose body is suffering from his self-imposed restrictions. Los enters "the anteriors of Albions/ Bosom" (45[31]: 3-4, E 194), yet "the interiors of Albions fibres & nerves were hidden/ From Los; astonished he beheld only the petrified surfaces...He seized his Hammer & Tongs, his iron Poker & his Bellows" (46[32]: 4-5, 8, E 195). To enter into and re-animate Albion's fibers, Los must use "kindest violence" (38[44]: 2, E 186) to rupture Albion's stagnation.

Los's encounter with Albion suggests a way of being in dialogue with another that deviates from, for example, the ways in which Albion's sons exchange abstract ideas. The sons' exchange is fruitless, as it is based on and re-inscribes the law of proper place, which defines certain boundaries between self and other. The law that posits distance and separation between its elements does not allow for the surfacing of difference, so that, despite their quarrelling, the sons merely re-iterate their predefined boundaries. Exchange is the mode of discourse in the vegetative world; thus Albion's sons and

daughters “looked on one-another & became what they beheld” (30 [34]: 50, E 177). Instead of exchange, Los’s exertions produce dialogue, a way of passing through language, others, and spaces, which does not posit a stable ground. Los enters Albion, and this trespass confronts and splits the logos that both inscribes and is re-inscribed by Albion. As Los moves through Albion, he further ruptures the law of place, which assigns stable positions through which subjects are defined. Indeed, Los wields tools with which to split Albion’s very fibres. If fibres are opened, this suggests a blood-flow, so that it is not necessarily through the creation of new grounds, but through flows, or in flux, that subjects or “elements” now left adrift might be regenerated.

Los “walks up and down continually/ That not one Moment of Time be lost & every revolution/ he makes permanent” (75: 7-9, E 230). His walks are inspired and inspiring, and problematize the notion of stable boundaries between the mover and the moved, or the moved through. Los’s displacements make the possibility for revolution exist continually, not unchangingly. Through his exertions, flows are unleashed, elements might be rent from their place, and the possibility continually exists for regeneration and the revolutionary experience of Minute Particulars.

Another example of a productive disruption of place involves the interaction between Jerusalem and Jesus. This is a space that emerges out of the movement of *Jerusalem* itself, rather than through the foregrounded labors of Los. It seems to appear out of nowhere; this appearance points to the existence of many possible openings for regeneration, and, perhaps, also displays ways in which these openings might unexpectedly unfold when elements of place are disturbed, as they are in Los’s walk. In this interaction, Jesus recognizes Jerusalem in her “fallen” state and calls to her. “But

Jerusalem faintly saw him” and “Insane she raves upon the winds hoarse, inarticulate” (60: 39, 44, E 210). Jesus’s call opens a space for Jerusalem to become other than what she is called in the vegetative world, a fallen ideal, a harlot. Furthermore, this possibility, that Jerusalem might be recognized as other than what Jesus sees her to be, underlines the artificiality of subjectivity, the ways subjects might be recreated in new contexts and practices.

While Jerusalem is at first, inarticulate, there are moments when she does see and hear Jesus; “oft she saw/ The lineaments Divine & oft the Voice heard” (60: 50-1, E 211). Jerusalem senses traces of other possibilities of becoming. And, although when she speaks, she “blaspheme[s] thy holy name,” Jesus pities her, knowing she is “deluded by the turning mills” of vegetative existence (60: 62-3, E 211). Jesus opens the story of forgiveness between Mary and Joseph for comfort; “Behold Joseph & Mary/ And be comforted” (61: 1-2, E 211). In this rendering of the story, forgiveness is not a thing Joseph grants because he believes Mary a virgin; instead, Mary’s transgression opens the possibility of forgiveness, which otherwise would not exist. In mutual forgiveness, “he Himself may Dwell among You” (61: 26, E 212). Indeed, Mary and Joseph—and Jerusalem—are opened to divine possibilities because they transgress the cruel “Moral Virtues of the/ Heathen,” or Albion’s moral law (61: 19-20, E 212). Furthermore, unlike the story of the past, which Albion’s daughters worship, this story is alive and contemporary; Jerusalem sees and feels Mary. Mary “leaned her side against Jerusalem” (61: 47, E 212). This living story opens a new space and subjectivity for Jerusalem. While Jerusalem is an outcast in the generative world, this story literally casts her in, as a character in dialogue with others. Again, this is an unexpected storyline that emerges

within the movement—the drift—of *Jerusalem*; likewise, Jerusalem herself is adrift, lacking a stable position. This lack, however, is what opens possibilities for the experience of Minute Particulars.

In the vegetative world, Los, too, is without a proper place; he is at a loss in a world that is increasingly fixed and prohibitive. And yet this loss marks an opportunity. Certeau argues, for instance, that

The discourse that makes people believe is the one that takes away what it urges them to believe in, or never delivers what it promises. Far from expressing a void or describing a lack, it creates such. It makes room for a void. In that way, it opens clearings; it “allows” a certain play within a system of defined places. (105-6).

To reframe this in spatial terms, the place that makes Los’s movement possible is also the place that continually frustrates this movement, producing a lack. This lack is not an impasse, but a clearing for re-creation. Unlike the loss of an ideal world, which is mourned by Albion and his children, Los’s loss and frustration perpetuate movement, movement which is not securely channeled, but which is continually disrupted and re-directed. This movement exposes various possibilities for play and dialogues.

As Los moves in space, he also moves within language to ensure its flexibility and possibilities of regeneration; he “built the stubborn structure of the Language, acting against/ Albion’s melancholy, which else must have been a dumb despair” (36[40]: 59-60, E 183). His building unfolds storylines, which, as in the story of Joseph and Mary, are stages and plays, which open dialogues rather than pronouncements or exchanges.

Los is entangled in language as he is in Albion's place. And, again, his language makes use of the prescribed language of Albion and his children, as he makes use of Albion's daughters' song. Yet Los's—and Blake's—building of *Jerusalem* itself is a building that takes place within Albion's frustrated and frustrating language. Molly Rothenberg suggests a way of thinking about how the language of regulated spatial practice and deviant turns in language (Blake's practice) might interact. She argues that the movement of *Jerusalem* is produced through “two modes of language”: referential language and the rhetorical function of language. Referential language, that of Albion's law, of stabilized and assigned meanings, “is absolutely necessary for signification to appear” as it stabilizes meanings, and offers “a definite origin that governs the relationship between sign and referent” (493). However, “we have recourse to the rhetorical function when the ‘original’ authority appears as textually or rhetorically constructed”; by representing referential language within *Jerusalem*, Blake ruptures the “determinate context which permits signification” and “refigures this referential moment as a rhetorical trope” (493). Blake the poet and Los the builder re-present spatial and linguistic constructions in *Jerusalem*, making them pliant.⁹ That is, it is through the representation of referential language that rhetorical language moves. This representation of referential language—the very building blocks of *Jerusalem*—is made into a rhetorical turn, which overthrows the stability of Albion's law-making language. Albion's mode is re-constructed, thus its “original” authority is offset. It is a language made use of—poached on—by Los, and by Blake. Furthermore, this re-construction points to the interpretation of referential language. Interpretation involves a reading, itself a kind of

⁹ Jason Whittaker discusses this pliancy in his examination of the ways in which Blake makes use of mythologies, which are “commonly used to support national and imperialist arguments” for radical purposes (*William Blake and the Myths of Britain* 15).

lifting or trespass against the law's stability. Thus, there is a double tactical move, or rhetorical turn involved in *Jerusalem*: Los's/ Blake's interpretation and re-presentation, and the reader's own interpretative trajectories.

