LITERARY GEOGRAPHIES

Mapping Bunyan, Mapping Blake: William Blake's (Anti-)cartographic Imagination

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Abstract:
Characterising William Blake as both a cautious participant in and a serious critic of contemporaneous mapping practices, in this paper I posit that Blake's work problematises the mapping of texts along interpretative and onto-epistemological axes. As a focal point, I consider Blake's watercolour entitled *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream* as a critical reader-generated mapping in the context of the wider tradition of cartographic illustrations to John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. *The Dreamer* epitomises Blake's own contradictorily anti-cartographic cartography, whereby he adopts cartographic forms and yet continually eschews the prescriptivism of fixed, teleological representation. Blake's (anti-)cartographic imagination is also in evidence in his own literary texts, of which *Jerusalem* is my prime example in this article, as well as in his late visual art. I argue that Blake's work, particularly his approach to mapping *The Pilgrim's Progress*, resonates with recent moves within spatial studies to characterise maps, journeys, journeyers, and worlds as co-constitutive sites which are always in a state of becoming. In this, I place Blake in dialogue with contemporary theorists of mapping, literary geo-/cartography, and spatial literary studies, suggesting some ways in which Blake's work and that of recent theorists may be mutually illuminating.

Keywords: Blake; Bunyan; mapping; ontology; teleology; pilgrimage.

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Introduction

In his last years (c.1824-7), artist and poet William Blake undertook the project of producing designs to John Bunyan's Christian allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which was first published in 1678 but remained highly popular well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The precise circumstances of the commission for the project are not known, though it is likely that it was undertaken at the request of John Linnell, who commissioned numerous other works from Blake during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Blake would produce, to varying levels of completion, 29 watercolour designs to the *Pilgrim's Progress* before his death in 1827. The first in the sequence of designs is the work often referred to as *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream* (also known as *John Bunyan Dreams a Dream*), in which Blake drew on a longstanding visual tradition of frontispiece designs to editions of *Pilgrim's Progress*. One component of this visual tradition, which will form the basis for much of my ensuing discussion, was the inclusion of maps of the protagonist's journey as outlined in the text.

In what follows, I undertake a visual analysis of Blake's *The Dreamer*, arguing that this artwork could be read as what David Cooper and Gary Priestnall might term a critical 'reader-generated mapping,' whereby Blake subverts the teleological underpinnings of the cartographic impulse in *Pilgrim's Progress* and in contemporaneous mappings thereof (Cooper and Priestnall 2011). In reading *The Dreamer* as a map and taking it seriously as an expression of Blake's (anti-)cartographic imagination, my reading blurs the stubborn boundary that Tania Rosetto identifies between the 'cartographic' and the 'visual,' while also being at home within what she terms the 'geovisual turn within the field of literary studies' (Rosetto 2016: 258, 264). I consider *The Dreamer* in conjunction with analyses of other artworks that Blake produced in the early nineteenth century, including the visual-verbal text *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (composed c. 1804-1820). Cumulatively, this material can be read as illuminating what I term Blake's anti-cartographic cartography, whereby he gestures towards cartographic visual conventions, all the while undermining the fixity of his own representations.

I argue that *The Dreamer* offers an early visual gesture towards what Andrew Thacker has characterised in a present-day context as a 'critical literary geography,' combining literary interpretation and criticism with cartographic theory and/or practice (Thacker 2005/2006). Blake offers a twofold critique; first, against the teleological, predestinarian terms of Bunyan's text (and those of its illustrators), and second, against such binary distinctions as those between author/reader and representation/practice. Hence, Blake's work can be seen to resonate not only with critical literary geo-/cartography, but also with post-representational theorisations of cartography, the latter of which Rosetto views as neglected within the field of literary cartography (Rosetto 2014: 526). Throughout this article, I therefore place Blake in dialogue with recent theorists of processual or post-representational mapping in order to demonstrate some ways in which Blake's work and that of recent theorists are mutually illuminating.

Bunyan's 'directions' and Blake's 'golden string': Two Models of Mapping

> This book will make a traveller of thee,
> If by its counsel thou wilt ruled be;
> It will direct thee to the Holy-Land,
> If thou wilt its directions understand.
> (Bunyan 1788: xiii)

In his 'Author's Apology' to *The Pilgrim's Progress* (first published 1678), seventeenth-century allegorist John Bunyan formulates a certain relationship between creator, text, and reader. Adopting the framing device of a dream sequence, the *Pilgrim's Progress* charts the progress of an everyman known only as Christian, who journeys from the 'City of Destruction' to the 'Celestial City,' facing various trials and tribulations along the way. Bunyan's programmatic prescription in the 'Apology' appeals to an idealised cartographic logic whereby the author is supposed to encode certain 'directions' in the text, directions which are understood to unidirectionally 'rule' the reader, requiring only that they 'understand' the *a priori* coordinates laid out in the book. The sovereign text is thereby understood as an ontologically stable artefact with absolute control over its reception, in much the same way that for Rob Kitchin, Chris Perkins, and Martin Dodge, the map is 'always seeking to appear ontologically secure' (2009: 21). Bunyan's formulation seeks to establish his text as 'ontologically secure' insofar as it makes explicit what Vincent J. Del Casino and Stephen P. Hanna term 'an implicit duality between production and consumption, author and reader, object and subject, design and use, representation and practice,' binaries that have long governed conceptions of cartographic texts (Del Casino and Hanna 2006: 34). Indeed, perhaps tuning into Bunyan's own rhetoric of the text-as-guide, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, numerous visual artists designed maps to illustrate the *Pilgrim's Progress*, pictorially laying out didactic guides for the reader-viewer and maintaining Bunyan's own binary distinction between representative text and embodied practice. In this article, I shall chart the rise of an increasingly cartographic impulse within the visual tradition of illustrations to the *Pilgrim's Progress*, which runs alongside a widespread map-mania in the visual culture of the long eighteenth century.

Within this context, poet-artist William Blake emerges as a somewhat uncomfortable—indeed subversive—figure, troubling the kind of hermeneutic model identifiable in contemporaneous attempts to map the *Pilgrim's Progress*. I argue that Blake's mappings work to shed light on some central interpretative and onto-epistemological problematics involved in the mapping of texts as it was being undertaken during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In order to demonstrate this, I focus primarily on Blake's first design to the *Pilgrim's Progress*, before turning to his other depictions of journeys in his late visual art, and his reworking of the creator-text-reader/viewer axes in his late illuminated book *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (composed c.1804-1820), a complex visual-verbal text in which Blake dramatises the fall of Albion (a mythical embodiment of Britain, or humankind in general), his division from Jerusalem (figured as both the city and a mythical woman), and the construction of a New Jerusalem on earth known, in Blake's idiosyncratic mythology, as Golgonooza. I argue that in these works

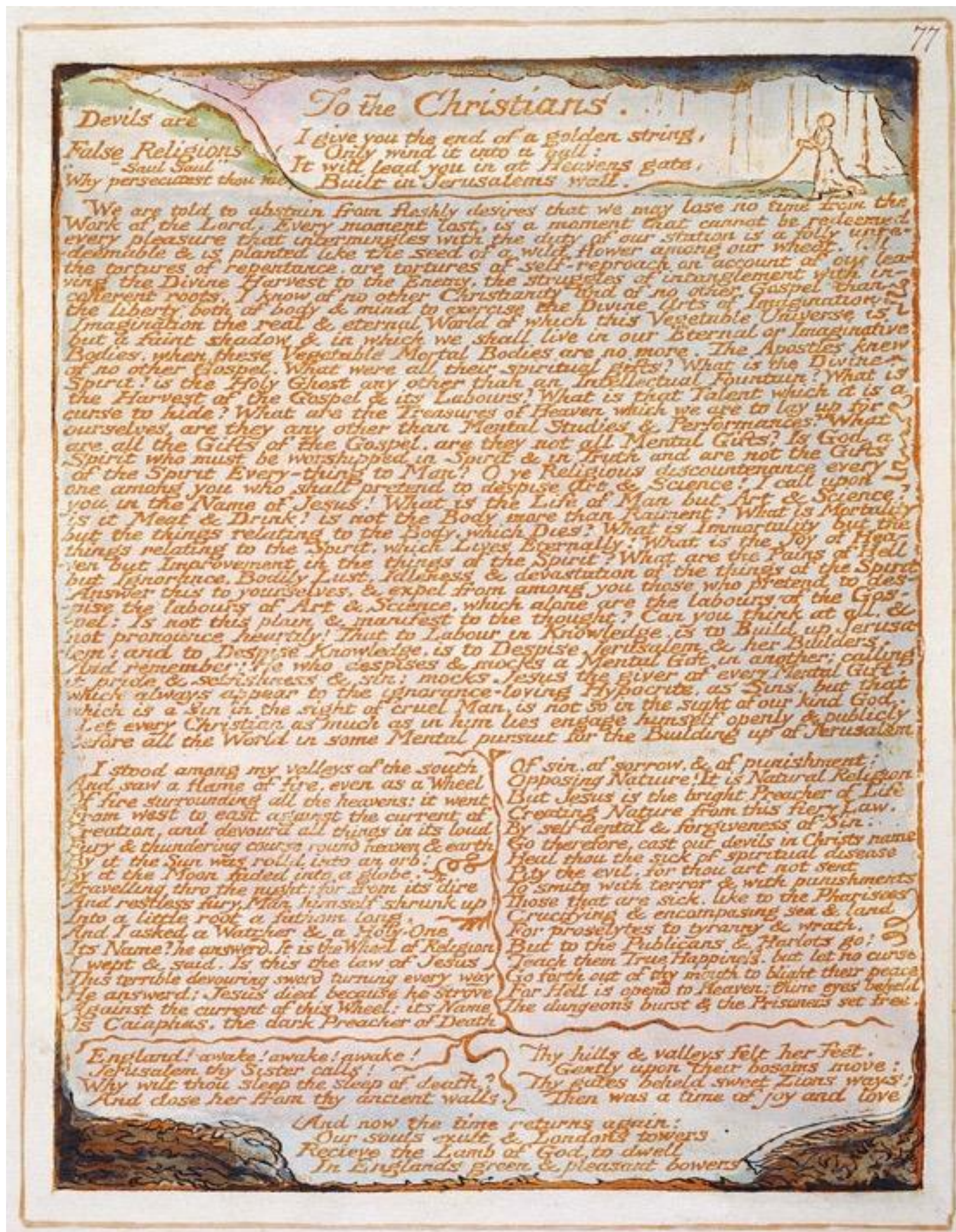
Blake models a conception of maps and mappings as, in Del Casino's and Hanna's terms, 'both representations and practices (read: performances) simultaneously'; that is, that cartographic texts are spaces through which their creators and users continually produce and modify those texts' meanings and, in doing so, themselves (Del Casino and Hanna 2006: 36).

