Blake’s Green Symbols of Humanity, Society, and Spirituality

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Cover Page Footnote
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William Blake is an exemplar of Romantic poetry often characterized by his depictions of the occult, the divine, and human nature. Despite his reputation as a Romantic poet, many critics claim that Blake does not share the deep ecology of his peers, suggesting he is attuned towards the spiritual and away from the natural. Blake’s fellow Romantics, such as John Keats and William Wordsworth, are lauded as Green Romanticists due to their aptitude for depicting the sublimity of nature and its ability to inspire divine revelations, depictions which occur similarly throughout Blake’s oeuvre. Regardless, Blake’s name is frequently omitted from ecological discussions; some scholars, like Joseph Warren Beach, go so far as to claim that Blake’s poetry demonstrates a disregard for nature altogether, while others, like Northrop Frye, suggest that his depictions of nature reveal a deep-seated hostility towards the material world. However, Blake’s Songs of Innocence and of Experience reveals a poet to whom nature is a continual source of inspiration. Within Blake’s collection, nature represents the struggles of marginalized people as well as man’s individual development. In his poetry, Blake also frequently correlates the power of nature with the power of a divine Creator, enticing readers to see the supernatural within the natural world. An eco-critical analysis of Songs of Innocence and of Experience reveals that Blake’s depictions
of nature are no less notable than those of his peers. Blake’s use of green imagery symbolizes human development, gendered and social inequalities, and divinity throughout his masterwork, all of which illustrate his continual awe for the natural world and his relevance to the broader discussions on Green Romantic poets.

In order to analyze Blake from a Green Romantic standpoint, Green Romanticism must first be defined. In his essay, “Toward Green Romanticism,” former Oxford provost Jonathan Bate highlights the inextricable link between Romanticism and ecology. Bate suggests that “Romanticism does not only concern itself with ‘shallow green’ issues such as national parks and clean air. It also provides a powerful way into ‘deep green’ thinking” (67). This “deep green” ideology encourages readers to re-conceptualize the way they view the world. Bate claims that this upheaval is central to the Green Romantic movement and describes how the Romantic concept of the “sublime” places mankind in the uniquely fragile position of both nature’s beneficiary and annihilator. Essentially, mankind’s existence hinges upon its cooperation with and respect for the natural world. To understand the enormity of this undertaking, he suggests that “we need new myths, new ways of conceiving the planet” (Bate 67). Fellow academic Ralph Pite also echoes Bate’s conclusions on Romanticism and ecology. In his article “How Green Were the Romantics?” Pite proposes that “[p]refering what nature can teach to what man has taught [and] finding true and unalienated life in rural, pre-industrial communities” are characteristics shared by both disciplines (357). Pite proceeds to claim that Green Romanticists often boast an “imaginative perception,” fusing reason with mysticism (369). In this way, Bate, Pite and their colleagues define Green Romanticism as a movement characterized by the intersection of man, mysticism, and the natural world.

If Green Romanticists respond to the call for “new myths” and “imaginative perceptions,” Blake is a Green Romantic in no uncertain terms. He believed that imagination was the key to a fulfilling existence, and his visions of “trees bespangled with angels” led to the creation of a mythos where spirituality and nature are undeniably entwined (Black et al., “William Blake” 86). From an eco-critical lens, Blake’s writing espouses his Romantic belief that a fusion of the material and the immaterial world can benefit mankind’s development. Nonetheless, controversy exists in relation to Blake and his depictions of nature. The Broadview Anthology of British Literature, Volume 4: The Age of Romanticism claims that Blake is separated from his
peers due to a “lack of interest in ‘painting Nature’” and asserts that “[f]or Blake, the true aim of art was to tune the senses and the imaginative faculties to the higher pitch of a spiritual reality, not to the natural world” (Black et al., “William Blake” 86). This statement represents one side of the debate regarding Blake’s ecology: nature takes a subordinate role within Blake’s poems. Author Kevin Hutchings goes so far as to assert that Blake has a “modern reputation as nature’s Romantic adversary” (“Ecocriticism” 175). As if in confirmation, Blake’s narrator of “The Proverbs of Hell” declares, “Where man is not Nature is barren,” an oft-cited statement that appears on the surface to disregard the Green Romantic concept of nature as a source of inspiration and sublime self-discovery (Blake 110). Notably, literary critic Northrop Frye interprets Blake’s declaration of nature’s barrenness to mean that, without man’s constructions of society and religion, nature is reduced to its “mysterious remoteness and stupid power” (232). However, in order to assess Blake fairly, one must consider the context of his statement. In “The Proverbs of Hell,” the speaker is a visitor in Hell, a damned soul or demonic entity. The views of this unreliable narrator cannot represent Blake’s own with accuracy. Critics in favor of Blake’s Green status have attempted to contextualize the poet’s work and reframe the discussion of his ecology. In particular, Blakean scholar Mark Lussier challenges Blake’s reputation as a poet who is “often seen to resist science by negating nature” and argues that the evidence of “Blake’s hostility towards nature” is “misleading, having been removed from textual context and stripped of ambiguity” (“Deep Ecology” 397, 398). As Blake’s ecological viewpoint is more subtle than those of his peers, its complexities are often overlooked by the existing scholarship. Regardless, Lussier applauds Blake’s “interplay of mind and matter,” specifically how the poet depicts nature’s influence over the mind (“Deep Ecology” 399). Essentially, Blake’s complex relationship to nature manifests in his writings in contradictory ways, urging readers to view the bigger picture of Blake’s mythos.