London's Opening Streets

Blake makes use of the proper place of London; it is within London's increasingly organized and industrialized place that Los/ Blake builds the regenerative spaces of Jerusalem.¹⁰ And while the proper place of London would not recognize this building, Blake's representation of London's—and England's—place names within the text also destabilizes these places, opening them to re-signification. Blake specifically mentions London as the place where he composes *Jerusalem*, “I write in South Molton Street, what I both see and hear/ in regions of Humanity, in London's opening streets” (34[38]: 42-3, E 180). Blake hears and re-presents both the recognizable voices of law, and the “sighs & bitter groans” of the discontented (9: 17, E 152). And he sees, even within Albion's place, and the possibility of opening spaces that are *Jerusalem*.

One way in which *Jerusalem* problematizes proper topographies is through the use of proper names. Because of this use of proper names, it is possible to read some of Los's walks. For example, he travels “from Highgate thro Hackney & Holloway towards London/ Till he came to old Stratford & thence to Stepney and the Isle of Dogs” (45[31]: 14-16, E 194). The place names correspond with a mappable route; Los is moving from north to south. However, Los finally rests “on London Stone” and is at once both sitting on the Stone (45[31]: 44, E 195), and “Upon the valleys of Middlesex, Shouting loud for

¹⁰ See Paul Miner's “Blake's London: Times & Spaces” for a discussion of the hellish environment of London in which Blake moved.

Aid Divine” (46[32]: 9, E 195). This overlapping of places confuses a reading of the walk as a linear progression; the walk becomes unmappable, and indeed transgresses the law of the proper, whose elements are in fixed locations.

Certeau argues that “proper names carve out pockets of hidden and familiar meanings. They ‘make sense,’ in other words, they are the impetus of movements” (104). Proper names—in this case, the proper name of London and its districts—orient the walker, making movement possible. And yet, these names “slowly lose, like worn coins, the value engraved on them...their ability to signify outlives its first definition...these names make themselves available to the diverse meanings given them by passers-by” (104). That is, as they are made use of, these places are opened to multiple meanings; “they become liberated spaces that can be occupied. A rich indetermination gives them, by means of a semantic rarefaction, the function of articulating a second, poetic geography on top of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning” (105). London makes Blake’s movement possible, and in turn, his practice of the city—his use of names that makes his walk in the city both readable and perplexing—opens this “rich indetermination,” re-generative possibilities within a vegetative world.

Some of Jerusalem’s pillars are built over “The fields of Islington to Marybone,/ To Primrose Hill and Saint John’s Wood” (27:1-2, E 171); these are locatable places, which are already developed and mapped. Blake’s impingement on proper place makes way for what might be called the heterotopia of Jerusalem. Michel Foucault distinguishes between utopias, “arrangements which have no real space,” and heterotopias, other spaces, which “constitute a sort of counter-arrangement...in which all the real arrangements that can be found within society are at one and the same time represented,

challenged, and overturned” (“Of Other Spaces” 352). One of the important characteristics of a heterotopia is that it “has the power of juxtaposing in a single real place different spaces and locations that are incompatible with each other” (354). Indeed, in *Jerusalem*, regulated practices and places are represented to be overturned; Los must give “a body to Falsehood that it may be cast off forever” (12: 13, E 155).¹¹ And yet this overturning is not a defeat, but a destabilizing of the places and practices that build petrified monuments instead of opening streets.

Jerusalem opens overtures, dialogues which build new stages upon and among ruins. These are spaces for mutually transforming encounters, which is the experience of Minute Particulars; “When in Eternity Man converses with Man they enter/ Into each others Bosom (which are Universes of delight)/ In mutual interchange” (88: 3-5, E 246). Eternity is not a place “beyond the contingencies of space and time” (Peterfreund 117), but opens in the spaces continually opened through trespass, or resistant practices, spaces that are created only within, and are dependent upon time, “opportunity,” and place.

¹¹ Julian Wolfreys further suggests that Blake’s “words deconstruct the purely real, purely representable London in order to transform it into a world of words and discourse, with a topography which resists mapping in the conventional sense, and yet which Blake himself maps without fixing it into place” (*Writing London* 38).

CHAPTER III

PERPLEXED AND PERPLEXING STEPS: AMBIGUOUS BEGINNINGS AND PERFORMATIVE WANDERINGS IN DE QUINCEY'S *CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM EATER*

In *Jerusalem*, Albion's command of place, subjectivity, and language is undermined through Los's tactical movements. In disrupting and displacing Albion's positioning, Los's movements unfold spaces in which new subjectivities and experiences might appear. Los moves and builds within Albion's petrified world of nostalgic longing, repetitive practices, and circumscribed speech; he does not have recourse to an outside, but practices the arts of trespass, poaching, and re-presentation. In his *Confessions*¹², De Quincey demonstrates characteristics of both Albion and Los. De Quincey wants to command the "proper" text by commanding language, and he shares with Albion and Albion's children, a nostalgic longing for an ideal past, as he longs for a harmonized and self-determined identity. And, although this essential self, I shall suggest, is itself unveiled as a fiction, De Quincey's narrative does develop, to some extent, the repetitive nature of Albion's daughter's mournful songs. As a Losian figure, however, De Quincey also displays an extraordinary range of tactics: digressions, deferments, and disappearances. These tactical maneuvers disrupt the proper text, and displace any "proper" text or self-possessed subjectivity. Indeed, it is within the interwoven movements of a "proper" text and digressive narrative strains that De

¹² I use the revised, periphrastic version of *Confessions* (1856). References to the earlier version are specifically noted.

Quincey appears in various guises; he appears not as a self-determined subject, however, but as one entangled in and negotiating language, space, and performances.

Several recent critics focus on *Confessions* as an always- frustrated attempt to define or recover an authentic self. Julian Wolfreys, for example, argues that *Confessions* is a text “haunted relentlessly by the figure of the desiring self constantly in search of a knowable other as the means by which to define the limits of a personal identity” (104). It is the unknowable and undefinable other, John Plotz argues, that haunts De Quincey’s opium dreams, so that “De Quincey’s terror comes from feeling himself divided into an entire world of different characters, all coming at him as obstructions to his return to a single true identity” (93). For both Wolfreys and Plotz, it is the desire to delineate a unified identity, as defined against unknowable and thus unfixable others, which fuels De Quincey’s writing. Thomas Keymer, on the other hand, argues that *Confessions* insists that “[i]n dreams...we do indeed approach an authentic self, but a self that resists representation” (190). Keymer writes that, “autobiography had come to emulate the novel’s quest to expose the ‘inmost recess’ of the mind,” and suggests that, as an autobiographical project, *Confessions* is an exploration of the mind’s unchartered—and uncharterable territory (189).