Before coming to the visual material, it will be well to consider Blake's own formulation, in Chapter 3 of *Jerusalem*, of the relationship between creator, text, and reader-viewer:

> I give you the end of a golden string
> Only wind it into a ball:
> It will lead you in at Heavens gate,
> Built in Jerusalems wall
> (Erdman 1952: 231; henceforth E231).

In contrast to Bunyan's rather more unidirectional formulation, Blake's lines weave together the illuminated book, its creator, and its reader in the spirit of a shared journey towards 'Heavens gate,' located in the 'wall' of Jerusalem, the Holy City that in Blake's myth formerly stood on the site of London. Underneath the *Jerusalem* passage, which appears at the top of plate 77, there is a vignette (Figure 1) in which a tiny, gowned figure enacts the verse instruction to wind a ball from a string that trails over the landscape, towards the top of a hill where the clouds have begun to clear away.

In Blake's vignette, the figure appears to be partly guided by his/her winding of the thread, partly by the trajectory of the thread itself, and partly by the crooked lines of the landscape. The route, one could say, emerges at the encounter between each of these events; the 'golden string' found in the pages of Blake's book is being used *like a map*, according to an ontologically open-ended understanding of mapping. In the words of Kitchin *et al.*, 'the map does not represent the world or make the world: it is a co-constitutive production between inscription, individual and world' (Kitchin *et al.* 2009: 21; see also Crampton 2003). This comment seems eminently applicable to Blake's major illuminated books (*VALA, or The Four Zoas; Jerusalem,* and *Milton*). However, whereas Kitchin *et al.* suggest that maps are 'always seeking to appear ontologically secure,' Blake's map-like artworks and texts are perhaps better described as always seeking to destabilise their own ontological security—to foreground their status as works in progress, as maps in progress (Kitchin *et al.* 2009: 21). In this sense, Blake can be seen to problematise a binary distinction not only between textual representation and readerly practice, but also between production and consumption, constantly undermining his own role as sovereign creator and hence raising the question, as posed by Del Casino and Hanna: 'Do authors not consume their own representation, see themselves in its images, reconstruct their own desires through this object, or dare we say subject?' (Del Casino and Hanna 2006: 35).



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To the Christians.

Devils are
False Religions
"Saul Saul"
Why persecutest thou me

I give you the end of a golden string,
Only wind it into a ball:
It will lead you in at Heavens gate,
Built in Jerusalems wall.

We are told to abstain from fleshly desires that we may lose no time from the
Work of the Lord. Every moment lost, is a moment that cannot be redeemed
every pleasure that intermingles with the duty of our station is a folly unre-
deemable & is planted like the seed of a wild flower among our wheat. All
the tortures of repentance. are tortures of self-reproach on account of our lea-
ving the Divine Harvest to the Enemy, the struggles of intanglement with in-
coherent roots. I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than
the liberty both of body & mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination.
Imagination the real & eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is
but a faint shadow & in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative
Bodies, when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more. The Apostles knew
of no other Gospel. What were all their spiritual gifts? What is the Divine
Spirit? is the Holy Ghost any other than an Intellectual Fountain? What is
the Harvest of the Gospel & its Labours? What is that Talent which it is a
curse to hide? What are the Treasures of Heaven which we are to lay up for
ourselves, are they any other than Mental Studies & Performances? What
are all the Gifts of the Gospel, are they not all Mental Gifts? Is God a
Spirit who must be worshipped in Spirit & in Truth and are not the Gifts
of the Spirit Every-thing to Man? O ye Religious discountenance every
one among you who shall pretend to despise Art & Science! I call upon
you in the Name of Jesus! What is the Life of Man but Art & Science?
is it Meat & Drink? is not the Body more than Raiment? What is Mortality
but the things relating to the Body, which Dies? What is Immortality but the
things relating to the Spirit, which Lives Eternally? What is the Joy of Hea-
ven but Improvement in the things of the Spirit? What are the Pains of Hell
but Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness & devastation of the things of the Spirit
Answer this to yourselves, & expel from among you those who pretend to des-
pise the labours of Art & Science, which alone are the labours of the Gos-
pel: Is not this plain & manifest to the thought? Can you think at all, &
not pronounce heartily! That to Labour in Knowledge, is to Build up Jerusa-
lem: and to Despise Knowledge, is to Despise Jerusalem & her Builders.
And remember: He who despises & mocks a Mental Gift in another; calling
it pride & selfishness & sin; mocks Jesus the giver of every Mental Gift,
which always appear to the ignorance-loving Hypocrite, as Sins, but that
which is a Sin in the sight of cruel Man, is not so in the sight of our kind God.
Let every Christian as much as in him lies engage himself openly & publicly
before all the World in some Mental pursuit for the Building up of Jerusalem

I stood among my valleys of the south
And saw a flame of fire, even as a Wheel
Of fire surrounding all the heavens: it went
From west to east against the current of
Creation, and devourd all things in its loud
Fury & thundering course round heaven & earth
By it the Sun was rolld into an orb:
By it the Moon faded into a globe,
Travelling thro the night: for from its dire
And restless fury, Man himself shrunk up
Into a little root a fathom long.
And I asked a Watcher & a Holy-One
Its Name? he answerd. It is the Wheel of Religion
I wept & said. Is this the law of Jesus
This terrible devouring sword turning every way
He answerd: Jesus died because he strove
Against the current of this Wheel: its Name
Is Caiaphas, the dark Preacher of Death

Of sin, of sorrow, & of punishment;
Opposing Nature! It is Natural Religion
But Jesus is the bright Preacher of Life
Creating Nature from this fiery Law.
By self-denial & forgiveness of Sin.
Go therefore, cast out devils in Christs name
Heal thou the sick of spiritual disease
Pity the evil, for thou art not sent
To smite with terror & with punishments
Those that are sick, like to the Pharisees
Crucifying & encompasing sea & land
For proselytes to tyranny & wrath.
But to the Publicans & Harlots go:
Teach them True Happiness, but let no curse
Go forth out of thy mouth to blight their peace
For Hell is opend to Heaven; thine eyes beheld
The dungeons burst & the Prisoners set free.

England! awake! awake! awake!
Jerusalem thy Sister calls!
Why wilt thou sleep the sleep of death?
And close her from thy ancient walls.

Thy hills & valleys felt her feet,
Gently upon their bosoms move:
Thy gates beheld sweet Zions ways;
Then was a time of joy and love

And now the time returns again:
Our souls exult & Londons towers
Recieve the Lamb of God to dwell
In Englands green & pleasant bowers.

Figure 1. William Blake, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (Copy E), plate 77, c. 1821 (relief and white-line etching with hand colouring, 22.1 x 17 cm). New Haven, Yale Center for British Art, accession no. B1992.8.1 (1-100).

The work-in-progress nature of Blake's golden-string wayfaring, and his own complex involvement in and consumption of the work in the very act of creation, are further nuanced by the threadlike tendrils (which double as a means of formally dividing the text) in the lower half of the *Jerusalem* plate. These lines complicate the apparent contiguity/continuity of the 'golden string' in the vignette. They are fragmentary—broken,

appearing in one sense as dead-ends, 'leading' nowhere at all—and yet, their presence points to a plurality of possible pathways that may in practice end up being explored. Blake does not here purport to have 'solved' the problem of the limits of representation; rather, he gestures towards a more-than-representational gaze, reaching out towards potential convergences between author, text, reader, and world.

There are important theological stakes in Blake's re-mapping of spiritual journeying, insofar as he takes issue with predestinarianism, a doctrine which is particularly central to Bunyan's Calvinist text. In the *Jerusalem* lyric from which I have quoted, Blake hints that there may be a way out of the labyrinths of the fallen city, but since in his work (as in the world itself) 'we do not know in advance which way a line is going to turn,' a prior or predestined pathway cannot, for Blake, be supplied (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 134). Scholars such as Andrew Lincoln have devoted much attention to Blake's engagement with the doctrine of predestination especially in *Milton*, but the possibility that his quarrel with predestinarian thinking may also inflect his visual art has not yet been taken seriously (Lincoln 2006: 153-66).

But further to questions of doctrine, to borrow the language of post-Deleuzian ontology, Blake here and elsewhere advances a vision of maps, journeys, journeyers, and worlds as emergent sites of perpetual becoming. In this way, Blake emerges as both a cautious participant in and a serious critic of contemporaneous mapping practices, shedding light on some central interpretative and onto-epistemological problematics involved in mapping, and in the mapping of texts. In making this characterisation of Blake, I hope to further the efforts begun by scholars to situate Blake as a participant—and a subversive participant at that—within the framework of a history of mapping, as a figure very much engaging in 'creative dialogue' with many different modes of spatial representation (e.g. Hewitt 2010: 203ff; Hewitt 2011: 163; Bushell, Carlson and Davies 2020: 1-6).

Mapping Bunyan: The Visual Landscape

A number of stock visual devices in illustrations to the *Pilgrim's Progress* had appeared by the early nineteenth century. I would like to focus on two key iconographic and compositional devices; first, the small-scale scene appearing on many frontispieces to the text, poised somewhere between map and view, showing an abridged version of Christian's journey; second, the full-page map or plan included in some editions of the text. Both of these devices shed light on a tendency towards mapping the pilgrim's journey as though it were a *fait accompli,* a representation prescribing fixed practices. The convention of the miniaturised map was certainly known to Blake, as it is echoed in his own design *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream*, to which I shall return.

As Geoffrey Keynes long ago noted, by Blake's time depictions of John Bunyan's dream had long been 'adopted as the traditional form of the frontispiece' to the *Pilgrim's Progress*, 'and for more than 250 years *The Pilgrim's Progress* has seldom appeared without the embellishment of the Dreamer with his apparently tame lion lying in a cave below him' (Keynes 1971: 168). Although Keynes may have slightly overstated the popularity of this iconographic type (many editions, such as those incorporating Thomas Stothard's 1788

illustrations, did not feature an equivalent design), it was certainly very pervasive and well established. The prototypical example of this subject and what was to become its usual composition appeared in Robert White's frontispiece to the third edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, published in 1679 (Figure 2).