Despite the controversy surrounding Blake’s relationship with Green Romanticism, evidence of the poet’s deep ecology can be found within Songs of Innocence and of Experience, particularly in his representations of human connectedness with nature. Regardless, literary critic Joseph Warren Beach asserts that “Blake is an artist in most respects as opposite as possible to Wordsworth” (112). The implications of this comparison are evident, as Wordsworth is widely recognized by the critical scholarship as “a poet of
nature” and known for “absorbing the natural beauty around him” (Black et al., “William Wordsworth” 356, 355). In this way, Beach implies that Blake could not be further removed from the Romantics’ environmental leanings. However, Blake’s own lyric poem “The Ecchoing Green” challenges this assertion by highlighting the profundity of human kinship with the natural world. Literary scholar Barbara Lefcowitz confirms the sublimity of human connectedness with nature, asserting that “the observation of natural phenomena may certainly give rise to pleasurable response” in onlookers (125). Such phenomena can be seen in Blake’s “Ecchoing Green,” wherein the pastoral landscape symbolizes intergenerational joy, as the elders sit beneath a tree, watching children play, and muse:

Such, such were the joys,
When we all girls & boys,
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Ecchoing Green. (Blake 17–20)

Here, Blake describes the cycle of human life. The landscape remains unchanged, a constant source of joy to the young, while the elderly, no longer able to frolic and play as they once did, relive childhood as onlookers. In “The Ecchoing Green,” the enjoyment of nature’s sublimity is an experience shared by young and old alike, while nature itself acts as a constant, unaltered by the human drama that plays out across its fields. In this poem, Blake’s Green Romantic tendencies are at the forefront, as he “emphasiz[es] the interconnection of all earthly creatures and processes” (Hutchings, “Ecocriticism” 177). Blake’s intergenerational gathering is one that represents the full spectrum of human existence, from the innocent to the experienced, as the children dance across the fields, invoking the older generation’s memories of their own youthful games. In this way, nature acts as a conduit, allowing the aged to travel back to simpler times, while preserving the sanctity of their memories and experiences for future generations. Thusly, Blake demonstrates how people in all stages of life are unified by shared experiences in the natural world. However, Blake’s exploration of human connectedness through nature is not limited to “The Echoing Green.” The motif of nature as a transitional space is one that reoccurs throughout his oeuvre, also illustrating nature’s transformational power.