While I shall discuss De Quincey’s longing for an ideal self, the problem does not dictate the form of this chapter. Instead, I shall follow De Quincey’s multiple appearances and disappearances within the text; these appearances and exits are interlocking chains; De Quincey exits—and seems to rise above—a perplexity—only to be further perplexed. I shall follow these perplexed and perplexity steps, as I discuss ways in which De Quincey rehearses an entangled subjectivity.

Confessions is divided into three sections: the first is De Quincey's escape from his Manchester Grammar school and his wanderings through the Welsh countryside and into London; this is followed by the pleasures of opium section, in which De Quincey writes of a harmonized self, who, "naturally" stimulated by opium, drifts into London's markets and theatres; the work concludes with the pains of opium section, in which De Quincey discusses his despondency and addiction, his fantastical opium dreams, and assures the reader that he has thrown off the accursed chain of opium bondage (although, he then admits, he has not thrown off the chain; rather, he has adapted to it). My discussion follows this order. As a wanderer in the countryside, De Quincey plays the roles of both vagrant and gentleman-tourist; I shall discuss ways in which De Quincey demonstrates the range of his mobility—and indeed, narrative authority-- through his command of manners and language. As De Quincey then becomes a peripatetic in London, aligning himself with "others"-- prostitutes, outcasts, and "the crowd"-- I shall discuss how he mixes with others, even while remaining aloof and "unpolluted." Indeed, De Quincey remains un-entangled in the concerns of others because he might escape into an opium reverie; thus, in the next section, I discuss how opium might shape De Quincey's body and mind. And although Charles Rzepka argues that De Quincey "leav[es] his body out of the picture" ("The Body, The Book" 145), I shall suggest that De Quincey's body is an integral part of the narrative. Furthermore, De Quincey's appeal to a manageable, "natural" body allows him to construct a narrative authority, an authority, which, I shall suggest, is already compromised, but is further problematized by De Quincey's opium addiction and opium writing. While my discussion follows De Quincey's wanderings, its focus is, indeed, De Quincey's enmeshed subjectivity, a

subjectivity that is not self-determined or that exists *a priori*, but rather one that appears in a process of adapting and being adapted to both language and its surroundings.

Gentlemanly Wanderings and the Art of Appearance

In the first section of *Confessions*, De Quincey writes of his walks through the countryside, and the ways in which he makes use of the uncertain status of the walker to oscillate between the social roles of gentleman-tourist and vagrant. While these roles are performances—ways of appearing—De Quincey seems to command or control these appearances. That is, through his performance of these roles, De Quincey demonstrates the range of his mobility, a mobility in language and manners, which ultimately installs him as a “true” gentleman, and as a master of appearances.

Rebecca Solnit suggests that at the end of the eighteenth century, walking might be associated with two different—and socially classed—frameworks:

To walk in the gracious and expensive confines of the garden was to associate nature, the leisure classes, and the established order that secured leisure. To walk in the world was to link walking with a nature aligned instead with the poor and whatever radicalism would defend their rights and interests.

(Wanderlust 109)

Of course, a gentleman who takes to the public roads is not automatically aligned with the interests and perspectives of the working classes. Public roads do not constitute a common ground on which walkers of different classes might encounter one another. That is, the “nature” with which one is aligned through walking in the world is not a transcendent order, which champions the rights of “common man,” nor is it a “common

nature” or a “common sense,” through which the social and political conditions that shape subjects are transcended. Still, as Robin Jarvis suggests, during the Romantic period, there are risks associated with walking in the world; the walker willingly mixes with other social classes, and might himself be mistaken for a vagrant (*Romantic Writing*). De Quincey himself attests to this prejudice against walkers. Although there is “no sort of disgrace attached in Wales, as too generally upon the great roads of England to the pedestrian style of travelling,” De Quincey still notes that pedestrianism “carries with it the most awful shadow and shibboleth of the pariah” (723, 740).

De Quincey’s role as a peripatetic allows him to practice a straddling of social identities. He practices walking both as a gentlemanly tourist and as a wandering vagrant. Jarvis argues that Romantic tourists were seeking health, the conditioning of the body within a salubrious environment, and “most typically certain varieties of landscape, the visual properties of which they were schooled to appreciate in terms of the sublime and beautiful and which...could be then objectified, framed and reproduced via the Claude glass and the ubiquitous sketchbook” (*Romantic Writing* 40-1). De Quincey does indeed walk for health, to regulate his body, feeling himself “never thoroughly in health unless having pedestrian exercise to the extent of fifteen miles at the most, and eight to ten miles at the least” (725). And, at times, De Quincey performs the tourist stroll; for example when walking along the banks of the “wild and picturesque” river Dee, and “throwing [his] gaze along the formal vista presented by the river” (697-8). Thus, De Quincey’s walker appears as a gentleman, “properly” educated in ways of seeing and regulating the body.

De Quincey's finances are strained, however, thus he "alternately...sailed upon the high priced and the low priced track" (730). He would sleep outside or stay in cheap cottages, so that he might save money for his "periodical transmigrations back into the character of gentleman-tourist" (732). And while De Quincey plays both the vagrant and the gentleman-tourist, he paints himself as most clearly a gentleman, one whose propriety in manners and language distinguishes him as such.

The ease with which De Quincey moves between the roles of vagrant and gentleman-tourist highlights the different roles as performances, and not as "natural" positions within a hierarchical ordering. Yet, these are performances in which De Quincey might take part—indeed, I shall argue, performances he might orchestrate—because of his mastery of language and manners. One example illustrates this mastery quite well: although De Quincey enters the town of Shrewsbury as a peripatetic, he approaches an inn and announces himself "as a passenger 'booked' for that night's mail. This character at once installed me as rightfully a guest of the inn, however profligate a life I might have previously led as a pedestrian" (743). De Quincey is then led to his room by "[f]our wax-lights carried...by obedient mutes," and while the lights are not necessary, they are "used by innkeepers, both abroad and at home, to 'try the range of their guns.' If the stranger submits quietly, as a good anti-pedestrian ought surely to do, and fires no counter gun by way of protest, then he is recognized at once as passively within range, and amenable to orders" (743). De Quincey pays for the lights, as is expected from a proper guest, and his new position is immediately confirmed. In this passage, De Quincey asserts his "rightful" position through a display of his competency in language and manners. His self-announcement might be textually supported by his

reserved position on the night's mail coach, but this is a position to which he need only allude. De Quincey presents himself as "within range," as having a place in this situation, by both announcing himself as a part of this situation, and by showing he is "amenable to orders," the demands of others, and to the ordering of the frame itself. That is, the innkeeper, the "obedient mutes," and De Quincey perform roles that constitute this frame, even while these performances re-inscribe a set of social rules that offer each a position. De Quincey appears within this frame; he is "recognized" and "installed," given a place—in the inn, and within the frame—because he is able to join the performance.