White's design was reproduced and emulated enthusiastically throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for example in J. Sturt's frontispiece for the 1728 edition of the text (Figure 3), and again in a 1775 edition (Figure 4).

All of these frontispieces feature a synoptic projection of the pilgrim's journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City in the background. White's and Sturt's designs are also notable for their map-like use of place-names to demarcate the pilgrim's journey.

It is my claim that the 'golden string' vignette in *Jerusalem* also instantiates a Blakean reimagining of this visual tradition of the mapped pilgrimage. The accompanying design to that plate shows a figure trudging, like Christian in the Bunyan illustrations, towards an upwards sloping hill. Considered in this light, the title overhead, 'To the Christians,' may in part nod to the journey of Christian the everyman from the *Pilgrim's Progress*. However, in Blake's design any markers of place are conspicuously absent. The golden string, standing in for Christian's book, trails over the landscape to the edge of the design, where—rather than reaching an image of the anticipated gate to heaven at 'Jerusalems wall'—it instead becomes interwoven with the margin of the plate itself (Figure 1). There is, despite the lyric's promises, no clear end in sight.

The second, and closely related, bread-and-butter visual device used in illustrations to the *Pilgrim's Progress* by the eighteenth century was the more explicit map or plan. These images seem to pick up on the map-like characteristics of the 1679 prototype frontispiece, developing this iconic composition into a means of narrative synopsis that also strongly implies a reading of the allegorical journey as pre-scripted (and indeed prescriptive). The earliest example that I have located was produced for a 1778 edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress* (Figure 5) by Thomas Conder, a map-engraver of whom Blake may have been aware, since both were regularly hired by the radical publisher Joseph Johnson and both contributed engravings to John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of a five years expedition against the revolted negroes of Surinam* (1796). Following Conder's example, similar maps would become popular additions to the *Pilgrim's Progress* well into the nineteenth century (See Morgan 2015: 248, fn. 75).

Conder especially seems to have drawn on the fashion for strip maps of the kind pioneered by John Ogilby's *Britannia* (1675) and further popularised in the early eighteenth century by major British map-publishers including Thomas Gardner, John Senex, and John Owen and Emanuel Bowen. Catherine Delano-Smith has noted the precedent for such strip maps in the pilgrimage itineraries included in the *Chronica maiora* of the thirteenth-century Benedictine monk Matthew Paris, which plotted pilgrimage routes from England to Rome and the Holy Land (e.g. Figure 6), a context which seems particularly significant when it comes to Conder's use of the strip map format in his plan of Christian's pilgrimage (Delano-Smith 2006: 46-9).

Figure 2. Robert White, frontispiece to the third edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, London: Printed for Nath. Ponder, at the Peacock in the Poultrey near Cornhil, 1679 (engraving). London, British Library.

Figure 3. J. Sturt, frontispiece to the fourteenth edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, London: Printed for J. Clarke, 1728 (engraving). London, British Library.

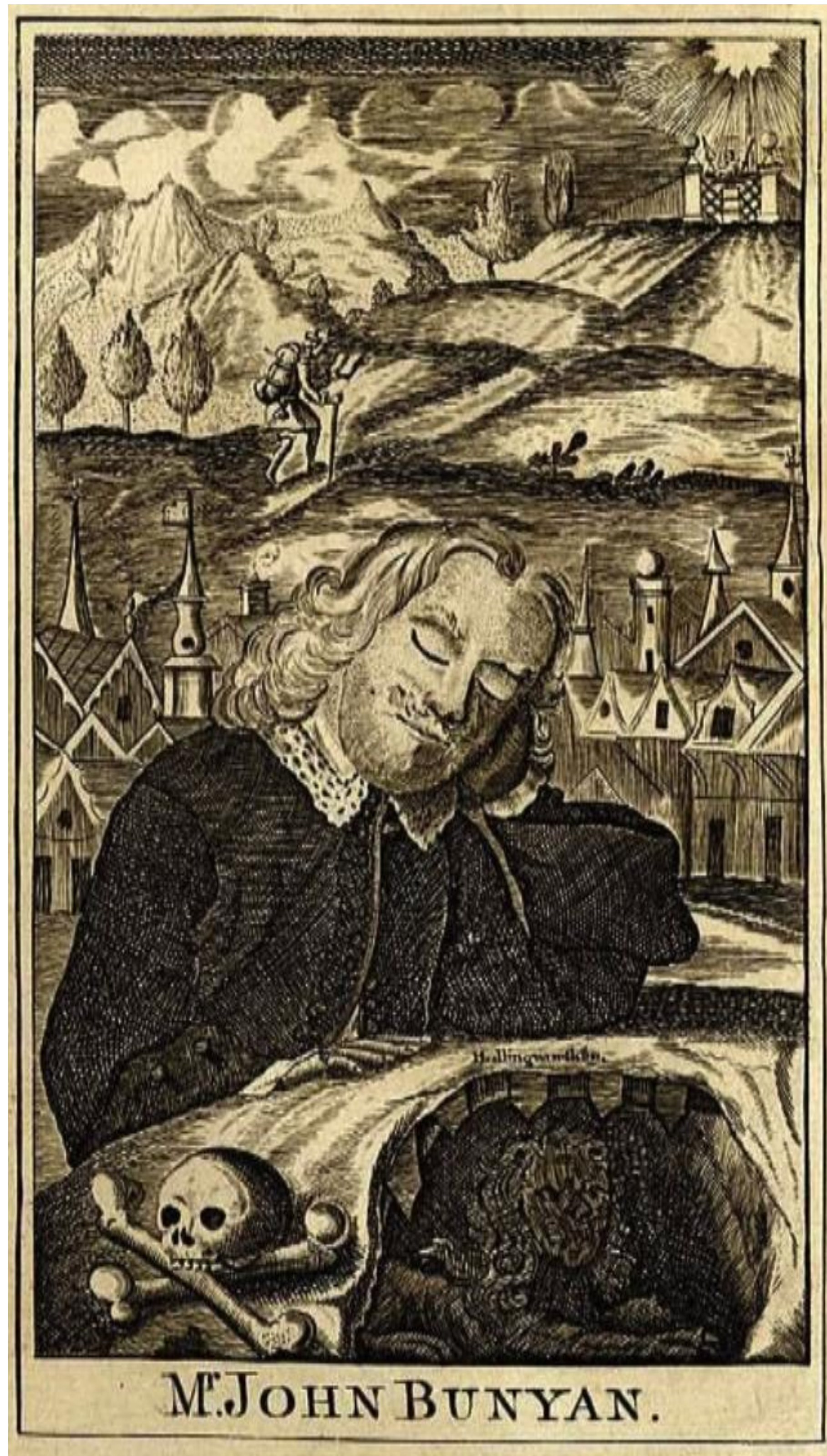

Figure 4. Hollingworth (?), frontispiece to the *Pilgrim's Progress,* London: P. Oriel, 1775 (engraving). London, British Library.

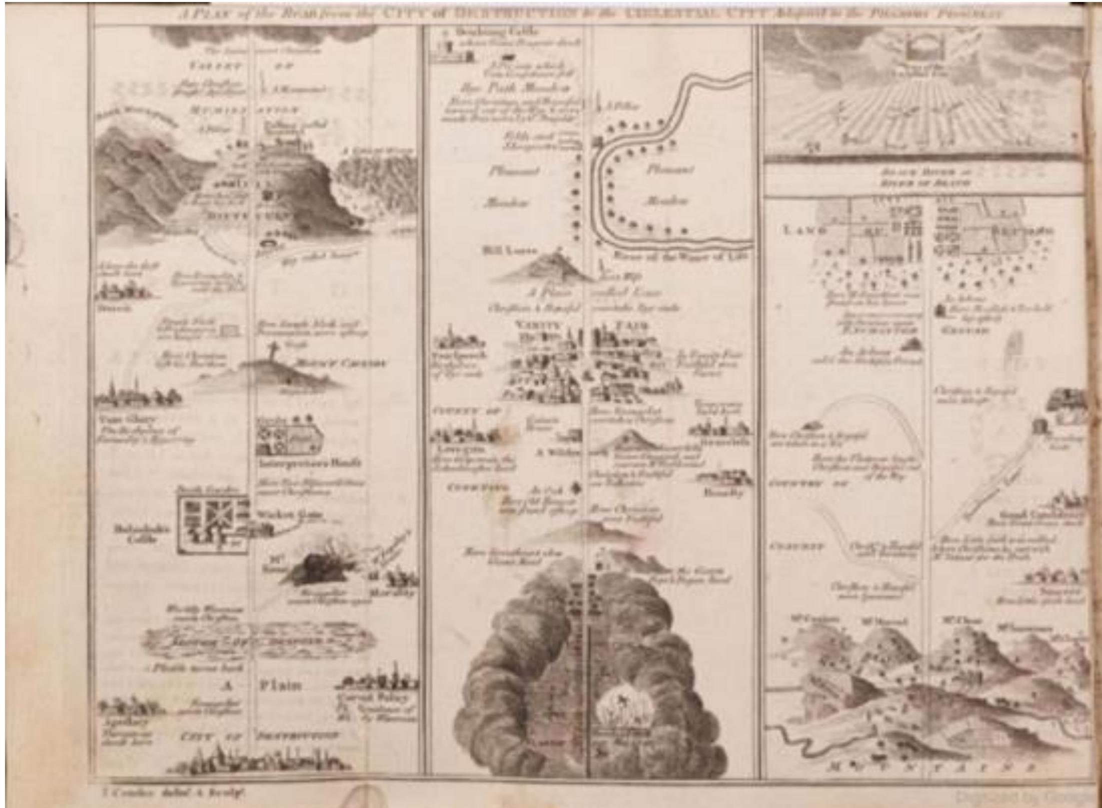

Figure 5. Thomas Conder, 'A plan of the road from the city of destruction to the celestial city adapted to the *Pilgrims Progress*,' *The Pilgrim's Progress*, London: Printed for H. Trapp and A. Hogg, 1778 (engraving). London, British Library.

Though it is not known for certain, Delano-Smith notes that it would have been 'perfectly possible' for Ogilby or someone in his circle to have seen or known about a copy of the *Chronica* then in the library of Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1571-1631) (Delano-Smith 2006: 51). More importantly for our purposes, by Conder's (and Blake's) time, knowledge of Paris's itineraries seems to have become even more widespread within London's intellectual and artistic networks. For instance, Richard Gough's 1780 *British Topography* includes a plate, likely engraved by Blake's former master James Basire, illustrating Matthew Paris's strip map showing a pilgrimage itinerary from England to the Holy Land. Given the attention Paris's manuscripts were receiving among London antiquaries and intellectuals, it is quite possible that as well as responding to the fashion for topographical strip maps in his own day, Conder's plan was also picking up on a known example of a pilgrimage itinerary laid out in the form of a strip map. A copy of *British Topography* was recorded in the 1821 auction catalogue for William Hayley's Felpham library, so it is possible that Blake himself may have encountered Paris's strip maps therein (Evans 1821: 39).