For instance, in Blake’s Songs, the poet examines the profundity of nature on both a macro and micro scale, examining not only the material
world’s ties to a shared pool of foundational memories but also its influence on the individual. Lussier contends that the “psychological development of [the] individual” and the “temporal development of the human within natural processes” are each at the forefront of Blake’s poetry (“Ecological Consciousness” 261). However, Frye’s perceptions of Blake are enduring, as much of the critical scholarship on Blake still perpetuates the notion that, in Blake’s opus, “nature is quite simply and utterly the enemy of humanity and must therefore be either radically transformed or altogether transcended” (Hutchings, “Imagining Nature” 134–135). Frye paints Blake’s philosophy in bold, anti-natural strokes and goes on to claim that, for Blake, nature is simply “there for us to transform,” suggesting it is “all very well to abuse nature” (qtd. in Hutchings, “Imagining Nature” 38). However, exactly the inverse can be observed in Blake’s “The Little Girl Lost” and “The Little Girl Found,” as the natural world accelerates the transformation of Blake’s young protagonist. In “The Little Girl Lost,” Lyca acts as the embodiment of innocence, as she sleeps on “hallow’d ground” (Blake 40). The poet even implies that she is indwelt with the Earth’s spirit, describing,

That the earth from sleep,
(Grave the sentence deep) Shall arise and seek
For her maker meek. (Blake 3–6)

Here, Blake suggests that Lyca is seeking a divine creator via communion with the natural world. Lost in the wilderness, Lyca is at peace with her surroundings, despite the beasts that lurk in the jungle. Ultimately, she is undressed and carried into a cavern by a lion and a lioness, communicating the pinnacle of her oneness with nature. While Lyca’s disrobing could certainly suggest sexual maturation, her descent into the cavern represents an initiation. According to Professor Norma Greco, “[i]nitiation of all kinds involves a death to the profane life as represented by various symbolic forms such as darkness, a cave, hut or forest, all of which suggest ‘the beyond’ and the ‘darkness of gestation in the mother’s womb’” (149). While Lyca’s innocence acts as a blank slate, allowing her to commune effortlessly with the wilderness, the trek of Lyca’s parents in “The Little Girl Found” tells a different story. At the start of the poem, Blake describes “hollow piteous shriek[s],” “unrest,” and “trembling” as Lyca’s parents journey fearfully through the wilderness to find their daughter (Blake 16, 17, 18). If Lyca represents innocence, her parents represent experience, and their worldly
experiences make them fearful of wild things. Elizabeth Deatrick confirms that Lyca’s parents’ “perspectives of the natural world... have grown skewed through long years living among other humans” (54). For this reason, the couple perceives the jungle as a threatening unknown, until a lion “licks their hands” and leads them to their unharmed daughter, who sleeps “among the tygers wild” (Blake 31, 48). Only then do Lyca’s parents, no longer fearful of “the wolfish howl” or “the lion’s growl,” achieve oneness with nature by following their daughter’s example (Blake 51, 52). In this way, Blake suggests that the process of attuning oneself to nature involves the shedding of the “spectre of selfhood” that develops in adulthood and “impedes inner recognition” (Lussier, “Self-Annihilation/Inner Revolution” 41). Lyca’s journey indicates that fear of the natural world is learned, not innate, as humans in early stages of development are more open to nature’s influence.

In these twin poems, “The Little Girl Lost” and “The Little Girl Found,” Blake exhibits a fusion of ecological and Romantic themes, demonstrating how nature acts as a conduit for human development rather than an impediment.