Performances thus constitute the codified framework through which De Quincey appears. The space in which De Quincey appears is a production and a performance, but a performance over which he demonstrates a kind of mastery. In Lefebvre's terms, De Quincey demonstrates a competency in spatial practice. That is, he has learned to "correctly" read the framework, and knows how to take up a place within it. And so, while De Quincey represents himself as a walker, he is not one who "lack[s] a place" (Certeau 103). He claims a place—that of the gentleman—and his ability to adapt to various social situations simply attests to the range of his mobility¹³.

De Quincey's gentlemanly status and his mobility are conferred through language, especially through his self-identification as a master of language. For example, when De Quincey travels through Bangor, a route which swindlers are known to take, he discovers that he himself is suspect. He finds modest lodgings in Bangor, but learns that

¹³ And because the meaning of "gentleman" was being re-defined well into the nineteenth century, the designation has a certain pliancy. He takes advantage of this flexibility to install himself as a gentleman; "As a scholar and a man of learned education, I may presume to class myself as an unworthy member of that indefinite body called *gentleman*...I am so classed by my neighbors; and, by the courtesy of modern England, I am usually addressed on letters, &c., *Esquire*" (804). De Quincey argues that his self-appointed status is recognized and re-inscribed by others; still, he must respond to call, and perform the role of gentleman—a role whose codes, I argue, he recognizes and re-incribes.

his landlady has been warned by the Bishop to be cautious of travelers, including De Quincey himself. De Quincey is outraged by this questioning of his character, and imagines writing a letter to the Bishop; “I thought of letting him know my mind in Greek; which, at the same time that it would furnish some presumption in behalf of my respectability, might also (I hoped) compel the Bishop to answer in the same language; and in that case I doubted not to make good my superiority” (718). Here, De Quincey claims a “true,” respectable identity—he is emphatically not a swindler or a vagrant—one to which he has recourse because of his perceived command of language. It is this command of language, he writes, that sets him apart from the less “civil” sort.

De Quincey is put off by “the harsh and uncivil expressions of uneducated people—viz., their very limited command of language” (722). It is only by staying in higher-priced inns that De Quincey feels he might practice the arts of conversation with a fluctuating group of friends and tourists. Thus, while his finances might align him with vagrants, his arts of conversation align him, he assures us, more readily with leisured gentlemen. De Quincey writes,

I enjoyed these two peculiar gifts for conversation: first, an inexhaustible fertility of topics, and therefore of resources for illustrating or for varying any subject that chance or purpose suggested; secondly, a prematurely awakened sense of *art* applied to conversation. I had learned the use of vigilance in evading with civility the approach of wearisome discussions, and in impressing, quietly and oftentimes imperceptibly, a new movement upon dialogues that loitered painfully, or see-sawed unprofitably. That it was one function of art to hide and mask itself (*artis est artem celare*), this I well knew. (728)

De Quincey draws attention to his arts of concealment, digression, and performance, arts that are certainly at work in *Confessions* itself. He refers to himself as a master-navigator, able to delineate and direct topics of conversation. His knowledge of language extends even to supposed classical foundations; he speaks the privileged discourse of Latin and Greek.¹⁴ From his well-established position, De Quincey might “imperceptibly” direct the course of a conversation through the art of evasion and impressing, an art of “civility,” which makes him appear to have, if not the property, then the propriety, of a gentleman. Indeed, he does claim a kind of property, the space of the text, as he controls the spatial/ linguistic frameworks through which he appears. Insofar as “art is the skill to conceal,” it is also the skill to reveal, indeed, to give shape. Thus, De Quincey’s art of making himself appear is rooted in his knowledge and command of languages.¹⁵

As shaper of his own textual space and commander of his own appearances, De Quincey might be understood as a strategist, a systemizer who assumes a subjectivity and uses this will to organize the page. Certeau suggests that “in front of his blank page, every child is already put in the position of the industrialist, the urban planner, or the Cartesian philosopher—the position of having to manage a space that is his own and distinct from all others and in which he can organize his will” (*Practice* 134). Thus,

¹⁴ Daniel Sanjiv Roberts points out, however, that De Quincey had read Horne Tooke’s *Diversions of Purley* (1798-1805), which challenged the traditional privileging of classical foundations; “Tooke’s etymology valorizes modern language on its own terms rather than seeking its excellence on the basis of Latin and Greek particles adopted into the language by the grammatical legacy of the classical world” (118). Furthermore, Roberts suggests, De Quincey asserts his own alignment with this theory through his insistence on the autonomous authority of modern works of literature. Thus, I might read De Quincey’s use of Latin as itself a kind of posturing (and not a “true” position); that is, De Quincey demonstrates what his readers might perceive as (classical) authority, so that he *appears* as indeed, a master of language.

¹⁵ While in the un-revised *Confessions* De Quincey identifies himself as a master Grecian and Latinist, he later revises this statement. He claims that knowledge must be measured in relation to time spent on a subject, so that, as a young student, he could only have a “slender” knowledge of classical languages.

according to Certeau, insofar as De Quincey claims to control language, he is also asserting a command of space. De Quincey conjures appearances, but these appearances are subject to his self-defined space, and to the rhetoric that he employs. In this way, he appears to be a self-determined subject, a subjectivity that, I will later argue, is problematized.

Encountering Others and the Art of Giving the Slip

Insofar as De Quincey aligns himself with the “pariah” of the vagrant-walker, he aligns himself, in London, with other “others,” an abandoned child, the prostitute, Ann, and the crowd itself. De Quincey only plays the role of vagrant; however, and is able, as Jarvis suggests, “at any time to rescue his respectability,” to perform his more “fitting” role as gentleman (209). Similarly, De Quincey’s alignments with the others he encounters in London are tenuous. While De Quincey constructs his interactions with others into a frame through which he might define himself, the progression of the text, and De Quincey himself is partly determined by these linguistic frames.

When De Quincey first arrives in London, he has slender means of support. He is aware of “proper” channels, through which he might gain access to funds and find a position within London society; he might, for example, “either seek assistance from the friends of [his] family, or...turn [his] youthful accomplishments ...into some channel of emolument” (765). Because he does not want his pursuers—his family and schoolmasters—to trace him, however, he is hesitant to make himself known to the family’s friends, or to use his name to obtain the necessary introduction needed for securing employment. De Quincey takes on the cover of anonymity; he drops out of one

way of appearing—as a De Quincey, son, and schoolboy—and adopts the role of peripatetic and sympathizer.