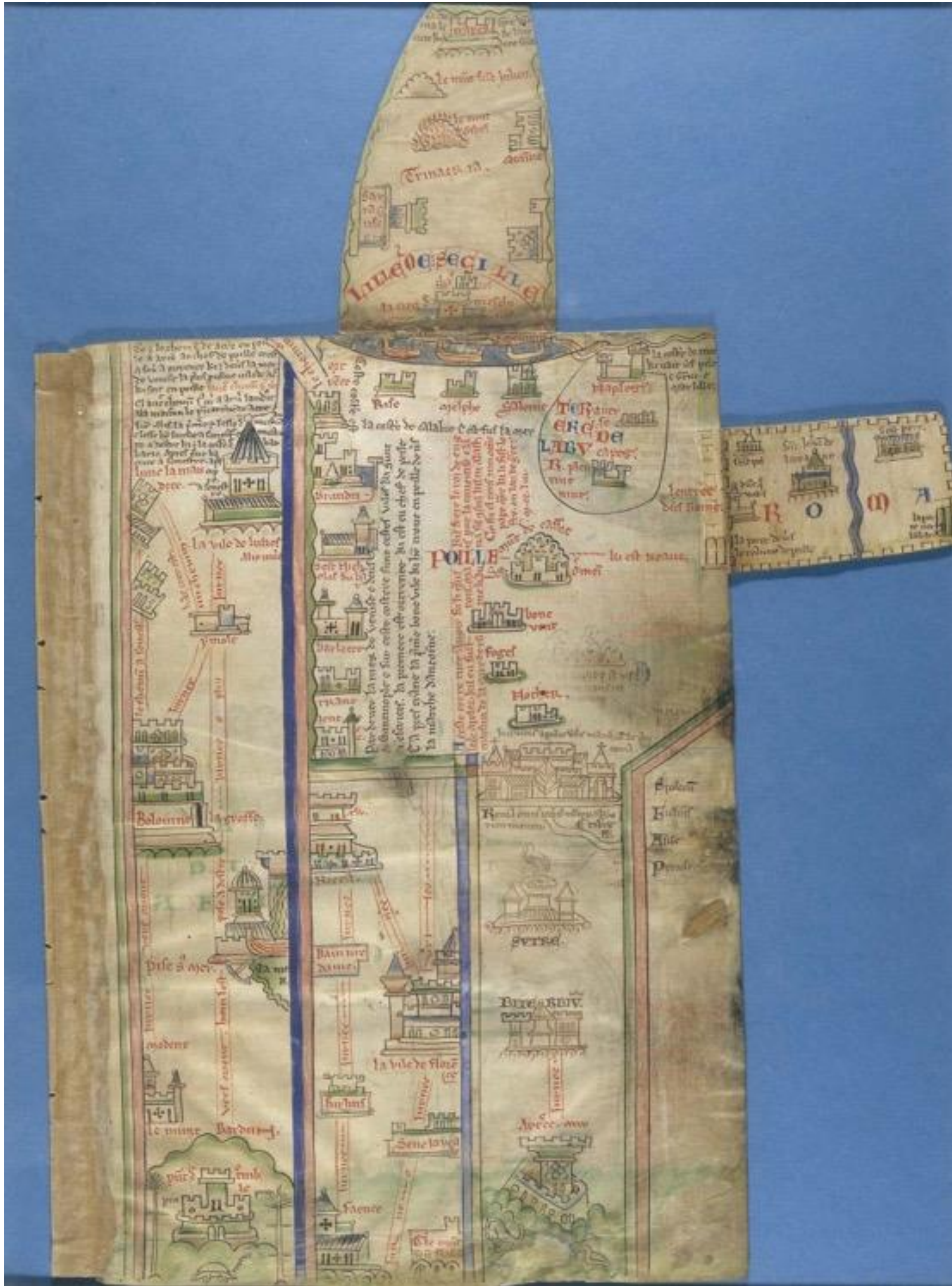

Figure 6. Matthew Paris, Map of Palestine from the *Chronica Maiora*, London, British Library, Royal MS 14 C VII, ff. 4r.

Both Paris's and Ogilby's strip maps appear to have been made for the purposes of 'armchair' travel, rather than for practical usage in physical navigation (Delano-Smith 2006: 51). This 'nonutilitarian' function is shared by Conder's plan, which adopts Bunyan's theme of the allegorical journey. Figure 8 shows part of Paris's itinerary from London to the Holy

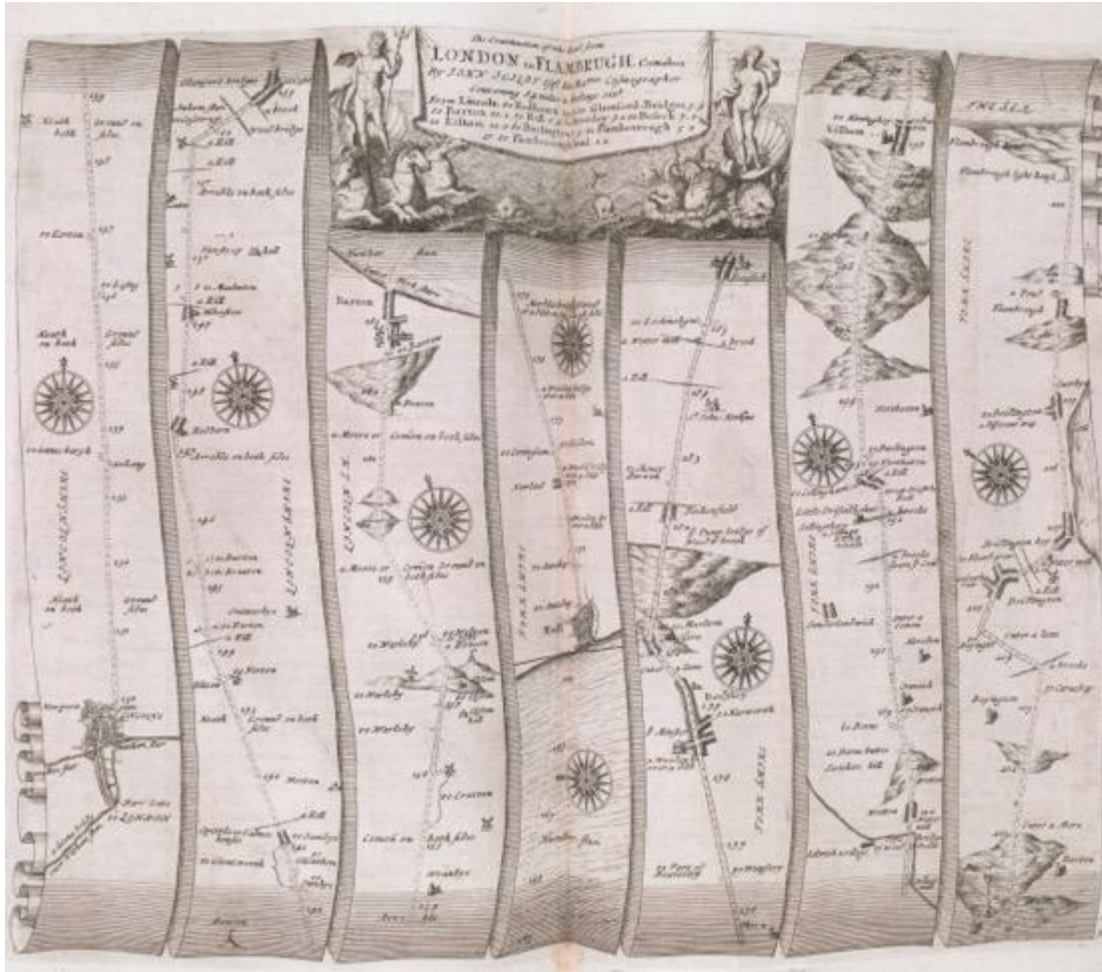

Figure 7. 'The Continuation of the Road from London to Flambrugh,' from Ogilby's *Britannia*, London, 1675. London, British Library.

Land, laid out in vertical strips with a central path connecting key landmarks. Figure 7, a folding plate from Ogilby's *Britannia* showing 'The Continuation of the Road from London to Flambrugh,' adopts a very similar layout using vertical strips.

Both Paris's and Ogilby's maps provide limited practical or precise topographical information, creating the impression of a straightforward trajectory from a starting-point, in the lower left, to a labelled destination, in the upper right. As Catherine Delano-Smith has noted, Ogilby's strip maps presented the roads 'as more or less straight lines,' with a primary emphasis on landmarks that could be seen from the road and large private houses along the way (Delano-Smith 2006: 51). Conder's plan, which presents the line from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City as a 'road' rather than a 'route,' takes a similarly landmark-oriented approach to both of these antecedents, marking out key points in the journey without dwelling on the many moments of doubt, delay, and disorientation which are found in Bunyan's text. Such neatly ruled linearity relates to a wider tendency in Enlightenment-era diagrammatics and infographics, seen for instance in Joseph Priestley's 'charts' or timelines of biographical and historical time, which were published by Joseph Johnson during the 1760s. In Conder's plan, narrative time is similarly streamlined: a few byroads that diverge from the neat spine of the straight and narrow are the chief indication

of any possible contingency, spontaneity, or variation in route; but the central road is marked out in an otherwise uninterrupted continuum. Compared with the radical discontiguity of the tendrils in *Jerusalem* plate 77, in his inclusion of byroads Conder is rather less willing to leave anything to chance: all is contiguous (including the very neat, gridlike formal divisions of the plate), and each byroad is shown to lead somewhere in particular, either a region or a specific 'landmark' drawn from Bunyan's moralised geography. Moreover, Conder's plan is unpeopled, removing any sense of the embodied *process* that must take place prior to what we might consider *progress*, which here appears as though it is perfectly natural and pre-determined. The impression of pre-determination is partly a corollary of the formal logic of the plan itself, but in the context of the Calvinist theology of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, the format also affords an apt graphic visualisation of the predestinarian-sounding 'straight and narrow' model idealised by Goodwill in the text: 'there are many ways butt down upon this; and they are crooked and wide: but thus thou may'st distinguish the right from the wrong, the right only being strait and narrow' (Bunyan 1778: 25). Blake famously subverts this formulation in one of his 'Proverbs of Hell' in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, where he writes that 'Improvent [*sic*] makes strait roads, but the crooked roads without Improvement, are roads of Genius' (E38).