However, Blake does not limit nature to its transformative powers; the poet also uses ecological motifs to reveal and implicitly criticize social inequities, such as gender discrimination. While such critics as David Riede declare that Blake’s poetry “reject[s] nature utterly,” truthfully, Blake embraces natural symbols within and throughout his masterwork (qtd. in Hutchings, “Imagining Nature” 38). Namely, an exploration of Blake’s metaphoric depictions of flora and fauna reveals a poet who frequently conflates female freedoms with processes as natural and inevitable as the blooming of flowers. According to Professors Majd M. Alkayid and Murad M. Al Kayed, “Blake uses the symbol of flowers to discuss women’s problems and defend them indirectly in his poems” (785). In Blake’s “A Sick Rose,” womanhood is represented by a rose made sick by an “invisible worm” that “flies in the night” (Blake 2, 3). Blake proceeds to state that the worm “Has found out thy bed,” implying destruction of a sexual nature (4). The invisibility of the worm, as well as its nocturnal behaviors, suggest that the worm represents a selfish lover, perhaps an unfaithful husband or even “the patriarchal society that ‘feeds on’ or mistreats women” (Alkayid and Al Kayed 785). Within this poem, Blake describes a “dark secret love,” a destructive force that corrupts the rose, the object of its desire (7). The oppressive, one-sided “love” that Blake depicts evokes associations with the male gaze, a byproduct of a patriarchal society that views women as commodities to be consumed and
discarded in service of male pleasure. In “My Pretty Rose Tree,” Blake once again describes the struggles of womanhood in floral terms. Throughout the poem, the narrator describes a “Pretty rose-tree” that was “offer’d to [him]” and consistently uses first-person pronouns, such as “me,” “I,” and “my,” word choices that indicate the speaker’s possessiveness and male entitlement (Blake 1, 3). Obsessively, the narrator watches and tends to the tree “by day and by night,” which only results in the tree growing thorns to keep him at a distance; Blake refers to these thorns as the gardener’s “only delight” (Blake 6, 8). While the narrator views the tree as his personal property, the tree proves itself to be an ever-evolving entity outside man’s sphere of control. According to Hutchings, there are “parallels between the domination of nature and the oppression of women in patriarchal societies,” as the two processes are “complexly linked and mutually enabling” (“Ecocriticism” 183). Essentially, Blake’s “My Pretty Rose Tree” uses the tree symbol to depict the struggles of women who are treated by men as property rather than autonomous individuals. In this poem, Blake “clearly encourages women to stand by themselves and defend their rights. . . [by rejecting] the assumed role that man tries to impose on her” (Alkayid and Al Kayed 785). Similarly, in “Ah! Sun-Flower,” Blake likens a sexually empowered woman to a sunflower seeking “that sweet golden clime” (3). The poet writes,

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Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire,
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go. (Blake 5–8)
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Here, Blake’s sunflower reaching to the sun represents a woman taking ownership of her body, shedding the label of Madonna and shamelessly adopting the dichotomous label of whore. Despite the fact that “[the narrator’s] roots are [grounded in a patriarchal society]. . . she keeps growing towards the sky or freedom” (Alkayid and Al Kayed 786). This woman is the envy of both “youth” and “virgin,” who are still restricted by a rigid, puritanical culture. Ultimately, “In “A Sick Rose,” “My Pretty Rose Tree,” and “Ah! Sun-Flower,” Blake uses floral imagery to criticize gendered restrictions and illustrate a clear need for social change. However, Blake’s depictions of inequality are not limited to women’s rights; they also extend to groups oppressed on the basis of culture, race, and financial status.
In Blake’s poetry, nature is used continually as a mechanism for social critique. Still, such critics as Frye suggest that, in Blake’s opus, “Nature is miserably cruel, wasteful, purposeless, chaotic and half dead” (qtd. in Hutchings, “Imagining Nature” 38). However, Frye’s reading of Blake contradicts the poet’s own words in “The Little Black Boy,” which depict nature as a welcome reprieve from mankind’s cruelty. In this poem, Blake uses green imagery to both represent and deconstruct racial inequalities. Specifically, Blake likens the human body to “a cloud” or a “shady grove,” which shields the soul from the “beams of [God’s] love” (16, 14). The titular child establishes this metaphor by comparing the social stigma surrounding his own skin to dark clouds that have “bereav’d [him] of light” throughout his life (Blake 4). As Blake equates God’s love to rays of sunlight, the dark cloud is a symbol of oppression, representing the racial injustices the child has suffered. However, the child’s mother urges him to consider the day when they will hear God’s voice, saying, “‘come out from the grove my love & care / And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice’” (Blake 19–20). Here, Blake criticizes a discriminatory society that oppresses people of color and prevents them from recognizing their true worth in the eyes of a divine creator. For context, “The Little Black Boy” was published in 1789, while the slave trade was active in England. In fact, “[f]rom 1701–1807, British ships are estimated to have carried over 2.5 million enslaved persons” (Heblich et al. 8). Blake’s criticism of the slave trade demonstrates the Romantic principle of social upheaval, with emphasis on the importance of human dignity and equal rights. Professor Jacob Adler reflects that, in this poem, “Blake is thinking of the soul’s freedom from the body” and, by extension, freedom from an unjust society (412). In a green, pastoral heaven, Blake concludes that every soul will feel the warmth of God’s affection equally.