One outcast with whom De Quincey aligns himself is an abandoned child. Unable to pay for lodgings in London, De Quincey stays rent-free in the gloomy house of a money-lender's attorney. De Quincey finds that this house is already occupied by “a poor, friendless child,” a young girl, and writes that the two sleep on the floor, “with no other covering than a large horseman's cloak... The poor child crept close to me for warmth, and for security against her ghostly enemies” (755). De Quincey defines his relationship to the child as a fellow-sufferer and friend, and while he does not feel particular affection for this child, he posits an interest in and alignment with her based on a conception of “human nature:”

Apart from her situation, she was not what would be called an interesting child. She was neither pretty, nor quick in understanding, nor remarkably pleasing in manners. But thank God! Even in those years I needed not the embellishments of elegant accessories to conciliate my affections. Plain human nature, in its humblest and most homely apparel, was enough for me; and I loved the child because she was my partner in wretchedness. (760)

The girl is interesting because of her situation, which, to some extent, is De Quincey's situation. But then De Quincey suggests that to be “interesting,” through the “embellishments of elegant accessories” isn't necessary; it is “homely” human nature that binds him to her. De Quincey's banal appeal to “human nature” is not clarified, but is elaborated; “*and I loved the child because she was my partner in wretchedness.*” Perhaps more than feeling an affinity to the girl because of their shared material condition, or

because of human nature, the girl is interesting because De Quincey's memory of her is an opportunity to embellish and elaborate, indeed, an opportunity to add "interest" and shape to his narrative.

As a walker in the great sea of Oxford Street, De Quincey is "of necessity a peripatetic, or a walker of the streets [so that he] naturally fell in more frequently with those female peripatetics who are technically called streetwalkers" (761). Again, he claims an alignment with society's outcasts, and assures his readers—in fact, impresses upon his readers—that this affinity is based on shared circumstances, and what appears, at first, as genuine sympathy:

Smile not, reader too carelessly facile! Frown not, reader too unseasonably austere! Little call was there here either for smiles or frowns. A penniless schoolboy could not be supposed to stand within the range of such temptations; besides that, according to the ancient proverb, "*sine Cerere et Baccho,*" &c.

These unhappy women, to me, were simply sisters in calamity (760)

De Quincey's explanation falters a bit; that is, it is not that he possesses a deep sympathy and concern for the situation of prostitutes, and therefore, is not tempted. Rather, it is his poverty that takes him out of the range of paying for and pursuing these temptations.

And, if one doubts his earnestness—which seems only an earnest indication of his lack of money—one need only remember the ancient proverb to which he alludes (*Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*; Without bread and wine lust grows cold). De Quincey again makes use of Latin to demonstrate his breeding; this phrase does not really add to his rhetorical appeal, however, as he has not denied his lust. Instead, he merely reiterates that he is too

poor to buy bread and too poor to buy sex. And, De Quincey adds, as if his appeal is backed by the full weight of seamless argument, these women are his “sisters.”

While De Quincey proclaims his general sympathy for the prostitutes with whom he walks up and down Oxford Street, he identifies a particular affection for one particular prostitute, Ann; “one amongst them—the one on whose account I have at all introduced this subject—yet no! let me not class thee, O noble-minded Ann-----, with that order of women” (761). De Quincey’s “sisters in calamity” are now classified as “that order of women,” a designation which Ann does not fit because of her noble-mindedness. De Quincey identifies common footing with the abandoned child and prostitutes through their shared material circumstances. In Ann, however, he is able to recognize a noble mind (being himself noble-minded). Ann, De Quincey writes, “who had herself met with little but injuries in this world, stretched out a saving hand to me” (763). Ann saves De Quincey by bringing him a glass of port wine when he has fainted. The story of Ann perpetuates his narrative; it is on her account, De Quincey argues, that he has digressed to the topic of prostitution. And while Ann physically saves De Quincey, she also saves his appearance; through the frame of Ann, De Quincey might appear as a sincere sympathizer with “others.”¹⁶ And later, when he is unable to trace Ann, De Quincey appears as a sympathetic character himself, as he “put into activity every means of tracing” his like-minded and authentic friend.

Indeed, De Quincey endeavors to trace Ann and the abandoned girl, but loses track of both of them. On the one hand, this loss is a profound one; his fruitless search for

¹⁶ Alina Clej argues that “De Quincey’s persistent identification with social outcasts is by no means a sign of enlightened tolerance; if anything, it constitutes the counterpart of his class prejudices and racial intolerances” (*A Genealogy of the Modern Self* 83). Indeed, De Quincey’s rhetoric demonstrates, I argue, a dubious alliance and sympathy with outcasts.

Ann later haunts his dreams. On the other hand, these girls' disappearances offer De Quincey a way to exit the stage, so that he might move on to his next performance. The stories of these girls become traces on De Quincey's page; traces that elaborate the narrative design, provide interesting digressions (he writes about prostitution only because of Ann), and offer De Quincey frames through which he might appear. Deborah Epstein Nord, for example, suggests that De Quincey makes use of Ann to express himself; "the prostitute bespeaks not her alienation and difference but his own" (355).

While his Ann and the wretched child are traces, which provide digressions, they also offer orientation. De Quincey's text, he claims, is foremost a moral tale; it is written to make the opium eater "fear and tremble" (861). De Quincey, therefore, is, as a gentleman, obliged to speak, to warn others of the grave danger of opium eating.¹⁷ The "proper text," then, is a cautionary tale, and a tale, presumably, under the full command of his art. The stories of Ann and the child are interesting digressions to this cautionary tale, which offer De Quincey a certain appearance. Insofar as they are digressions-- they disrupt its clear progression and moral purpose-- these stories are also orientations; they re-direct the tale. As orientations, the traces on the page determine, or allow a new position. If De Quincey's art is one of appearance, his appearance is partly determined through these re-orientations, through the space opened by traces on the page itself. That is, he is partly determined by language itself. Yet, as a master of language—if not of purpose—it would seem that De Quincey still controls these tracings, commands his own appearance through writing.

¹⁷ As Cardinal Newman would later write, in his *The Idea of a University*, a gentleman "never speaks of himself except when compelled" (www.victorianweb.org). This ultimate moral purpose allows De Quincey a gentlemanly guise under which he can write about his wanderings, and, of course, himself.

An important part of De Quincey's self-professed command of language is the control of purpose, to say what one means. If these digressions are purposeful, they are not digressions at all; rather they are *Confessions*, as they constitute a part of its intent. De Quincey writes that a command of language is "the power of adapting it plastically to one's own thoughts" (657). The stories of these "others" are re-orientations that demonstrate that although he might adapt or modify language to fit his purpose, De Quincey—and the text's "purpose"—is also modified, re-adjusted through his use of language. These tracings re-direct or constitute his narrative; likewise, his appearance and position as a subject is also adapted through language itself. That is, language itself appears as not only a tool to be wielded, but also as a constitutive constraint.

