

Obviously, we're not exhausting the possibilities here. Blake's system of contraries is a dialectic, moving towards regained harmony of life, as he saw it in his visions. Ten-fifteen years after the *Songs*, Blake has turned away from political revolution to a more purely spiritual revolutionary vision, in great epics *Milton* and *Jerusalem*. Seems to find, at least as aspiration, a synthesis that makes up innocent experience.

Jerusalem ["And did those feet in ancient time"]

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon Englands mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On Englands pleasant pastures seen!

The legend; beautiful countryside

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

But is it beautiful now?

Mills: the machinery of evil/corruption

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

Imagery of war: fighting, conquering

What kind of warfare? See next stanza.

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In Englands green & pleasant Land.

"Green and pleasant" not sufficient.

William Blake (from *Preface to Milton a Poem*, 1810)

Voice? Point? Not a passive ideal—one of action and aspiration. What can it mean, if Jesus (Lamb of God) actually walked in England? Post-Millennialist.

(go through) What does the city mean, for Blake? London vs. Jerusalem

□ Vision of future brought about by prophet-creator.

Hymn "Jerusalem" became, ironically, song of idealistic empire-building.

Then, in 1930s—anthem of the Labor Movement.

(Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, *Brain Salad Surgery* album) (Monty Python)

Recently—hymn for Rugby, cricket, etc.

For work on one of these poets/poems, suggest Covent Garden, early morning; Theatre district, debtors' prison; Blake's territory & grave (Bunhill Fields, Islington)

NOW: Wordsworth, Shelley (a bit): more on London's beauty and rottenness.