Similarly, in “The Chimney Sweeper,” Blake uses an idyllic landscape as a representation of heaven, as well as a metaphorical escape from injustice. This coalition between green symbols and the divine is a far cry from Frye’s assertion that Blake depicts “nothing outside man worthy of respect” (qtd. in Hutchings, “Imagining Nature” 38). Conversely, Blake uses natural imagery to denounce the practice of child labor, which was legal in England at the time of its publication and disproportionately impacted “orphans, [who were] often kept malnourished to fit into chimneys, eventually developing cancers” (Montalti 377). In “The Chimney Sweeper,” Blake incorporates spiritual iconography and natural imagery to implicitly condemn this
injustice, as he describes one laborer’s dream of an angel, who sets thousands of young chimney sweepers free:

Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.
Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind. (15–18)

In this excerpt, nature once again represents freedom, a divine reset or blank slate, allowing persecuted peoples’ to shed their social statuses and bask in nature’s sublimity. Ultimately, Blake’s depictions of ecology reveal his disdain for “any kind of authority of power that oppresses people, whether this is related to monarchy, patriarchy, or social classes” (Alkayid and Al Kayed 785). As evidenced in “The Little Black Boy” and “The Chimney Sweeper,” Blake frequently correlates green imagery with divinity, as if declaring nature itself as a tool of the divine, used to provide peace and equality to the oppressed.

Much of the existing scholarship overlooks nature’s role in Blake’s Songs of Innocence and of Experience as a reflection of the divine. Poet and Blakean scholar S. Foster Damon goes so far as to argue that “[Blake] objected to the deistic nature worship, with its idea that the world of three dimensions is all, and that it operates by mechanical causes and effects” (101). Yet, once again, Blake’s own work can be utilized to refute such popular detractions. In particular, in his poems “The Lamb” and “The Tyger,” the poet identifies the divine attributes of earthly creatures. In “The Lamb,” a child approaches a grazing lamb and, enchanted by its “wooly bright” coat and “tender voice,” asks “Dost thou know who made thee” (Blake 6, 7, 2). Here, Blake alludes to the Christian mythos, as the image of the child alongside the sheep evokes the Book of Revelations, which proclaims, “The wolf will live with the lamb. . . and a little child will lead them” (qtd. in Montalti 382). The child solidifies this Biblical parallel, saying to the sheep,

He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child: (Blake 12–15)

Here, Blake likens the figure of Christ, also known as the Lamb of God, to both a child and a sheep, highlighting their shared characteristics of
purity and humility. English scholar Stephanie Montalti explains that these “pastoral motifs... represent the idealized countryside [and] represent both innocence and experience as complementary and contradictory states” (377). As such, a tonal shift occurs within “The Tyger,” wherein Blake analyzes one of nature’s most lethal carnivores and how it too reflects the divine. The famous opening stanza reads,

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night; What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry? (Blake 1–4)

In these lines, Blake establishes that the tiger, like the wolf, is just another of God’s creations. However, Blake’s use of the word “fearful” poses a question: how could a benevolent God create such a savage beast? Here, Blake implies that the hands of the creator are worthy of the same fear inspired by their creation. In the closing stanzas of “The Tyger,” Blake alludes to the poem’s counterpart, “The Lamb,” asking, “Did he smile his work to see? / Did he who made the Lamb make thee?” (19–20). Ultimately, “The Lamb” and “The Tyger” act as nature’s declaration of God’s two faces: merciful creator and vengeful destroyer. Montalti surmises that, while the lamb is meek and Christ-like, the tiger is “a product of [God’s] power” (386). In this way, Blake examines nature’s binary oppositions and concludes that both nature’s tranquility and its power are characteristics inherited from a divine creator.