Yet another alignment that De Quincey claims is with "the crowd." De Quincey wants to see and engage with the crowd, even while positing a distance between himself and others. Indeed, he acts as the flâneur, "an ambivalent figure," who, in the words of Steve Pile,

Walks the streets in search of new faces, new experiences, yet constantly polices his closeness to those faces, those experiences, never letting himself become embroiled in the daily lives of other people. The spectator marks himself out from the spectacle, never becoming the spectacle himself: he is in the streets, but not of the streets, he is in the crowd, but never of the crowd.

(The Body and the City 230)

The flâneur marks himself; he is not marked by others. He determines a certain distance from others through his own regulations, his self-policing. Indeed, De Quincey himself writes, "that at no time in my life have I been a person to hold myself polluted by the

touch or approach of any creature that wore a human shape” (761). And while De Quincey does not feel sullied because “plain human nature” is enough, he asserts, to establish a common ground, he also “holds” himself back.¹⁸ He is incapable of pollution because he claims recourse to another ground, an inviolable and self-directive self.

De Quincey plays the flâneur when he wanders into the marketplace to “sympathize” with the working classes:

For the sake...of witnessing, upon a large a scale as possible, a spectacle with which my sympathy so entire, I used often, on Saturday nights, after I had taken opium, to wander forth, without much regarding the direction or the distance, to all the markets, and other parts of London, whither the poor resort on a Saturday night for laying out their wages... Whenever I saw occasion, or could do it without appearing to be intrusive, I joined their parties, and gave my opinion upon the matter in discussion, which, if not always judicious, was always received indulgently. If wages were a little higher, or were expected to be so—if the quartern loaf were a little lower, or it was reported that onions and butter were falling—I was glad; yet, if the contrary were true, I drew from opium some means of consolation. (780)

De Quincey represents a self that is present, yet absent. He is among the crowd, but not of the crowd; he wants to “witness,” write about, even sympathize with a happening that remains, for him, a “spectacle.” While his walk is ostensibly undirected, it is, in fact, very much directed toward insinuating himself into and indulging in conversations from which he might retreat. He might take up the crowd’s concerns when they afford him

¹⁸ In fact, John Barrell argues in his *The Infection of Thomas De Quincey: A Psychopathology of Imperialism*, De Quincey demonstrates an intense fear of the other, including the crowd.

pleasure, but he might just as easily remove himself. Indeed, while his mood might be elevated by favorable wages and prices, instead of feeling the weight of misfortune “if the contrary were true,” De Quincey simply slips out of the sympathizer’s role, and into an opium reverie. Opium, then, provides De Quincey recourse; he is not “polluted” by others, but re-positioned by opium.

Mind, Body, and the Art of Re-inscription

At first, De Quincey claims that his opium use restores his sense of self – possession. Self-assured, De Quincey can walk through the crowds without being tainted by them; his body is present, but his mind is elsewhere. When De Quincey begins eating opium, he claims that it,

introduces amongst [the mental faculties] the most exquisite order, legislation, and harmony. Wine robs a man of his self possession; opium sustains and reinforces it...[opium] gives simply that sort of vital warmth which is approved by the judgement and which would probably always accompany a bodily constitution of primeval or antediluvian health (788-9)

While opium introduces mental harmony, this introduction is only a reinforcement of man’s “natural” self-possession and mental order, which corresponds to an un-fallen state of bodily health. Thus, “opium always seems to compose what had been agitated, and to concentrate what had been distracted” (790). Indeed, De Quincey claims that opium restores an ideal state, assuaging his guilt for his boyish errors, and palliating the pains of his body. In this way, De Quincey might remove himself from the material concerns of

the child, Ann, and the crowd, and instead, be an essential self, an ideal mind divorced from history, and wedded to a vital, Edenic body.

Indeed, in *Confessions*, mind and body are integrally linked. Opium acts “to excite and stimulate the system” (792), so that De Quincey’s body is driven out into the marketplace, into the crowds, and to the opera. De Quincey writes, “opium did not move me to seek solitude, and much less to seek inactivity, or the torpid state of self-involution ascribed to the Turks” (795). Instead, De Quincey’s mind and body are mobilized, seeking and constructing pleasure in activity. On one hand, I might read this activity as re-affirming the essential ordering of the mind, yet, this activity is a construction, which involves the mobilization and re-positioning of mind and body.

Paul Youngquist, for example, compares “De Quincey’s Crazy Body,” with Kant’s regulated body. Youngquist suggests that Kant tries to stabilize his body through a strict regimen, so that digestion will not interrupt his mind’s ability to participate in the “supersensible.” De Quincey’s sensuous body, however, is produced by opium; his sensations of pleasure and pain are directly tied to this use, and to the body’s materiality. Youngquist argues that the “exquisite order, legislation, and harmony,” of the opium eater’s mental faculties demonstrate a materially-based aesthetics; “[a]esthetics proves more visceral than Kant ever imagined, if the beautiful is a function more of good digestion than of apparent purposiveness and universal communicability of its representations. The opium eater knows all its pleasures without having recourse to the supersensible to legitimate them” (352). Indeed, Youngquist argues, De Quincey’s “aesthetics is peripatetic, at least in its pleasurable phase: the materiality of intellectual pleasure requires not cognitive, but bodily movement—to the opera, around the

marketplace, among the dark and labyrinthine streets of midnight London” (353). Thus, when De Quincey, writing of the delights of the opera, argues that “opium, by greatly increasing the activity of the mind, generally increases, of necessity, that particular mode of activity by which we are able to construct out of the raw material of organic sound an elaborate intellectual pleasure” (796), Youngquist points to this pleasure as embodied; “[s]uch is the agency of opium that its incorporation inspires aesthetic pleasure whose disinterestedness and communicability are functions not of harmony among cognitive faculties, but of bodily processes” (353).

If harmony is a production and an activity, it is one dependent on the processes of the mind as determined by the opium-eater’s body. De Quincey’s retreat from the crowd into an opium reverie, on to another ground, is then merely the implication of the mind and body in yet another performance and production, indeed, as Youngquist suggests, a material production. De Quincey’s mind and body are inspired—set into motion and produced—by opium-eating. And yet, insofar as De Quincey directs this production, he determines the range of movement. Indeed, as a self-possessed opium eater, De Quincey aligns his range of movement—his bodily and intellectual experiences—with an ideal state of harmonized existence.