Not all maps and plans of the *Pilgrim's Progress* adopted a 'straight and narrow' linearity in a literal formal sense. For example, John Pitts' 1813 engraving (Figure 8) shows a rather more tangled, meandering scenario, which also stresses embodiment by representing Christian in various spatio-temporal moments on the one visual plane; yet, as is the case in Conder's plan, the route can be traced as clearly 'beginning' at the City of Destruction in the lower left-hand corner and 'ending' in a fully visualised vignette of the Celestial City in the upper right.

Figures and locations are clearly articulated and labelled. In this sense, although several plans of Bunyan's allegory adopt more crooked or curved roads, the emphasis tends to be on pre-existing roads rather than emergent routes, and there remains a sense of 'narrowness' in the limited potential for mazy, creative agency by walkers—the necessary latitude required for the carving out of Blakean 'Roads of Genius.'

In their emphasis on destinations and landmarks, such plans of the *Pilgrim's Progress* also resonate with Tim Ingold's notion of 'transport' as opposed to 'wayfaring.' The former, Ingold argues, operates according to a modern inversion whereby movement is conceived as 'essentially destination-oriented,' obscuring 'our most fundamental mode of being in the world,' a way of being and of knowing which for Ingold arises not only at stopovers or landmarks, but from an 'experience of movement in which action and perception are intimately coupled' (Ingold 2011: 150, 152). This notion of 'wayfaring' as a fundamental way of being—or, perhaps more accurately, of *becoming*—in the world has much in common with Blake's visual representations of journeying, which, although they may have a notional destination in mind, seek more to absorb the viewer in the minute movements of bodies in the world than to project or prescribe a fixed itinerary towards a fixed destination. Indeed, Ingold represents the difference by means of two contrasting types of line (Figure 9): a crooked line for wayfaring, a straight line for transport, in a conception that is strikingly similar to Blake's own celebration of crooked lines of movement over and above the straight and narrow.

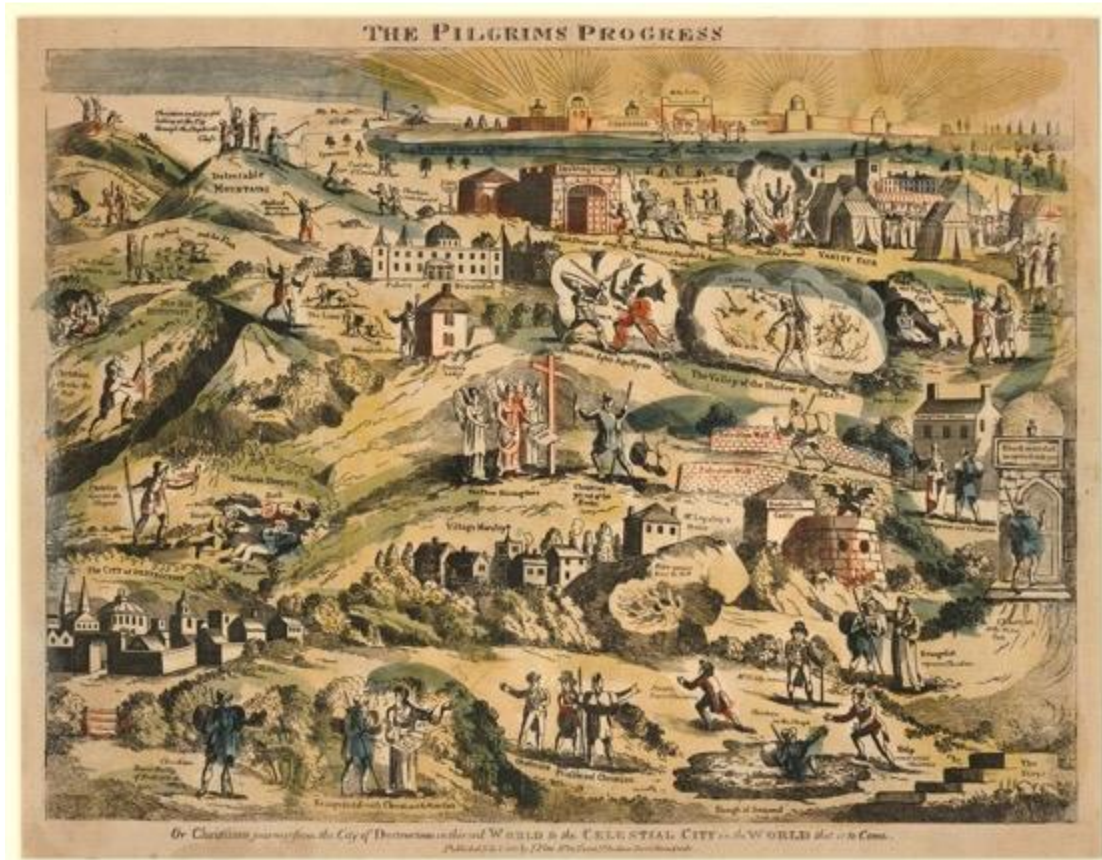

Figure 8. John Pitts, 'The Pilgrims Progress, Or Christians journey from the City of Destruction in this evil World to the Celestial City in the World that is to Come,' 1813 (etching, hand coloured, 27.8 x 48 cm). London, British Museum, museum no. 2008,7097.2.

To turn then to Blake's own version of John Bunyan's dream (Figure 10), painted in 1824-7, the picture's demonstrable relationship with the representational tendencies of prior illustrations to the *Pilgrim's Progress* will be immediately evident.

Blake's depiction of Bunyan dreaming seems ostensibly to be lifted wholly from the typical iconography and composition of *Pilgrim's Progress* frontispieces. But what interests me here is the way in which Blake has dealt with the background scenery (Figure 10.1), in which we would usually expect to find a relatively straightforward projection of Christian's journey towards the Celestial City. Like Keynes, Stephen C. Behrendt finds Blake to be wholly typical in this regard:

> *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream* is at once predictive and synoptic, gathering as it does the chief elements of the entire tale—*including the narrative frame*—into a single initial design. The 'progress' moves from left to right in the 'natural' *visual* reading order that replicates even as it anticipates the narrative order of the verbal text. (Behrendt 1995: 27)

Behrendt's relatively uncomplicated view of 'progress' as it may be conveyed by Blake's series of designs is in keeping with that of Gerda Norvig, who reads Blake's take on Bunyan's tale as a progress, seriatim, towards 'individuation,' initiated and forecast by this first design: it 'was largely about the visionary aim of the dreamer's unconscious to dream the dream awake, thereby exemplifying a typological process of psychological individuation' (Norvig 1993: 129). But such interpretations of this picture can start to sound as though they mean to suggest that Blake accepted the notion that a spiritual journey—a pilgrimage, a progress—could be somehow scripted in advance and therefore easily represented on a single pictorial plane. It is my claim that Blake was actually very uncomfortable with this notion. Of the illuminated book *Milton a Poem* (composed c.1804-11), Lincoln writes that the actions of Blake's protagonist 'show that the condition of the individual is not "determinate" in the sense of being fixed before birth' (Lincoln 2006: 161-62). The *Dreamer* picture conveys a similar message. This is why Blake's rendering of the background 'synopsis' is hazy, incomplete, and indistinct: we can only see the faint suggestion of, as Norvig indicates, '(1) Christian leaving the City of Destruction; (2) Christian duelling with Apollyon; (3) a sojourner, possibly Christian, standing in an arbor […]; and (4) light streaming from the Celestial City,' the latter indicated only by half-articulated rays of light and the vague suggestion of gothic architectural forms (Norvig 1993: 135).

The haziness of these forms is notable in the work of an artist who is so vocal about his commitment to firmness of outline. Blake favoured firm outlines over colouristic blending: in his *Descriptive Catalogue* accompanying his 1809 exhibition, for instance, Blake writes of his preference for 'Clear colours unmudded by oil, and firm and determinate lineaments unbroken by shadows, which ought to display and not to hide form' (E530). Yet in the vignettes of *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream* forms appear precisely hidden and broken. Keynes notes, I think rightly, that despite the haziness of this section of *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream,* '[t]he design appears to be finished,' and he goes on to suggest that 'the cloudiness of the upper layer' is 'intended to give the effect of dream-land in contrast with the more precise outlines of the sleeper and lion' (Keynes 1971: 174). Norvig likewise supposes that the scenes are drawn 'indistinctly on purpose, […] to suggest that at this stage of their presentation their visionary content is still only in embryo': still, she regards the design as ultimately teleological: 'it has its end in its beginning' (Norvig 1993: 134-35). Certainly, there is some sense of a dreamlike fugue here, but it is my claim that, in keeping with a wider visual habit when it comes to the representation of journeying, Blake has deliberately made the vignettes appear formally 'unfinished' as a manoeuvre that is both anti-predestinarian and anti-cartographic. Similarly, in Blake's final design in the series (Figure 11), the travellers' arrival at the Celestial City is depicted in translucent forms, with vague suggestions of the gates or the city's skyline above. The picture's emphasis is on the embodied process of the ascension, rather than on mapping the coordinates of the city itself.

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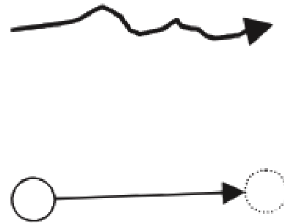

FIGURE 13.3 Wayfaring (top) and transport (bottom). In transport, a pre-constituted entity is displaced laterally across a surface, from one location to another. In wayfaring, the thing is a movement alongly in the world, creating itself endlessly in the process.

Figure 9. Ingold's sketch of the difference between lines of 'wayfaring' and of 'transport,' from his *Being Alive*, p. 163.