Blake’s depictions of spirituality are not limited to Christian theology; Blake’s nature writings also adopt Buddhist enlightenment principles. Author David McMahan defines Buddhist modernism as “a hybrid tradition with roots in the European Enlightenment no less than the Buddha’s enlightenment, in Romanticism and transcendentalism” (qtd. in Wood 270–271). Within Blake’s poetry, the Buddhist concept of interconnectedness, a process of discovery that begins with self-annihilation and inner revolution, recurs. However, Blake’s reputation as an adversary of nature is so entrenched that even his biographer, Peter Ackroyd, claims that Blake “despised” nature, regarding the natural world with as much contempt as if “the Mundane Shell or Vegetative Universe... was the vesture of Satan” (qtd. in Hutchings, “Imagining Nature” 38). As if in rebuttal, the interconnectedness of spirituality, man, and nature is at the forefront of Blake’s “The Human Abstract.” In this poem, Blake analyzes the conditional nature of virtue as
it is dependent upon cruelty to exist. The poet describes a tree that grows, spreading a “dismal shade” of “Mystery” and “Deceit,” which provides shelter for caterpillars, flies, and ravens (Blake 14, 17). In this way, Blake fosters an unconventional Romanticism, one that diverges from idealized depictions of nature’s sublimity and embraces “unlikely creatures;” essentially, Blake’s holistic approach does not “blithely disregard all that is hateful in nature,” instead exhibiting an understanding that even pests and scavengers play an essential role within the ecosystem (Hutchings, “Ecocriticism” 182). Lussier affirms that “Blake’s mythic treatment of mind and matter in the epics also functions as a sacred ecology” (“Self Annihilation/Inner Revolution” 54). The final stanza of “The Human Abstract” reads,

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro’ Nature to find this Tree
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human Brain. (21–24)

Here, human thoughts are represented via the ecological image of a tree, a natural motif that harkens back to the Biblical Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In this way, Blake takes a dualistic approach to spirituality, fusing Christian and Buddhist concepts to suggest that good cannot exist without evil, illustrating the interconnectedness of these moral extremes. Blake asks readers to consider how, if no one was victimized by cruelty, there would be no one to benefit from benevolence. Essentially, Blake’s poetry incorporates imagery from disparate theologies to demonstrate how nature and the divine coalesce within the enlightened human brain. A similar motif occurs within Blake’s poem “A Poison Tree,” in which the narrator tends to his wrath until it grows into a tree, bearing poisoned fruit. When the narrator’s enemy steals and consumes an apple, the narrator awakens the next day to his “foe outstretched beneath the tree” (Blake 16). In this poem, Blake once again adopts the Buddhist concept of interdependence, illustrating how mankind’s petty grievances are reflected in the environment, often with deadly consequence. In this way, Blake “emphasiz[es] the interconnection of all earthly creatures and processes” (Hutchings, “Ecocriticism” 177). In “The Human Abstract” and “The Poison Tree,” Blake’s “awakened man, the ecological subject, [and] consciousness of Buddhist practice” all shape an “ongoing dialogue with our own pasts, with our experiences, with the environment, and with others” (Lussier “Self Annihilation/Inner Revolution” 54).
Essentially, Blake’s work asks readers to be thoughtful in their dealings with spirituality, with nature, and with one another, as these components are inextricably connected.

Despite Blake’s reputation as a Romantic outlier, unmoved by and even adversarial towards nature, Songs of Innocence and of Experience paints a picture of a poet who is continually inspired by nature’s changing faces. Through Blake’s implementation of diverse symbols, from rose trees and sunflowers to coffin flies and ravens, he demonstrates his holistic ecology, one that embraces not only the sublimity of nature but also its cyclical morbidity. In Blake’s oeuvre, the material world is both a source of childhood wonderment and a bridge to adulthood, while its creatures, gentle and ferocious, reflect the paradoxical nature of the divine. In this way, Blake does not simply impel readers to look skyward for lofty branches bespangled with angels. He also urges mankind to acknowledge the grave-worms beneath their feet, as the heavens could not exist without the earth below. To Blake, both nature’s tranquility and its wildness are worthy of examination. By drawing attention to the ugliness of nature alongside its beauty, Blake does not aim to vilify the material world. Instead, he paints a picture of its raw, unconventional profundity. Similarly, Blake does not vilify humanity as annihilators within the world. Instead, he urges readers to be mindful and to consider the value of all earthly processes. While Blake’s philosophy is unique among his more idealistic Romantic peers, he is not in conflict with them. Rather, his voice contributes to the well-roundedness of the Green Romantic movement. Ultimately, a reframing of Blake’s Songs from an eco-critical lens demonstrates the poet’s belief in nature as a facilitator of human development, a mechanism of social equality, and a reflection of the divine, establishing Blake as a worthy recipient of the Green Romantic label. In turn, Blake establishes humanity as just one part of a larger whole, inspiring readers to think critically about their interactions with nature.
Works Cited