De Quincey claims that his opium use aligns him—in fact, balances him—with an ultimately nostalgic ideal. This nostalgic longing perpetuates addiction, as De Quincey repeats and increasing his use to “restore” him to this antediluvian state.¹⁹ As his use

¹⁹ De Quincey’s nostalgic longing, for an ideal mind and body, “for hands washed pure of blood,” draws him into a cycle of repetition and unrealizable desire, as Albion’s sons and daughters, longing for an ideal world, perform repetitive gestures, and perpetuate a cycle of bloodshed and violence. De Quincey becomes a confirmed opium addict after he “had suffered much in bodily health from distress of mind connected with a melancholy event” (805). And while, he assures the reader, the event is not a necessary part of the

increases, De Quincey finds himself dispossessed by opium; he is left performing “manœvers the most intricate, dances the most elaborate...round [his] great central sun of opium” (826). He is no longer self-directed, but is enslaved to another, to “an unknown shadowy power, leading I knew not whither, and a power that might suddenly change countenance upon this road” (824). De Quincey is uprooted, and left adrift; he follows opium’s unpredictable course, and suffers “the torments of a man passing out of one mode of existence into another, and liable to the mixed or alternate pains of birth and death” (861). Opium forces De Quincey into “the mortal languor of paralysis,” he “would lay down his life if he might but rise and walk; but he is powerless as an infant, and cannot so much as make an effort to move” (845). As opium’s subject, De Quincey loses possession of his mind and body. He cannot right himself, as he is “powerless as an infant;” that is, he claims he is essentially innocent and wrongfully enslaved.

Indeed, a part of *Confessions*’ professed aim is to demonstrate how De Quincey is able to right himself—and write himself—recovering a mastery of the body and mind, and of language. While De Quincey’s mind and body might have been subjugated to opium, and were, therefore, adrift, he re-writes his body as a fundamentally normal and “natural” one, thereby establishing a link between himself and his readers, and between his dispossession and his “rightful” sense of self-possession.

Certeau writes that bodies “become bodies only by conforming to [cultural and socially symbolic] codes” (147). A part of De Quincey’s practice in *Confessions* is to re-inscribe his body (and mind) into the recognizable economy of bodies. This recognition allows his voice to matter, by establishing a material common ground between himself

narrative, as again, De Quincey--as proprietor of the text—determines what is proper and what needs only to be alluded.

and his readers. One way that De Quincey draws attention to the fundamental normalcy of his subjugated body is by conflating the pains of the opium-addicted body with the bodily pains brought on simply from lack of exercise. De Quincey forges a link with a “natural” body, a body that is not determined by opium, but is merely a suffering body. In introducing the “Pains of Opium” section of his narrative, he writes:

A part of the evil which I feared actually unfolded itself; but all was due to my own ignorance, to neglect of cautionary measures, or to gross mismanagement of my health in points where I well knew the risks, but grievously underrated their urgency and pressure. I was temperate: that solitary advantage I had; but I sank under the lulling seductions of opium into total sedentariness, and *that* whilst holding firmly the belief that powerful exercise was omnipotent against all modes of debility or obscure nervous irritations. The account of my depression, and almost of my helplessness, in the next memorandum (No. III), is faithful as a description to the real case. But, in ascribing that case to opium, as any transcendent and overmastering agency, I was thoroughly wrong. Twenty days of exercise, twenty times twenty miles of walking, at the ordinary pace of three and a-half miles an hour, or perhaps half that amount, would have sent me up as buoyantly as a balloon into regions of natural and healthy excitement, where dejection is an impossible phenomenon. O heavens! How man abuses or neglects his natural resources! (824-5)

De Quincey’s body is an essentially healthy body, and one that is just as regulatable as anyone’s; he would benefit from fresh air, a ramble in the countryside. De Quincey establishes a common ground—the suffering and “natural” body—between himself and

his readers. At the same time, De Quincey points to this body as one that might have been shaped by his knowledge, his command. That is, had he not neglected and mismanaged his body, all would be right. Indeed, he re-asserts the primacy of the will to control and manage his body.²⁰ Thus body and mind are no longer wedded in an ideal harmony; De Quincey falls from this ideal as he rights his body and re-inscribes his authority. Furthermore, opium is no longer a great sun, but a seduction and a stagnation. De Quincey claims to have never given over completely to the “yoke of opium,” a doubtful claim, as he admits he is still an opium eater²¹, and as the narrative itself, in its various digressions, is itself already adapting to opium’s power to lead one knows “not whither.” He was wrong to write that opium is his “overmastering agency,” and promises to present “the real case” in the following narrative. However, the “real case” is, problematically, the text, and the text is already, as I shall discuss, inescapably linked to opium.

Opium Writing

Once again, De Quincey exits a perplexity and writes himself into another one. Insofar as he writes to establish the mind’s authority over the body, he has already fallen. Likewise, insofar as he tries to inscribe an ideal state of perfect harmony he has already fallen from this ideal, and he further transgresses, as language moves him away from any

²⁰ Peter Melville Logan argues that “De Quincey’s narrative flirts with the danger of undermining its own narrative authority every time the narrator turns to the improper subject of his suffering body” (93). Logan asserts that the “conservative De Quincey perpetuates the ideological position that women write from their bodies rather than their minds” (94). Therefore, for Logan, in re-asserting his will, De Quincey is also he asserting his masculine authority.

²¹ De Quincey writes that his freedom from the bondage of opium was “simply a provisional stage, that paved the way subsequently for many milder stages, to which gradually my constitutional system accommodated itself” (860). De Quincey, then, adapts opium and is adapted by opium, as he, I shall further argue, adapts and is adapted through language.

stable position into multiple performances, appearances, and entanglements. De Quincey's nostalgic longing for an ideal state is bound to produce repetitive gestures; that is, in the attempt to re-inscribe a self-possessed self, De Quincey takes more opium, writes more, and further transgresses.²² It is in these transgressions, however, that De Quincey appears, not as a self-possessed authority, but as an enmeshed subject. Indeed, he does always appear as a gentlemanly, genuine, or ingenuous self, but an ingenious one. That is, De Quincey is an in-genious subject, a subject who begins within transgression, and the steps he takes are both perplexed and perplexing.

De Quincey claims that his narrative begins with the strangeness of dreams; “[f]or the sake of those the entire narrative arose” (821). Significantly, De Quincey cannot compose the dreams “into any regular and connected shape” (96).²³ De Quincey is at a loss; that is, his position as commander of language is at stake, as he is not able to impose a regular and proper shape. Thus, he must move within the constraints of narrative form and of language; he is not only an adapter of narrative, but it adapted by its constraints. And while, in the revised edition, De Quincey suggests that the dreams are the “main phenomenon by which opium expressed itself permanently, and the sole phenomenon that was communicable,” his dream narrative is still disjointed (but not more so than the rest of the narrative); it follows the same pattern of numbered explanatory notes, postulates, digressions, and dated dream journals.²⁴ Furthermore, De Quincey suggests

²² Writing itself becomes an addiction, insofar as it is a repetitive gesture, which aims to posit or “recover” the ideal of a healthy, non-opiate body and/or a pre or non-textual self.

²³ Cited in the unrevised text of 1822, edited by Hayter.

²⁴ In the revised text, De Quincey attempts to connect causally the sections of his narrative by tracing his use of opium to the palliation of “the miseries left behind by youthful privations” (820). In fact, De Quincey writes the “proper,” plotted, and un-periphrastic text as follows; “the dreams were an inheritance from the opium; the opium was an inheritance from the boyish follies” (821). This is followed, however, by a long digression in which De Quincey, in his “medical character” propounds the medicinal benefits of

that, “opium expressed itself permanently,” in his dreams; insofar as the dreams compel writing, opium marks the text, it compels and inspires De Quincey’s writing and movement throughout the text, problematizing any unfettered and self-commanding position that De Quincey claims.