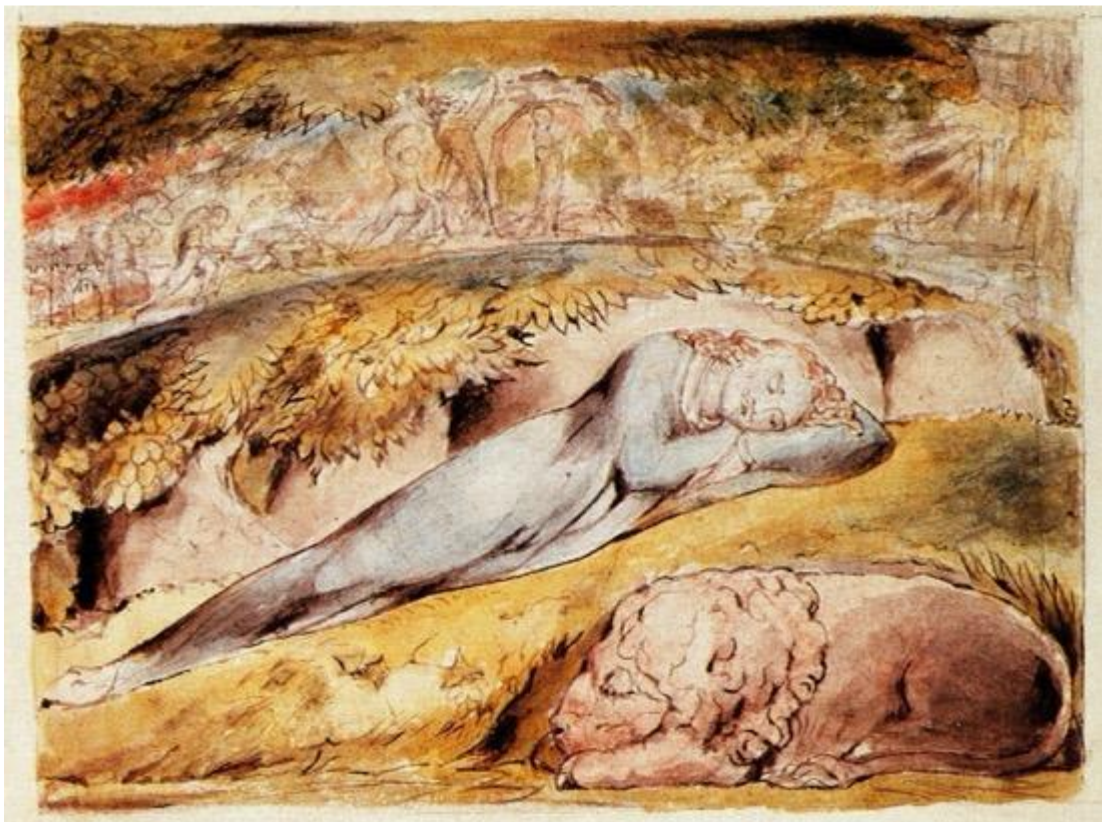

Figure 10. William Blake, *John Bunyan Dreams a Dream* or *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream*, design for *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 1824-7 (graphite, ink, and watercolour on paper, 13.4 x 17.9 cm). Private collection. Formerly in the Frick Collection, New York.

Comparison with a depiction of another dreamer in Blake's late art will corroborate this claim: namely, the biblical watercolour made for Butts and known as *Jacob's Dream* (Figure 12).

Figure 10.1. Detail of Figure 1 showing the scenes from Christian's journey.

Depicting the well-known episode at Genesis 28: 12 in which Jacob dreams of a ladder leading to heaven, Blake's artwork depicts the ladder as a meandering, vortical edifice that spirals into faintness as it approaches the heavenly light at the top of the scene. Figures weave their way along the ladder in all manner of directions, and despite the hopeful note struck by the sunny rays in the sky, Blake again denies viewers a vision of the heavenly destination, showing only the ladder's continuing spiral as it recedes into the distance. The line of the ladder does not simply connect A to B in a single thrust; there is an allowance for greater latitude and directional variation, and the final destination, though alluded to, ultimately goes unrepresented. There are other notable examples of similar scenarios in Blake's art, as I shall show in due course, and such pictures bespeak an on-going tension in his work between a spirit of utopian striving, and a sense of the impossibility of actually representing a single and pre-determined route by which 'destinations' are attained.

In *The Dreamer Dreams a Dream*, Blake reveals himself as fundamentally unwilling to and even avowedly incapable of singlehandedly providing a definitive and educative roadmap. What he does offer is a map in process, a call for reader-viewers themselves to take an active role in interpreting the text, in living their lives and moving through spaces, moment to moment, without assuming they already know in advance which way the lines are going to turn. While Norvig's interpretation of Blake's Bunyan illustrations does do much to trace lines of *progress* through the pictures, one can only do so by means of a certain level of abstraction; in the individual pictures themselves Blake seems rather to register in the body and movements of Christian the workings of *process* in journeying, in living, which do not in themselves necessarily *have to* contain the seeds of a prior destiny or destination. When we come to the major illuminated books that Blake was composing in the years prior to the Bunyan designs, this reluctance to forecast the means of arrival at a holy city and the nature of that city itself can be fruitfully placed in the context of a more fully-fledged conception of psycho-biology and history.

Figure 11. William Blake, *At the Gates of Heaven*, design for *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 1824-7 (graphite, ink, and watercolour on paper). Private collection. Formerly in the Frick Collection, New York.

Figure 12. William Blake, *Jacob's Dream*, c. 1805 (pen and ink and watercolour on wove paper, 37 x 29.2 cm). London, British Museum, accession no. 1949, 1112.2.

It will be fruitful to consider three further examples of how Blake negotiates, agonistically, the task of representing journeys towards holy cities in his visual art. Like the *Dreamer,* all three images could also, in some sense, be read as 'reader-generated mappings' of texts, to adopt Cooper and Priestnall's (2011) terminology. Although Cooper and Priestnall use these terms to designate maps specifically produced by literary critics, their description of reader-generated mappings seems just as applicable to Blake's artistic mappings of texts: 'cartographies which are, simultaneously, critical and creative maps; and

maps which, in turn, produce an additional layer of cartographic intertextuality for the spatial literary critic to read and to interpret,' as I shall go on to do (257). In all three cases that I examine here, Blake uses crooked or meandering and gestural lines to indicate possible routes, but eschews a definitive or fully elaborated teleology. The first example I would like to offer is the watercolour that Blake made in 1805 as a design to Robert Blair's poem *The Grave* (first published 1743), known as *Friendship* (Figure 13).

The picture, Alexander Gourlay has noted, 'appear[s] to illustrate images in a long passage near the end of the poem on page 29 in the 1808 edition' of *The Grave* (Gourlay 2003/2004: 102). Gourlay continues, the picture 'appears to respond in general to the idea of Jesus as guide and in particular to the phrase "There's no byeroad / To bliss," for it shows Jesus giving traveling directions to a man on his way to heaven' (Gourlay 2003/4: 103). This, I think, may be simplifying the issue. Several things are worth noting about the composition of this picture. First, there is the fairly simple fact that the picture shows the walkers' backs, one of Blake's favourite habits in his visual art, which also has an important part to play in the title-page of *Milton* and the frontispiece of *Jerusalem*. One result of this is to draw the viewer 'into' the picture, into the sense of an unfolding, *embodied* journey that comes into existence through movement itself.

A second notable feature of the picture's composition is the crooked and discontiguous form of the lines that trail over the landscape. Compared with the straight road that ploughs through Conder's plan of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, or the fully elaborated route demarcated in Sturt's frontispiece, Blake's lines are open-ended, gestural, and only partially articulated.

Third, there is the fact that the heavenly city itself is largely obscured by the figures in the foreground; again, Blake denies viewers a complete vision of what this destination might *look* like. In terms of his mythography this is significant because Jerusalem is characterised as a city or state that is to arise—to be *built*—through the processual activities of craft and reintegrated, embodied movement in the world. As such, it cannot be faithfully or fully represented in the pages of the illuminated book, because it is always a work in progress—or, perhaps more aptly, a work in *process*. He remains reluctant to precisely circumscribe, map, and hence reify the as-yet unbuilt holy or celestial cities. To do so would be to trap himself into the predictive role of 'an Arbitrary Dictator,' a false prophetic posture that Blake could not countenance (E617).

A fourth important feature of *Friendship* is the suggestion of conversation between the two figures. The trope calls to mind an older means of path-finding that relied on local knowledge and conversation rather than centralised roads and maps made (and, for the most part, used) by the powerful. It also hints at the possibility of call and response that answers to the kind of disembodied logic of some of the *Pilgrim's Progress* maps that I have discussed, which may be taken as implying that one's journey—in this case, the journey of the Elect—might unfold somehow automatically without allowing for much latitude of free will, contingency, or sociality along the way. *Friendship* instead seems to advance a scenario that is in some respects conceptually similar to the Antamon passage in *Milton*, as it has been analysed by Amanda Jo Goldstein, who emphasises Blake's opposition to

Figure 13. William Blake, 'Friendship,' 1805 (pen and ink and watercolour over traces of pencil, 23.8 x 17.6 cm). London, Collection of Alan Parker.

theories about embryological preformation, and to the kind of objectifying experimentalism that such theories can be used to authorise. Goldstein argues that Antamon, with his soft hands, represents an epigenesist model that acknowledges 'the social labor in generation and its science,' in a way that resists 'reduction of epigenesis to

autogenesis' and allows for apparent boundaries between 'subject' and 'object' to be negotiated without the implications of experimentalist violence as perpetrated by the likes of Tearguts and Urizen in Blake's writings (Goldstein 2015: 185). Blake's apparent discomfort with notions of embryological preformation, especially the notion of 'self clos'd' autogenesis and the split between supposed subjects and objects, arguably also resonates with his visual treatments of emergent journeys. Seen in the light of Goldstein's findings, the suggestion of conversability in *Friendship* opens up a similarly felicitous dynamic of journeying as becoming, breaking down the dichotomy between follower and guide into a livelier vision of two fellow travellers, joined hand in hand, co-constitutively bringing about their journey. The portrayal calls to mind the words of the Saviour at the opening of *Jerusalem*, affirming Christ's human embodiment and presence: 'I am not a God afar off, I am a brother and friend' (E146).