Indeed, De Quincey’s dreams themselves demonstrate his complicated movement. For example, as a happy--self-regulated--opium-eater, De Quincey walks through London, exploring its “knotty problems of alleys, alleys without soundings, such enigmatical entries, and such sphinx’s riddles of streets,” and feels that he “must be the discoverer of some terræ incognitæ” (799). For these wanderings, however, De Quincey writes:

I paid a heavy price in distant years, when the human face tyrannized over my dreams, and the perplexities of my steps in London came back and haunted my sleep with the feeling of perplexities, moral or intellectual, that brought confusion to the reason, that brought anguish and remorse to the conscience.

(799-800)

While in his ideal state, De Quincey is a discoverer of uncharted territory, a trailblazing and self-assured walker, in his dreams, he becomes a perplexed walker, a walker entangled and confused, without clear perspective. For De Quincey, dreams unveil reality, revealing “secret inscriptions” (847). He himself writes of these permanent markings:

But alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains for ever; just as the stars seem to withdraw before the light of day, whereas, in fact, we all know that

it is the light which is drawn over them as a veil, and that they are waiting to be revealed whenever the obscuring daylight itself shall have withdrawn. (848)

De Quincey's dreams do not simply perplex him; rather, they reveal perplexities that were already there, waiting to be revealed. That is, even in his opium reverie, De Quincey is already entangled, perplexed; an ideal state, in which De Quincey might stand apart from his surroundings—as explorer and discoverer—is itself dis-covered. Thus, his walks, and his performances, are always a way of negotiating space and his entanglements, and not a way of commanding or directing its perplexities into certain paths and unequivocal appearances.

If De Quincey's writing is an effort to “right” himself, to re-inscribe an ideal self, the text is indeed, a work of mourning and perpetual unfulfillment, as this self is a non-existent ideal, and an ideal which is further displaced (and dis-covered) through De Quincey's walks through language. In this doomed attempt to recover or return to an unfettered and “true” identity, *Confessions* is, as Roger Porter argues, “autobiographical writing [that] fixes De Quincey ineluctably into a pattern of repetition from which he cannot escape” (222). Wolfreys also argues that De Quincey's movements are “endless, repeatable, and circular” (104). That is, just as his addiction is fueled by a longing for a harmonized, or self-possessed self, and becomes a repetitive behavior, if De Quincey's writing is perpetuated by the loss of an ideal self, his writing, too takes on the repetitive form of Piranesi's plate, a form of “endless growth and self-reproduction” (850). Yet *Confessions* is not just repetition; it is a space, I have tried to demonstrate, of multiple appearances and performances. And while De Quincey's attempts to appear as self-possessed—and as a master of space and commander of language—repeat themselves,

these repetitions unfold into digressive utterances, digressions which are themselves productions, but which also produce spaces in which De Quincey appears as both adapter and adapted, an entangled subject producing and produced by language and the space of the text.

De Quincey's walk within and through language displaces any proper text or proper, ideal subject. His wandering writing produces more deviant threads, which re-orient the text and the subject from within. It is a space of appearance and disappearance, a space that is not mastered, but constructed through an architectonics that is perplexed and perplexing. Indeed, the movement of the text is, like opium, "a shadowy power" (824). The power of shadows is that they "permit exits, ways of going out and coming back in" (Certeau 106). Shadows allow movement, further digressions and transgressions, through which new performances might begin, and another range of possibilities might unfold.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In both *Jerusalem* and *Confessions*, spaces appear in movement, in the use of and trespass on, in Certeau's terms, the law of the proper, the regulated operations of language and place. The production of spaces and subjectivities in these texts is an activity that does not operate in concert with nostalgic or ideal notions of place and identity, but is instead a process of improvisations, which make use of and deviate from the repetitious practices that would merely re-inscribe the idealized and stable foundations of a generative world. Blake's Los and De Quincey's walker appear in spaces opened by performances, and their transgressive walks construct new spaces in which "forces, affects, energies, [and] experiments" might be actualized (Grosz, *Architecture* 155).²⁵

Indeed, Los's trespass on Albion releases and redirects forces and flows, which, in a generative world are so narrowly channeled that Albion is moribund. Los's exertions enable a new kind of circulation, a circulation that, instead of maintaining a regimented

²⁵ I take this from Grosz's discussion of a radical architecture, in which she suggests that "[a]rchitecture is not simply the colonization or territorialization of space," nor is building itself merely a way of sheltering and containing a subject; instead, she argues, architecture is "at its best, the anticipation and welcoming of a future in which the present can no longer recognize itself" (166). Indeed, both Blake/Los and De Quincey might be read as builders whose deviant spatial practices, insofar as they transform space and subjectivities, and alter what practices are possible, make way for surprising futures.

existence, opens spaces for experimentation and experiences of Minute Particulars. Los himself performs in dialogue with space, altering and being altered as he walks, and it is through this continual transformation that, I have suggested, possibilities for regeneration surface.

Likewise, De Quincey's walker circulates and is circulated through language and space. Robert Morrison, who reads *Confessions* as an exercise in self-fashioning, suggests that while De Quincey exercises "the rhetorical manipulation of identity and 'character,'" the wide distribution and enthusiastic reception of *Confessions* ultimately made "De Quincey" synonymous with "opium eater" ("Other Selves" 87). While De Quincey does construct an image of the opium eater, his text is also another kind of construction, a way of walking within and making use of narrative constraints, memories, and social practices to perpetuate mobility. This movement itself generates unexpected appearances.

Both *Jerusalem* and *Confessions* are constructions incorporating both repetition and deviant threads. That is, they are made up of both the practices that re-iterate and re-inscribe a "proper" subject and a "proper" text, and of deviant driftings, which unhinge and problematize a proper narrative, authority, or self-possessed subject. As Lefebvre argues that space is a process, product, and a range of possibilities, the spaces of *Jerusalem* and *Confessions* are likewise productions constructed through a process of both re-inscription and digression, and are a range of appearances made possible through this activity.

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Abstract: This thesis utilizes the theories of spatial production and practice laid out by Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre to produce a reading of William Blake's *Jerusalem* and Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. This study focuses on the production of space through regulated and deviant spatial practices, in particular, linguistic practices, and explores ways in which regulated practices re-inscribe ideologies and limit possibilities for change and movement. Deviant practices—the use and re-appropriation of regulated spatial practice—might, however, produce opportunities for regeneration. Blake's Los and De Quincey's opium eater are explored as walkers and trespassers who make use of language and spatial practices to create detours, disruptions, and digressions in the territorialized places and territorializing ideologies re-inscribed by regulated spatial practices. Through their transgressive walks, both Los and De Quincey's character problematize essential definitions of subjectivity and space, and open new possibilities for experience and performance.

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