Finally, owing to the pictorial composition, the figures appear as though they are immersed in the landscape before them. Their bodies (and bare feet!) appear to be fully *alive* to their surroundings in a way that resonates both Antamon's soft hands and Ingold's notion of movement 'alongly' in the world, using an eye that 'does not look *at* things but roams *among* them' (Ingold 2011: 134). Ingold's formulation, as he notes, recalls Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's distinction between 'striated' and 'smooth' space in *A Thousand Plateaus*: for Deleuze and Guattari, Ingold writes, 'striated' space is 'homogenous and volumetric: in it, diverse things are laid out, each in its assigned location,' while 'smooth' space 'has no layout,' '[i]t is an atmospheric space of movement and flux, stirred up by wind and weather, and suffused with light, sound, and feeling' (132; Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 524-25). These two poles—the one all layout and the other without layout—can start to sound a little like Blake's own mythological poles of Bowlahoola and Allamanda, the former entailing an excess of 'analytic power,' a 'space in the Blakean cosmos where *distinctions* are made'; the latter an excess of 'synthetic power' which could potentially cause 'dissociation or a fall into non-entity,' as Kevin Hutchings writes (Hutchings 2002: 198-99). To put this in terms of Blake's mythography, in the case of Tearguts and Urizen, too much analysis (striation) can result in violence and objectification; so, too, in the case of the Polypus an excess of synthesis (smoothness) can result in dissolution and a loss of identity. In *Friendship*, as elsewhere in his late work, Blake appears to seek a precarious balance between such extremes. The picture necessarily has a layout, and though its convivial charms seem to want to create an impression of somewhat 'smooth' or 'atmospheric' space, there are still key delineations between entities. The figures are shown immersed in what Ingold would call the 'weather-world,' and there is little colouristic differentiation between their forms and the world they inhabit, but their bodies are clearly outlined, and this is important for Blake's sense of an interrelational yet differentiated ecology. Despite their formal distinctness from the blue sky above and the green vegetation below, the figures can arguably be said to advance *in* the world, rather than regarding it entirely from above or outside it, as in the Romantic gaze at work in Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* (1818), or, still more dualistically, the idealised cartographic gaze 'from nowhere,' typically most interested in a straight and predetermined route to a destination.

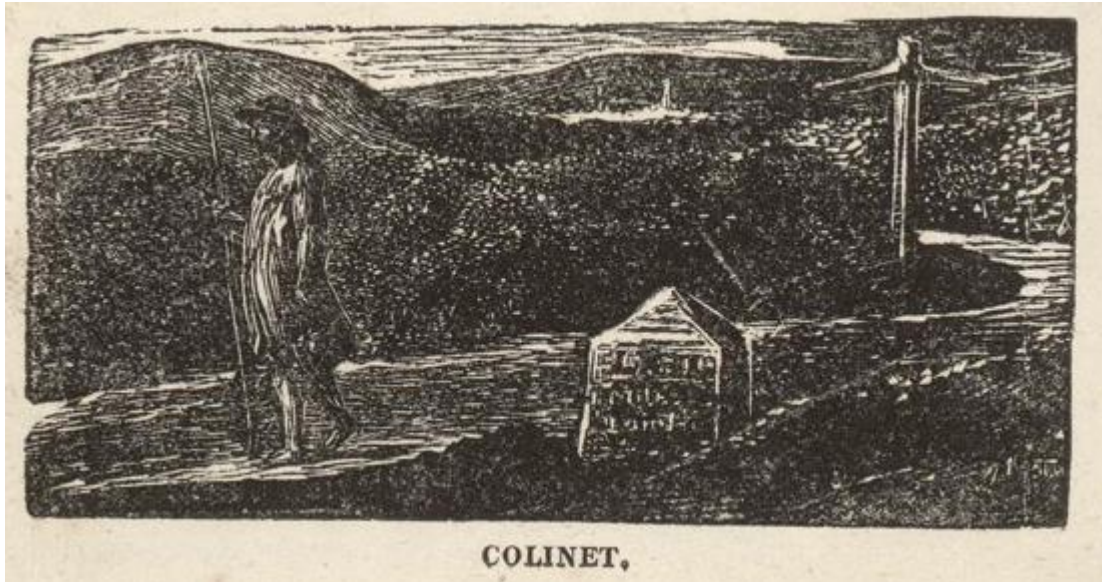

Figure 14. William Blake, *Colinet's Fond Desire Strange Lands to Know,* detail of design for Thornton's *Pastorals of Virgil*, 1821 (relief etching, whole sheet: 16.2 x 7.4 cm). Huntington Library, Art collections, and Botanical Gardens, 137046.

A second picture that I wish to consider in this context is one of the small woodcuts that Blake made as illustrations to Ambrose Phillips' verses included in the third edition of Robert John Thornton's *The Pastorals of Virgil* (1821). The woodcut, sometimes called *Colinet's Fond Desire Strange Lands to Know* (Figure 14), was again created prior to the designs for the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

It is a highly ambiguous and enigmatic picture, but one that again shows Blake's agonistic treatment of journeys towards (holy) cities. Here, the primary city-as-destination seems to be London, which may nod to Blake's own return to London from his pastoral cottage-life at Felpham in 1803. Hence Paley, with good reason, finds the walker in the picture to be 'a cryptic self-portrait of Blake himself,' since the milestone to his right 'is inscribed "LXII | miles | London," and as Blake was 62 at the time of the Thornton commission, we may interpret the figure as Blake himself. […] A possible additional meaning may lie in the fact that the distance from Felpham to London is about 62 miles, which leads to the suggestion that the traveller may be walking that route,' notwithstanding the odd orientation of the milestone (Paley 2003: 62). Accordingly, Paley suggests that the gothic spire in the background could represent Chichester Cathedral. Perhaps its significance is not quite so particular—could it gesture in a more general sense to a remote spiritual *telos*, a gothic cathedral city like the one partially visible in the watercolour *Friendship*? Or is the affective tone of the picture altogether gloomier, suggesting a misguided journey (back) to a benighted London-Babylon? Although Phillips' text tells us that the melancholy Colinet is leaving his pastoral home and heading for a city, the many ambiguities of the picture, and the nature of its composition, make it impossible to tell precisely where Blake's traveller is actually going as he walks towards the picture's frame. We can see a small stretch of the curling road already travelled but, despite hints at a future destination, Blake once again declines to map the journey that is to come.

The points that I have made about the images that I have discussed so far will be interestingly supplemented by brief comparison with another of Blake's late artworks showing pilgrims walking (mainly on horseback): the c. 1808 tempera painting (Figure 15) and later engraved impressions (e.g. Figure 16) of *Chaucers Canterbury Pilgrims*—another mapping of a textual source.

Figure 15. William Blake, *Chaucers Canterbury Pilgrims*, c. 1808 (tempera on canvas, 46.8 x 137 cm). Glasgow, Pollok House, accession no. PC.89.

Figure 16. William Blake, *Sir Geoffrey Chaucer and the Nine and Twenty Pilgrims on Their Journey to Canterbury*, 1810 (etching and engraving, 33. 2 x 93 cm). Washington, National Gallery of Art, accession no. 1943.3.8993.

The pilgrims are shown at an incipient stage in their journey when they are setting out from the 'Tabarde Inne' (labelled in Blake's picture) outside London and heading towards the shrine dedicated to Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. As Blake notes in the *Descriptive Catalogue*, in the background 'some buildings and spires indicate the situation of the great City'—presumably this 'great City' is London, which the pilgrims leave behind; it is less likely that it could refer to the much smaller town of Canterbury (E532). The picture can be seen first of all to offer a foil to the indistinctness of the journey of Christian in the *Dreamer*, and secondly to the lonely and potentially benighted wanderings of Colinet in the Thornton engraving, instead chiming with *Friendship*'s emphasis on both sociality and individually bounded bodies. First, Blake works with both the tempera and etching media to especially articulate individual forms in what he calls

'unbroken lines, unbroken masses, and unbroken colours,' a practice that he opposes to 'any thing Venetian or Flemish,' and especially to Thomas Stothard's practice of applying 'spots of brown and yellow, smeared about at random' in his own rival oil painting of the same subject (Figure 17) (E540).

Figure 17. Thomas Stothard, *The Pilgrimage to Canterbury*, 1806-7 (oil paint on oak, 31.8 x 95.2 cm). London, Tate Britain, reference no. N01163.

The clearly outlined figures in Blake's portrayal propose a marked contrast to the execution of the *Dreamer*, as is partly afforded by the difference of medium, with watercolour lending itself more readily to colouristic and tonal blending than tempera and especially uncoloured etching. What this contrast suggests, I want to propose, is that Blake's preference lies with moment-to-moment states as they unfold, rather than with predicted events laid out in a series, which he pointedly resists demarcating in the *Dreamer*.

Second, the *Canterbury Pilgrims* picture emphasises sociality between or across individual bodies, again sustaining a precarious balance between differentiation and synthesis. The linearity of the procession is offset by the picture's suggestions of conversation between figures, which we also see in the design to 'Holy Thursday' in *Songs of Innocence*. The two figures shown on (bare) foot, facing in contrary directions, also recall the multi-directional wanderings of the figures in *Jacob's Ladder*, ever so slightly undercutting the overall linearity and forwards propulsion of the procession. Yet, once again, such suggestions of sociality and spontaneity occur in the context of the firm outlines differentiating the figures, and the careful balancing of pairs within the overall composition: Blake resists the potential for dissolution or randomness (comparison with Stothard's painting may give some sense of what he means in saying, albeit with some exaggeration, that Stothard's figures are 'thrown together in [a] random manner') (E540). Finally, Blake's proclamation in the *Descriptive Catalogue* that 'Every age is a Canterbury Pilgrimage' importantly raises the trope of pilgrimage—of 'spiritual' journeying—to the level of social experience, figuring communal life as the stuff of many bodies in motion, of entangled lifelines (see Bowden 1980: 164).

Mapping Blake

By identifying this *agon* in Blake's attempt to map the *Pilgrim's Progress* as well as spiritual journeys as described in other texts, we can arrive at a useful characterisation of his (anti-)cartographic imagination, which I believe to be fundamental to the fabric of Blake's

illuminated books. This characterisation can in turn be brought to bear on a frequent critical impulse to read and model Blake's own mythographic texts in idealised, cartographic, or diagrammatic terms.

Norvig, for instance, transposes Bunyan's model of text-as-guide onto Blake's own designs to the *Pilgrim's Progress*: 'Blake works as a guide whose artistic productions are an illustrated tour book of the psyche' (Norvig 1993: 29). In this sense, she takes a similar view of the relationship between creator, text, and reader-viewer to that of Rebecca Solnit who, in her history of walking, writes that 'To write is to carve a new path through the terrain of the imagination. […] To read is to travel through that terrain with the author as guide' (Solnit 2001: 72). In contrast to the Bunyanesque model of the reader as a follower, the terms of Blake's 'golden string' image and the play of tendrils on that plate imply that while a guide has put the string down and so begun the process of winding/weaving, the originating authorial consciousness can make one neither walk in a straight line nor weave according to a precisely prescribed template. Ingold in fact makes a similar point, responding to Solnit's formulation of reader as follower with the idea that '[t]he work *invites the viewer to join the artist as a fellow traveller*, to look with it as it unfolds in the world, rather than behind it to an originating intention of which it is the final product' (Ingold 2011: 216, my emphasis). 'Following,' for Ingold, as for Deleuze and Guattari, thus becomes 'a matter not of iteration but of itineration': 'Artists – as also artisans – are itinerant wayfarers. They make their way through the taskscape […] as do walkers through the landscape […]. To improvise is to follow the ways of the world, as they open up, rather than to recover a chain of connections, from an end point to a starting point, on a route already travelled' (216). These models have much in common with literary geographer Sheila Hones' conception of the text (in her study, the novel) as an 'event' wherein author, reader, and their respective geographies meet, a characterisation which is certainly born out in the complex, contested spaces of Blake's illuminated books (Hones 2011).

There is not space here to examine the minutiae of Blake's mapping practices in the major prophecies. But what can be stated is that in these late illuminated books, especially in their descriptions of London and the utopian city of Golgonooza, Blake cumulatively suggests that city-walking, as a means of active re-territorialisation, affords the potential to re-conceive the maps of the 'continuing city' (Paley 1983). This he suggests largely through *verbal* imagery of urban walking, though there is also a handful of key designs that work to envisage the utopian horizons of urban pedestrianism. The relative dearth of explicit visual treatments of city-walking in the late illuminated books is characteristic of Blake's tendency to avoid mapping spaces, places, and routes in definitive graphic form. In his study of Golgonooza, James Bogan identified in Blake's late work a tendency *not* to map the city visually, writing that 'Blake has deliberately avoided drawing the visions of Golgonooza and of the fourfold Albion,' and arguing that the 'work' of drawing those visions 'is left to the reader, who is called upon to create these images in his own multi-dimensional mind' (Bogan 1981: 98). I find Bogan's notion that the mapping of Golgonooza is the work of 'Mental Fight' to be very astute, and a good model of the readerly process as set out for instance in the 'golden string' lyric, but I would add to it two modifications. First, Blake does not *avoid* mapping cities altogether; what he avoids is making *totalising* maps. Blake's half-articulated, half-intelligible graphic and verbal visions

of urban landscapes—his anti-cartographic cartographies—are partial and provisional, seeming to draw self-consciously upon maps' inherent 'partial perspective' (Propen 2009: 113-30). By offering only glimpses of its contours, Blake stresses the need for continued labour in the building of a viable world. Second, further to engaging the reader's *mind* to fill in the gaps, Blake is also pressing upon readers the importance of *bodily* work in constituting maps of the utopian city—and a vital vehicle for this message is the recurrent imagery of city-walking in his late mythography. Blake's visions of the redeemed city do in this sense imply a similarly *material* form, except that for Blake the redeemed city's futurity means that it cannot yet *materialise,* preventing a too-concrete visualisation in the present. For this reason, diagrammatic reader-generated maps like Samuel Foster Damon's map of Golgonooza (Figure 18) ought to be approached with caution.

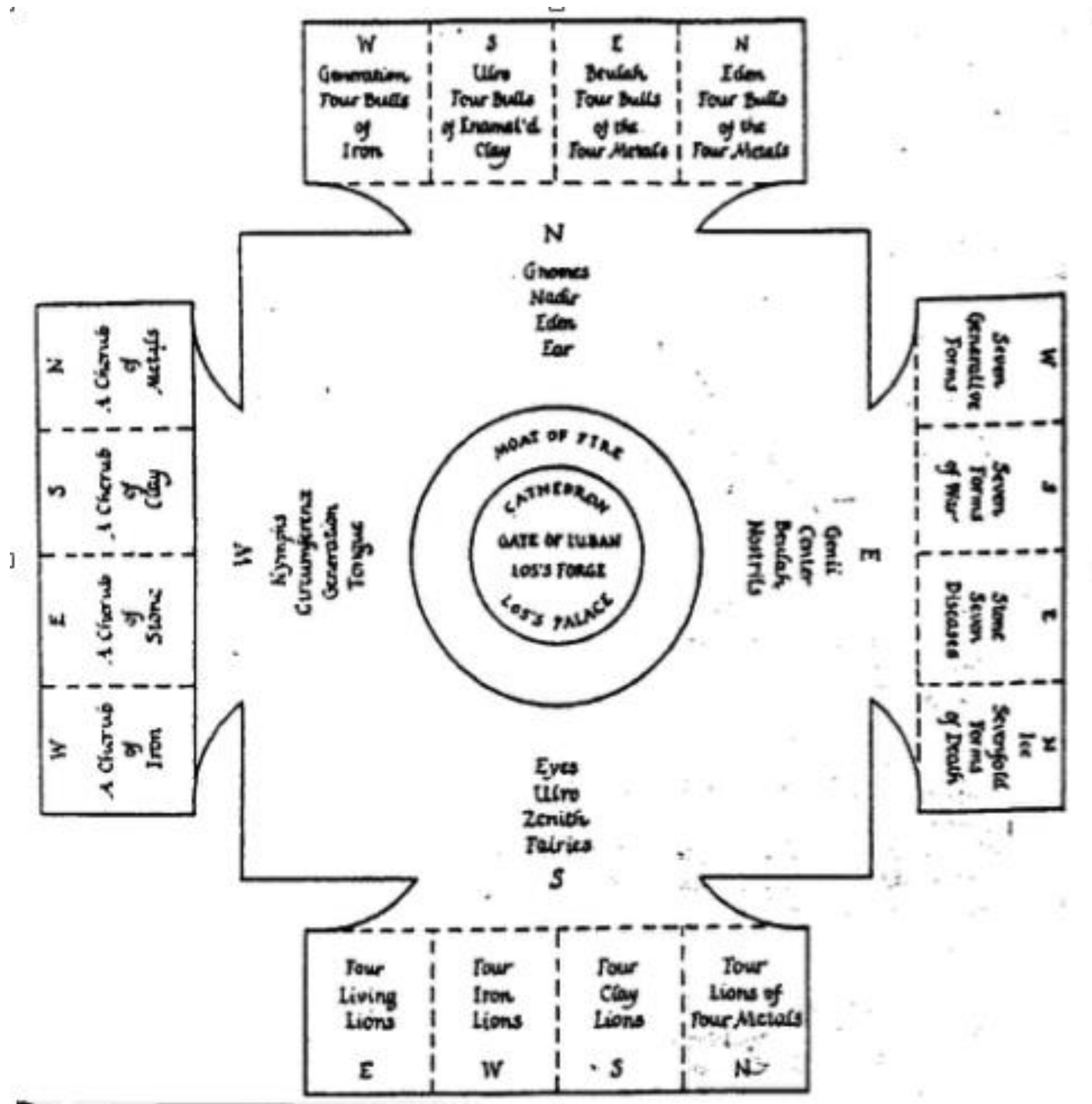

Figure 18. Map of Golgonooza. S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, rev. ed., Hanover and London: Brown UP/UP of New England, 1988, p. 163.

Damon's map presents Golgonooza in its entirety, bypassing Blake's own sense of its unmappability. Damon himself admits that his own diagram is somewhat misleading from an interpretative point of view, noting that 'Golgonooza, being four-dimensional, cannot be reduced to a chart of two dimensions'—though he appears ultimately untroubled by the move to diagrammatically 'complete' the work-in-progress city that Blake initiates (Damon 1988: 163).

By contrast, some more recent instances of creative reader-mappings of Blake's texts give a sense of the meaningful possibilities afforded by Blake's (anti-)cartographies, as though answering Blake's call for reader-viewers to wind the golden string. In an embodied and ever-evolving re-mapping of Blake's life and work, self-styled 'poetopographer' Niall McDevitt leads annual 'Blake Walks' traversing Blake-related sites on a pilgrimage of sorts across London.[1] Meanwhile, Sophie Herxheimer and Chris McCabe's visual-verbal pamphlet *The Practical Visionary* (2018) retraces various Blakean pathways, again drawing on Blake's own visual-verbal mappings of London in conjunction with places associated with his life. Despite the difference in medium, McDevitt, Herxheimer, and McCabe are all concerned with the co-production of imagined spaces as envisioned by Blake, enfolding some sense of a still-emergent Golgonoozan geography into their mappings of London. Such (re)mappings of Blake's work pick up on Blake's (anti-)cartography as an immensely generative affordance of his work—or, as Blake scholar Mike Goode might put it, as a 'capability' of the text, which can 'afford and limit meaningful possibilities' without necessitating determinism or reductionism (Goode 2020: 2).

Concluding Remarks

Blake's (anti-)cartographic imagery in his late illuminated books and visual art offers a very different hermeneutic model to the one legislated by John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and the visual tradition of artistic mappings associated with it. For Blake, the journey to the utopian city cannot be mapped yet, because the utopian city does not *exist* yet: it is constantly emergent and calls for continual labour. What *Jerusalem* proposes, as literary critic Talissa J. Ford writes, is first and foremost a distinction 'not between *real* and *imagined* space, but between *found* and *produced* space' (Ford 2008: 540). Metatextually, Blake's (anti-)cartography requires readers to engage in the strenuous mental and physical labour of both navigating and producing a disorientating world, of living with the difficulties one finds there, and of resisting the urge to seek comfort all too hastily in cartographic abstraction.

In giving readers 'the end of a golden string' and inviting them creatively to 'wind it,' Blake re-wires a binary model of production and consumption, representation and practice, in ways that anticipate recent moves within the related fields of map studies, literary geo-/cartography, and spatial literary studies, especially when it comes to processual theories of mapping. Blake himself seems to act out the process of readerly intervention and meaning-making in his non-prescriptivist mappings of the *Pilgrim's Progress* and of other literary texts in the artworks that I have examined. With no end in sight, maps, their creators, and their users continually work to generate multiple meanings and interpretative

possibilities, even across intervening centuries—processes that Blake's work by turns enacts and thematises. The theory and practice of mapping texts in the present can gain much from close attention to the reception of literary texts across visual cultures of the past, and to the 'living cartographies' that can thereby be retraced, revived, and re-examined (Rosetto 2014: 526).

Notes

[1] Niall McDevitt, a great Blakean guide and dear fellow traveller, passed away on 29 September 2022. His presence is very much missed on London's 'opening streets,' as Blake called them, streets which McDevitt opened up to so many people through his big-hearted poetry and guided walks.

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